



## More Change Ahead

Grace Covenant was already in the process of making changes when the pandemic hit: new ministries, new staff, a new look to many things around the church facility. We were ready to make more changes like worshipping online, meeting via Zoom and wearing masks!

Now, more changes are coming - including electing a pastor nominating committee and new elders and deacons at a congregational meeting that will be held both in person and online with the first order of business being to change the church bylaws so we can do all of this decently and in order.

The Nominating Committee has presented a slate of nominees for election by the congregation. Seven members, plus an alternate, who have stepped up in faith to undertake this responsibility on behalf of the congregation. Once elected and trained they will begin meeting to prepare the church's online profile which will be "matched" with the online profiles of pastors seeking a call. The PNC will prayerfully discern which of the candidates to interview by phone and in-person; and then they will present for your vote the one whom God is even now equipping and preparing to be the next installed pastor.

The Nominating Committee will also present a slate of nominees for elders and deacons for the Class of 2023. These new officers will be the ones who will serve alongside the new pastor. These are the changes that are going to move Grace Covenant into the future. Plan to attend

the congregational meeting on Sept 20 at 11:45 am so you can be a part of that future. Check out the insert for the PNC slate and how to attend the meeting.



### Looking Ahead Events May Be Postponed or Moved Online

#### September

- 7 - Office Closed
- 9 - Wednesdays at Grace
- 14 - Ruth Circle
- 20 - Congregational Meeting
- 23 - Wednesdays at Grace
- 27 - Youth Spaghetti Dinner

#### October

- 8, 9 - Daily Bread
- 7 - Wednesdays at Grace
- 11 - Stewardship Kickoff
- 21 - Wednesdays at Grace
- 25 - Commitment Sunday
- 28 - Trunk or Treat

#### November

- 1 - The Great Pumpkin Chase
- 4 - Wednesdays at Grace
- 8 - Annual Congregational Picnic
- 18 - Wednesdays at Grace
- 22 - Chili Cook Off
- Hanging of the Greens
- 26 - Thanksgiving Dinner

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### ***Many Thanks***

Thank you for your prayers, cards and expressions of sympathy on the passing of my sister Margaret who went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, August 11th . We have been comforted. God bless.

Sincerely, Winifred Rutherford & family

### ***Hello from Home***

Pastor Karen has found a way to do home visits in spite of the pandemic. Karen has been doing visits on your front porch, the lanai, or even just under a shady tree. Outside we can safely stay six feet apart and have a nice visit. You can see the results on the screens Sunday mornings with our "Hello from Home" photographs. If you would be interested in a home visit for yourself or if you know another church member who doesn't feel ready to go out and about yet, but would like a visit, contact Karen or call the church office.

### ***Book Club***

Are you a reader? Looking for a new activity during the pandemic? GCPC has a book club that is currently meeting by Zoom at 7:00 pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month. We'd love to have you join us for informal discussion and fellowship! If you're interested contact Jane Heppner .

The books on our schedule are:

- Sept. 22 ***Sweeney Sisters***  
by Lian Dolan
- Oct. 27 ***Unfinished Death***  
by Dee Henderson
- Nov. 24 ***Fierce Compassion: The Life of Abolitionist Donaldina Cameron***  
by Kathryn Wong and Kristin Wong
- Dec. 22 ***Through the Eyes of a Shepherd***  
by Kenneth Winter
- Jan. 26 ***Outbreak***  
by Davis Bunn

### ***Ruth Circle***

Ruth Circle will resume meeting monthly on Monday, September 14 at 10 a.m. We will be meeting in Conway Hall which will allow for social distancing.

We will wear masks and hand sanitizer will be available. No food or drinks for now.

We will be doing a study on Joshua and Winnie is already getting prepared. Study books will be available at our first meeting . Once again we will be supporting Servant's Heart so diapers and wipes are always needed.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.. All our welcome!!!

Barbara Hart

### ***Scholarships Awarded***

The GCPC Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that scholarships for the 2020-21 school year have been awarded to:

Kaki Gallagher, Valencia State College

Hannah Mann, Valencia State College

Alex Richards, University of West Florida

We offer them our prayers and best wishes.

