



# GRACE NOTES

## APRIL 2024

### SHARING THE FAITH

*“April showers bring May flowers,” so says the old saying. Seems pretty straightforward, but I think there’s more to it than that. I think the statement speaks about the ups and the downs, the Yin and the Yang of life, or the fact that the dark of night is followed by the light of the new day dawning. I am disregarding the suggested order here, that dark days of showers are always first before the proverbial flowers of life spring up. We all know that the sequence, flowers and showers or showers and flowers, can and do occur in different order.*

*Along the same line of thought, I am brought back to a line from Gene Shepherd’s hilarious tale that most of us watch around the holidays, “A Christmas Story,” in which the story’s author/narrator says, “Isn’t that the way it is? At the very height of our revelry, we are struck down with the realities of life.” You pick the phrase that you resonate with most, but that April showers do indeed bring May flowers or vice-versa is reality – just the way life is. But I don’t believe that for the Christian it (life) means simply taking the good with the bad. Rather, I believe that if we truly explore the glories of our faith, we can take the good with the good and also the bad with the good.*

*Let me start with the easy part, taking the good with the good. You know about those times, when things are right in the world and with God. When our health and the health of loved ones is good, the kids are good, relationships, jobs, money, spirituality and faith are all working just fine. When the good is really good and the May flowers are “in bloom,” we ought to...are called to...celebrate! When the life that God has given us is yielding bounteous amounts of grace and fields of flowers in bloom, we as Christians have a calling to share in the good news, especially to those who are not doing so well.*

*But what about those times when good things seem bad. I’ll stretch here some and say that for the practicing, mature Christian this should never be the case. Our faith in Jesus Christ is the firm, fertile ground in which our flowers will bloom when our faith, in good times and bad, is as it should be. This, my dearly beloved, is the Easter message. There are no “bad times” or showers or Yang nor fear of eternal dark nights for those who believe in the resurrection. Christ’s resurrection is ours to celebrate, to pray about, and to share with others. Easter and the hope that Easter brings can have the bloom of May flowers even in the shadow of death, because in His resurrection, Christ conquered death for us!*

*A short closing example of one of the scenarios that I have been witness to in the past. Just before Lent several years ago I received an e-mail from one of the members of the church that I served asking for prayers for a young man who was seriously ill. Several days later, and after praying for the young man’s recovery, I received another e-mail that informed me that the young man had died. We again engaged in prayer for his friends and family. Two days afterward, came the message that the family was celebrating that their son was now with the Lord, thanking us for prayers, and that the family, because they believed in “May flowers” rather than the showers, or because it was a time for eternal morning sunrise rather than the dark night, the family had decided to donate their son’s vital organs to help save the lives of others. Out of the drenching showers comes new life – The Resurrection!*

*Taking the good with the good is one thing to celebrate for sure, but taking the bad as something good is the mark of a true believer in the resurrection.*

*Christ has died  
Christ is Risen  
Christ will come again!!!*

*Blessings,  
Pastor Don*

The Worship Committee reminds church members and friends that the 2024 Flower Calendar is posted in the narthex. Fresh floral arrangements are \$35 and you may place your name on any selected date of your choosing. Please note that roses added to your arrangement are in addition to the \$35.00 and are \$5.00 each.

## Prayer Requests



Please join us in lifting up prayers for those who have immediate concerns: Sherry Crane; Jennifer and Jerry who are currently homeless; Philip Barton; Charlie Collins, Clint Collins father; Kathy Franks; and Mary Williamson.

Also pray for those with longer term needs: Margie Baker; Jerry Butler; Michael, Carl Crane's brother; Holly and John Durst; Lois Butler's sister and brother-in-law; Donna Fidler; Janine Groner; Pauline Kirk; Bob McAlpine; Pastor Don's brother-in-law, Joe; the friends and family of Gale Nevill; the friends and family of Cile Pfahler; Fred Pinochet; Laura Raizada; Libby Richardson; Sarah Robinson; Lonnie Stevens; Wayne Wagner; C. D. Weaver; Lucinda Williams; our military; first responders; the people of the Ukraine, Israel, the Gaza Strip; and our church.

If there are other people or concerns that you would like to add or delete from this list, please contact Lois Butler by phone at 352-262-5893 or by email at [treasurer@gpconline.org](mailto:treasurer@gpconline.org)

## Elders on Call

**Elders on Call  
for April are:**

**Lois Butler 352-262-5893  
Debbie Harris 352-213-5645**

Two elders volunteer to be available to church members and friends who may need assistance. When the church office is closed, these elders are on call to help.



