



# GRACE

[www.graceri.org](http://www.graceri.org)

## Sunday Service

Sundays at a 10:00

Masks are required.

Social distancing practiced.

Services will be posted on Facebook and our website following the Sunday service.

## Reach Us

Feel free to contact Grace with your prayer requests, questions, comments... anything at all.

Grace United Methodist Church

10 Park Avenue

Westerly, RI 02891

401-596-8000

## Follow Us

@graceumcRI



GraceUMCRI



## The Pastor's Desk

From Pastor Barry

There is a scripture reading in Ecclesiastes that I sometimes reflect upon. "Send out your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will get

it back" (11:1 NRSV). This passage causes me to reminisce of when I was a child throwing little pieces of 'Wonder' bread off of our favorite swimming hole dock in hopes to bring some fish to the surface. Before long, little rings would surface and 'snap' that little piece would be swallowed up by a 'sun' fish. As I would throw more and more bread – more and more fish would join into a feeding frenzy. I was amazed at how many fish would congregate around these little rolled up balls of bread. I thought, "Boy, these guys are hungry!"

The people of this world, the people in our community are hungry. They are hungry for food, they are hungry for hope, and they are hungry for purpose. This world is hungry for the love of Jesus Christ. We all have pieces of 'Wonder' bread within us. Our Lord has blessed us with many different and wonderful gifts of talent. So I ask this question, "What type of bread to you have to offer?" What 'Wonder' is within you?

Years ago when I cast those little pieces of bread trying to attract those fish, I really wasn't surprised when the fish

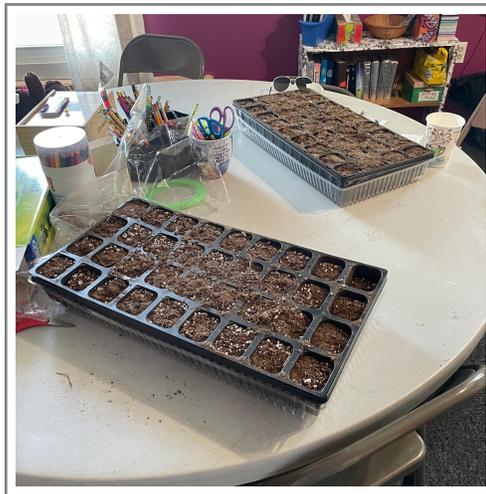
came. But I was surprised when those pieces of bread began to attract families of ducks. And then small birds began so swoop down and joined in.

When we are ‘casting our bread upon the water’, expect God to do the unexpected, expect God to use that bread for something amazing!

I lift up prayers of peace and grace for all of you.  
Blessings, Pastor Barry

### *Sunday School Scoop*

The Sunday School has started their Youth Group Community Project. They started planting cucumbers and tomatoes. They also were planning the garden layout. Next Sunday, they are planning to put together and decorate planters. If you want be a part of this cool project, email us at [umcgrace@gmail.com](mailto:umcgrace@gmail.com).



Also, please follow our Sunday school Facebook page (@gracesundayschool) and visit our page on Grace’s website (<https://www.graceri.org/sunday-school>), especially if you cannot attend Sunday school in person.

### *Outreach and Service*

By Pastor Barry and Theresa Gregal

While March and April focused on Easter, we are gearing up for busy times ahead with the Youth Group’s Community Garden and Mother’s Day “Giving Fence” carnations. We are also looking for other opportunities in our community for service. Got any ideas? Join us.

## Are you being called to service?

- ✦ For Mother’s Day, we will need help putting carnations on the “Giving Fence” (fence by the playground) for children to give to their moms.
- ✦ Calling all gardeners and handy folks! Want to help the Sunday school with their community garden project? May 2 & 9 the Sunday school will assemble their raised beds, and May 16 & 23 they will plant.
- ✦ The LaFazia Project will be hosting a back to school backpack drive in July for the children.
- ✦ We are also looking to do a diaper drive in September.
- ✦ In October, we have Socktober. Collecting socks for the homeless and others in need.
- ✦ Our food drive is in November.
- ✦ In December, the LaFazia Project will host a snow boots and winter coat drive for the children.
- ✦ Got any ideas?

**Do you have a good idea for a service opportunity? We would love to hear about it. Email [umcgrace@gmail.com](mailto:umcgrace@gmail.com)**

## Special Sundays 2021

A portion of the Pastor's Discretionary Fund will be used for Special Sundays.