Thanks to all members and groups who made donations to the scholarship fund.

### ***In Sympathy***

We extend our Christian love and sympathy to

The family and friends of Eugene Lang who died August 13, 2020.

Cleveland and Winifred Rutherford and family.

Winifred's sister Margaret Rhoden, died

August 11, 2020 and Cleveland's brother,

Albert Rutherford, died on August 16, 2020.

The family of Mike Beam and Vantrease Blair, and Miriam Reinhardt (Mike's sister in Montgomery) on the passing of Miriam's husband, Jim Reinhardt.

The family of former member, Ed Lane, who died in July 2020.

## **Daily Bread**

Thursday, October 8  
Friday, October 9  
11:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.



Grace Covenant volunteers will be helping at Daily Bread. The dining room at Daily Bread is closed because of covid

-19, so the volunteers will be serving up to-go boxes, which staff will then take outside to the clients. About 6-7 people are needed each day. If you can help or would like more information, contact Trudy Phelps before September 30.

Daily Bread, a Christian Service Center program, provides nourishing meals to the homeless of our community throughout the year. Emergency clothing, legal aid, and counseling are also provided on-site as part of the program. This is a collaborative effort of local churches, restaurants, grocers, hotels and bakeries providing the food and paper products necessary to feed these individuals. Three separate locations in Central Florida serve up to 500 individuals each day.

### ***Stay Connected and Current***

Grace Covenant offers weekly email updates delivered right to your inbox. To subscribe, call or email the church office. (Everyone will still receive the Grace Notes newsletter with its extra features each month.) Follow the church on Facebook. Subscribe to the church YouTube channel. Sermons, bulletins and announcements can be found on the church website.

### ***Daily Bread and the Upper Room***

Copies are available for pick up by the elevator.



### **CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

FOR K – 5<sup>th</sup> GRADERS

8:45am service

Children will attend worship with their family and after the children's sermon be escorted to Room 15 of Smith Hall for time with Ms. Sheryl learning about worship in new and exciting ways.  
Nursery/Walker and preschool care provided.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

FOR 3 years old – 5<sup>th</sup> GRADERS

9:30am to 10:30am

Discover, Explore, Learn! Using hands on activities children will experience God and His amazing love for them!

### ***Monday Zoom Prayer Time***

Would you like to join us in praying for our church and community? Monday mornings at 10:00 am Pastor Karen is hosting a prayer time. We read a verse or two of scripture, go over the prayer list, spend time in prayer, then end with the words of a hymn. Start your week praying with your brothers and sisters! If you are interested let Pastor Karen know or contact the church office.

### ***Special Offerings***

Due to the Pandemic, special offerings for One Great Hour of Sharing (Easter) and Pentecost (Day of Pentecost) were missed. It is not too late to contribute to these offerings. You can mail your contribution to the church or go to the church website to give online.



## September



Please contact the church office  
if you would like a copy of the  
birthday and anniversary list.

***From the  
Administration and Personnel  
Committee***

Grace Covenant has been able to respond to these unprecedented times because of volunteers and staff who have stepped up to ensure that the work of the church continues regardless of the circumstances. Admin & Personnel invites the congregation to thank these “essential workers” here at Grace Covenant. Just a few of the things that your staff has done in recent months are described below. And we’ve included a special thank you to just a few of the volunteers who worked with the staff to keep things going.

Sheryl Chernault, our new Children’s Ministry Director, and Rev. Karen Estes, our new parish associate, were hired just before the onset of the pandemic. Sheryl, helped not only with our on-line worship services but also delivered worship boxes to families with small children. She gave Children’s Sermons, sent out Easter and Vacation Bible School packages as well as a successful and safe in-person VBS. Sheryl also started a new program for children on Wednesday mornings in July. What you probably have not seen is the amazing transformation of Smith Hall under her leadership. Rooms have been cleaned and repainted in preparation for children to return to Sunday School and participate in other new ministries.