# Session Meeting Highlights

## March 17

Page 4

### **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND MISSION**

Superbowl of Caring - 67 cans of soups collected and delivered to Bread of the Mighty Food Bank  
Family Promise - Bed Race Fund raiser was wonderful - dinner was served to a father and 2 children on March 13 at Covenant  
Grace Giving Mission for March – pasta/noodles/sauces  
March 16 - Cile Pfahler's reception - family providing food - we will serve  
One Great Hour of Sharing special offerings will be taken during Lent  
Easter Breakfast is being planned before the worship service on Easter Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup> - Sign-up sheet will be put up closer to the date  
\$1 Fund for April - June will be the Good Samaritan Fund  
Next St Francis Dinner is 4/19  
Pens will be ordered for visitor bags  
Committee will meet on 4/2 at 11:00 am

### **ADMINISTRATION & PERSONNEL**

Scheduling interviews for Secretary & Cantor

### **FINANCE/STEWARDSHIP**

New insurance carrier is Insurance Board

### **WORSHIP & MUSIC**

4/7 - Communion will be served - Rev. Don Mossa  
Palm Sunday will observed on 3/24 with palm fronds  
Maundy Thursday Lord's Supper Worship Service will be held at Grace on 3/28 at 6:00 pm - Westminster and Covenant members with gather with us  
Easter Worship service 3/31 - choir will process and new Christ Candle will in place  
New members will be recognized on Easter Sunday  
Children's Worship Bulletins have been ordered  
In the process of determining copyright license  
Organist John-Peter attended a handbell conference and is working with Rev Becca at Westminster concerning a bell choir  
Looking ahead - American Guild of Organists will present a concert at Grace on 4/27  
Committee will meet 4/21 after the worship hour

### **PROPERTY & OPERATIONS**

Parking Lot lines were painted  
Art Studios of Grace sign was stained  
Stain and brushes were purchased in order to paint the rail outside the church office  
Facility Use Agreement was revised according to our new insurance carrier  
Two new computers will be purchased for the church office  
Art Studios of Grace artists will paint the doors to the studios a blue that matches the blue of the windows - they will also paint the other doors to the fellowship hall

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The Arabic Evangelical Church will meet in our sanctuary at 2:00 pm each Friday

Our Daily Bread booklets for March, April and May are available in the narthex



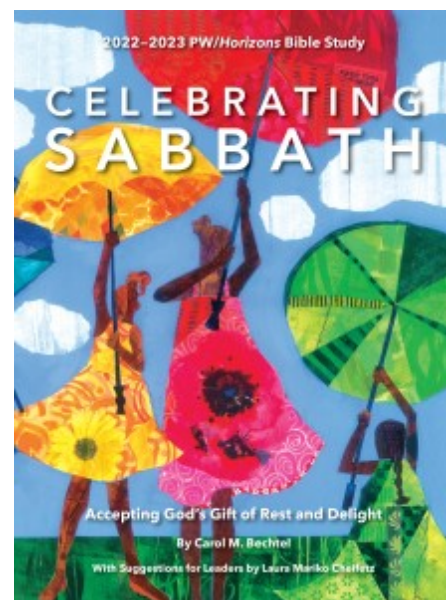
## Men's Noon Lunch & Fellowship



The men of the church are invited to meet each Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm in the library for fellowship. Please bring your own brown bag lunch, beverages will be provided.

## Circle News

The Anna circle will meet on Tuesday, April 9 at 12:00 noon in the library. Diane Millican will lead our study of Lesson 8 "Sabbath and Justice" in *Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight* by Carol M. Bechtel. Please bring your study book, Bible and your own brown bag lunch and beverage. All women are welcome. Please come and enjoy the fellowship.



The finance committee would like to keep the congregation informed about our General Fund income and expenses and our pass through donations. If you have any questions, contact Lois Butler at 352-262-5893 or [treasurer@gpconline.org](mailto:treasurer@gpconline.org).

	February	Through 2/29
Income	\$ 9,042.28	\$ 28,505.97
Expenses	\$ 12,694.41	\$ 16,283.67
Pass Through Donations		
Two Cents a Meal	\$ 3.00	\$ 17.00

**For it is in Giving That We Receive**

**Ways to Support Grace Presbyterian Church:**

1. Mail a check to the church office.
2. Use your bank's online bill pay system.
3. Use the electronic funds transfer from your savings or checking account.
4. Use a debit/credit card at the link on our website under the giving tab (there is also an image that you can click).

## **History of the Arab Church in Daytona Beach**

The church began with a direct special invitation to Dr. Wagid Fahim Guirgis during his attendance at the annual Boston Church Conference on July 5, 1997, to serve and to start an Arab evangelical church in Daytona Beach, where he has been practicing medicine since 1982. After returning from the conference, he contacted his friend Mr. Moufid Samuel Wehbee who lived in the same city and they agreed to start the church, and therefore a few faithful friends were invited to establish the church.