January 17, 2021: Human Relations

March 14, 2021: UMCOR

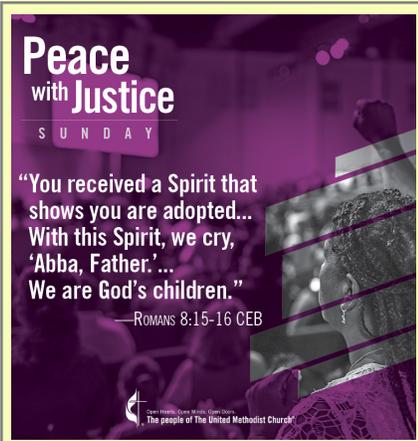
April 18, 2021: Native American Ministries

May 30, 2021: Peace with Justice

October 3, 2021: World Communion

November 28, 2021: United Methodist Student Day

Check out Grace's website for more information.



### Trustees' Beat

By Pastor Barry

The stump next to the sidewalk has been removed.

We installed an Amazon Ring doorbell at our rear entrance and two electric lock boxes. This upgrade make the church more accessible, while also keeping it secure.



Minor repairs were made on our playground.

### Gardening with Jesus

By Lois Fulton 

Budding in May and blooming in June is a much beloved flower that most people know. The rose.

My son Ben had one of these growing alongside a path leading to the back door at his home. It was there when the family moved into the house over ten years ago.

This rose had no scent but it did produce the most beautiful ,velvety, vibrant red roses. The problem was its long canes that seemed to reach out to grab and rip at the passer-by.

Every year Ben, a rose lover and collector, would give it a good pruning and anchor it to a trellis.

Every year the beautiful velvet, vibrant red roses would increase, but the rapidly growing, ornery climber would always slip away to reach out as if to grab someone's attention.

The plan each year was to “toss that rose out,” especially after one of the children had been scratched or had their clothing ripped. It did not fit into the small, formal area of the garden where hybrid tea roses sat looking pretty and minding their own space. There was no place for the untamable, hurtful plant whose flower was supposed to represent Love.

For some reason my son could not get himself to carry out his yearly vow to out the misbehaving , aggressive , thorny climber. I think he recognized the beauty in the flower and

its possibilities in the right place, or perhaps he admired its determination to survive. There was something precious there. Last week he pruned it way down. Some of the canes were 2 inches thick. He dug it out and brought it to me.

Oddly a few weeks before as I was cleaning up my garden I came across a large white trellis which was someone's toss away last fall. I had placed it at the very back of my garden against a tree at the edge of the woods. I didn't know what I would plant there, but it was ready.

Just as Jesus knows our faults, our wild, untamed ways, our shortcomings, He sees our beauty and our possibilities, our purpose in His garden, the world.

He doesn't toss us away.

Jesus is ready to receive us just as we are and to help us to fulfill our purpose. When we invite Jesus into our gardens, our space, we become aware of beauty and precious qualities in the plants and the people who are placed in our paths. Just as we look past the thorns and see the rose, we see the kindness of the delivery person who is working in the rain. We notice something special in the ornery teenage neighbor that we hadn't seen before.

The tossed away trellis and the unwanted rose will make a place of beauty at the edge of the woods at the back of my garden. Gardening with Jesus opens our eyes to possibilities never imagined.

A Rose Among Thorns  
By Oliver Cooper

*While strolling through the fields of time*

*There are many things to see*

*But nature is the greatest sight*

*That there could ever be*

*The greatest of them all to me*

*Is how the world was formed*

*And why the roses have to live*

*Each day among the thorns*

*One day among the world of thorns a rose began to grow*

*It was the greatest gift of God this world will ever know*

*It was the will of God to show that since the world was formed*

*There had to be a rose to live*

*And die among the thorns*

*Along the road to Jericho*

*A man was left to die*

*There like a petal from a rose*

*Two men had passed Him by*

*A neighbor and a friend came by*

*And saw His life was scorned*

*With love he took good care of Him*

*A rose among the thorns*

*One day among the world of thorns a rose began to grow*

*It was the greatest gift of God this world will ever know*

*It was the will of God to show that since the world was formed*

*There had to be a rose to live*

*And die among the thorns*

*Two thousand years will soon be gone*

*Since God looked down in love*

*There in the town of Bethlehem*

*A rose began to bud*

*It lived to bloom until one day*

*Was crushed with awful frown*

*And then with love from God above*

*Was moved to higher ground*

*One day among a world of thorns a rose began to grow*

*It was the greatest gift of God this world will ever know*

*It was the gift of God to show that since the world was formed*

*There had to be a rose to live*

*And die among the thorns*