Pastor Karen looked for creative ways for the congregation to get to know her through a weekly devotion. She has made great efforts to help people stay connected through friendly phone calls and greeting cards during a time when many are feeling isolated and detached from their church family. Karen also used her vocal talents by accompanying our choir director, Dr. Kelly Miller, in songs of praise. She continues that role as we transition with in-person services since there can be no choir or congregational singing.

Other staff members, Financial Director Phyllis Cornell, Church Secretary Rhonda Edmiston, Youth & Family Ministry Director Mike Beam, Choir Director Dr. Kelly Miller, Organist Barbara Browning, Sexton Wayne Champion, Custodian Edie Fike, and Interim Pastor Melanie Ruta have all been pitching in where needed to keep the church operating. Rhonda has kept the church office open for church business as well as providing support for Small Blessings, Share the Care and Meals on Wheels which have continued to operate throughout. Phyllis, working remotely, has ensured that the finances of the church remain stable and that the bills are paid.

Mike has stayed in close contact with our youth and organized youth activities on-line and face-to-face. Kelly and Barbara have collaborated to ensure that the traditional music that the congregation enjoys as it gives praise and glory to God has continued without interruption despite the absence of a choir. They also adjusted their schedules as needed to record online services. Wayne and Edie modified and adapted their custodial duties to conform with the “new normal” recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting our facilities and equipment to ensure a safe and welcoming campus.

Pastor Melanie oversaw the transition of our in-person worship services to an on-line worship service, kept the congregation and church leaders cared for and connected, and helped make sure the ministries of the church kept going. Pastor Melanie also drew upon her inner remodeler as she moved furniture; painted walls; helped moved the church library; and helps clean and disinfect the Sanctuary on Sundays. She is a good shepherd watching out for her flock.

There are many elders, deacons, committee members and a host of volunteers who helped make sure Grace Covenant was never “closed.” These faithful members helped ensure that the church was able to host VBS and Music Camp.

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### Wednesdays at Grace

Grace Covenant is taking fall programming outside! Starting Sept 9 we will gather as a family of faith in the Courtyard twice a month on Wednesday nights. Christian Education & Children's Ministry kick off the new format on Wed, Sept 9, 6:45-7:30 p.m. with the story of David dancing before the ark followed by instruction on socially-distant line dancing. There will be activities for children of

all ages. Bring a lawn chair and your mask. On Wed., Sept 23, worship will host a hymn sing. Email the church office or choir director, Kelly Miller, with hymn requests by September 16th. Future programming includes family bubble "campfires" for storytelling and 's'mores, a "Song in the Night" service of remembrance and more. Watch for more details.

### Confirmation Class

Confirmation Class for 2020-21 is set and ready to roll out. For 6<sup>th</sup> grade-12<sup>th</sup> grade, if you're ready to learn more about the church, Presbyterianism, and relationships, please contact Mike by Sunday, Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>. This class is done mostly on-line and is somewhat self-paced.

## ROOTED Student Ministry Schedule

Sunday School meets **every** Sunday  
9:30a.m.-10:30 a.m.

with FREE donuts, juice,  
Jesus and Carole P!!!

There is also an occasional walk to WaWa!

For more details on our events and other news....

**you can "friend" us on Facebook at:**

**Grace Covenant PC Youth,**

**and on Instagram at:**

**rootedgpc.**

**ROOTED Youth Group - 5:15 - 7pm**

We'll have awesome dinners provided by our parental units, games, music, prayers, announcements and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!

### September

**6**

ROOTED is off for Labor Day weekend.

**13**

Confirmation Class RSVP deadline  
ROOTED Youth Group - 5:15 - 7pm

**22**

ROOTED Youth Group - 5:15 - 7pm

**27**

Spaghetti Luncheon Fundraiser at Noon  
Youth arrive at Conway Hall at 10:30 a.m.

**OR**

ROOTED Youth Group - 5:15 - 7pm

Please submit articles to  
churchoffice@grace.to  
**Next Deadline - September 15**



### Support GRACE

#### when shopping online!

When you make a purchase on Amazon, go to  
<https://smile.amazon.com/>  
Designate GCPC as the non-profit to support.