The group started with the first meeting at Dr. Wagid's house two weeks later, a meeting in which four people attended. The small group decided to look for an American church in the area to start the church in its facility. The choice was on West Minster by the sea Presbyterian Church on the same street as Dr. Wagid lives.

They decided to contact the pastor of the church, Rev. Jeffrey Sumner, where they met with him in the presence of his assistant, Rev. George Painter, in a restaurant in the same area. After being told how the call for church began, Pastor Sumner immediately agreed to grant the Arabic Church the use of their American church building for meetings there free of charge.

The church began its first official meeting in the American Church building on August 3, 1997. Pastor Wissam Khalaf served in this opening and the hymn was led by Dr. Wagid Fahim Guirgis. The group decided to name the church the Arabic Evangelical Church of Daytona Beach, as it preaches the gospel, and belongs in its creed, foundations, and constitution to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Egypt. The church was officially registered in Florida on November 17, 1997.

## APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 4:00 pm – Square Dance Group	<b>2</b> <b>11:00 am Congregational Life &amp; Mission</b> 7:00 pm – Barbergators	<b>3</b> 12:00 noon – Men's Lunch 7:00 pm – ESWT(AA)	<b>4</b> 6:30 pm – Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	<b>5</b> 2:00 pm Arabic Evangelical Church	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 11:00 – Worship Service <b>Communion</b> 1:00 – Korean Service 7:00 – ESWT(AA)	<b>8</b> 4:00 pm – Square Dance Group <b>6:00 pm – Session Meeting in Church Office</b>	<b>9</b> <b>12:00 noon – Anna Circle</b> 7:00 pm – Barbergators	<b>10</b> 12:00 noon – Men's Lunch 7:00 pm – ESWT(AA)	<b>11</b> 6:30 pm – Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	<b>12</b> 2:00 pm Arabic Evangelical Church	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 11:00 – Worship Service 1:00 – Korean Service 7:00 – ESWT(AA)	<b>15</b> 4:00 pm – Square Dance Group	<b>16</b> 7:00 pm – Barbergators	<b>17</b> 12:00 noon – Men's Lunch 7:00 – ESWT(AA)	<b>18</b> 6:30 pm – Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	<b>19</b> 2:00 pm Arabic Evangelical Church <b>St Francis Dinner</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 11:00 – Worship Service <b>Worship Committee</b> 1:00 – Korean Service 7:00 – ESWT(AA)	<b>22</b> 4:00 pm – Square Dance Group	<b>23</b> 7:00 pm – Barbergators	<b>24</b> 12:00 noon – Men's Lunch 7:00 pm – ESWT(AA)	<b>25</b> <b>Grace Notes Articles Due</b> 6:30 pm – Gainesville Harmony Show Chorus	<b>26</b> 2:00 pm Arabic Evangelical Church	<b>27</b> <b>American Guild of Organist Concert</b>
<b>28</b> 11:00 – Worship Service 1:00 – Korean Service 7:00 – ESWT(AA)	<b>29</b> 4:00 pm – Square Dance Group	<b>30</b> 7:00 pm – Barbergators				

APRIL  
2024

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Email: office@gpconline.org

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
**WWW.GPCONLINE.ORG**

## Please don't forget our Special Offerings

### TWO CENTS A MEAL

We invite every member of the congregation to prayerfully contribute a few cents at each meal. This offering is held the first Sunday of each month, but feel free to contribute on any Sunday to help alleviate hunger and poverty.

### \$1 FUND OFFERING

Our \$1 Fund Offering for the months of April through June will go to the Good Samaritan Fund.

## GRACE - GIVING AND SHARING MISSION

Grace - Giving and Sharing Mission is a food and household item collection benefiting the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank. For the month of April we will be collecting dried beans and rice.



Arab Church - Continued from page 6

The Church Council, consisted of Pastor Wagid Guirgis, Mr. Moufid and Mrs. Suzan Guirgis, invited several ministers to serve and several evangelistic revivals were held, and the attendance in these meetings was more than expected by anyone, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in these meetings was wonderful and many souls were saved.

Weekly church services on Sundays, public Sunday service, the practice of the Lord's Supper, and Bible study provided by Pastor Dr. Wagid, as well as prayer and praise meetings in the middle of the week.

Arabic Church in Daytona Beach held a revival service on January 27 and 28, 2024. Among those present was Dr. Youssef Wassef, a physician who resides with his family in Gainesville, Florida. He told us that there is no Arabic speaking evangelical church in his city, which has many students and asked, if possible, to start an Arabic evangelical church there. We, the pastors of the church here at Daytona Beach, felt that this was a message from the Lord for us to begin a ministry there.