## **Session Summary**

August 2020

Session received the report of the Nominating Committee with the slate of nominees for election to the Pastor Nominating Committee: Danielle Alchin, Brian Gallaher, Maxine Gokee (alternate), Gary Munson, Scott Porter, Laura Regier, Robert Taylor and Joe Waddell. A congregational meeting is scheduled for September 20 to elect the PNC; the new elders and deacons for the Class of 2023; and two deacons for the Classes of 2020 and 2021.

Session approved language amending the bylaws of the church to allow electronic meetings. The new bylaw will allow members to attend congregational and committee meetings via telephone conference and computer applications such as Zoom. The congregation will vote on the new bylaw at the congregational meeting on September 20.

Session adjusted the Sunday service schedule. Starting September 6th, the early service (which has been shortened for recording online) will now begin at 8:45am. Sunday school will still be at 9:30 and the second service will still begin at 10:45.

Giving has fallen slightly over the usual slow summer months; but the committees and staff have kept expenses below budget as well leaving the church in a stable position financially.

The new church web-site is scheduled to come online soon.

Guidelines for additional church and community groups (Scouts and Still Stitchin' with Grace) to resume meeting in-person were approved.

Elders Jim Pate, Sally Kest and Diana Ibarra were appointed to the Mission Study Team. Two elders TBD were appointed commissioners for the Presbytery meeting on September 1 which will be held virtually.

Session removed from the rolls with regret, Gene Lang who passed on August 13.

## **From the Administration and Personnel Committee**

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Others took advantage of the time that the buildings were empty and the roadways clear to improve the grounds and facilities. Volunteers came in to help with the renovations in Smith Hall and to clean and disinfect toys and furniture. Others made sure that scheduled work, including the installation of monitors in the sanctuary, was completed as planned. And there were a few who helped shore up the church's finances during these uncertain times by securing a loan to offset payroll expense for church staff as well as the staff and teachers at Small Blessings.

Special thank you's are in order for nursery worker Barbara Baker who is transitioning after several years of faithful service from nursery staff to volunteer offering counter; Nick Pazar who transitioned temporarily from volunteer to staff for repair projects around the church as we continue to search for a facilities manager; and to Doug Hogarth, tech wizard, whose efforts and expertise, enabled the church to quickly transition to an on-line worship service. Doug videotaped, posted, and managed the technical requirements to make a professional-looking video for all our congregation to view. Doug, with help from Joseph Burns, oversees the live streaming of the early worship service making sure it is available on-line for people to watch at their convenience. Doug's talents and knowledge of the technology used by the church were critical to keeping us online after lightning strikes in June and August disabled or destroyed equipment around the campus. Doug, with help from others on the Tech Committee, spent many long hours restoring the system.

We are blessed by so many who do so much for the sake of others. We are truly one body working together!

**September 2020**



**GRACE COVENANT  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**Sunday Worship**  
8:30 & 10:45 a.m.

**Office Hours**  
Monday–Thursday: 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Friday: 8:30 a.m.–noon

1655 Peel Ave., Orlando, FL 32806  
Phone: 407.898.6571  
E-mail: [churchoffice@grace.to](mailto:churchoffice@grace.to)  
**WWW.GRACE.TO**

To:

Non-Profit Organization  
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Return Service Requested

**NEW TIME**

**For WORSHIP SERVICE**

Starting Sunday, September 6,  
the early worship service time  
will move to 8:45 a.m.

**Rooted Youth Group  
Spaghetti Dinner**

Please pencil in September 27th, noon,  
for our annual spaghetti fundraising  
luncheon. Depending on the COVID-19  
large group meeting guidelines,  
this fundraiser may change.  
A decision will be made by September 10th  
and we will move forward from there.

Please continue to support the work of the church by mailing your tithes and offerings to the church or by making a donation through the church website. Go to the "Online Giving" page at [www.grace.to](http://www.grace.to) and click on the "Give Now" button.