

Grace Presbyterian Church

February 22, 2026

Lent 1

9:30 am

WELCOME AND VISION STATEMENT

We are an open and affirming congregation.

**We genuinely welcome people of all ages,
races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations,
beliefs,
and those who are cognitively
and or physically challenged.**

Our vision is to be a community of love and purpose,
**each one engaged in ministry,
seeking to know Christ, growing in discipleship,
and embodying God's love for the world.**



"To be tested"

Prayer Candles

Before Worship, you may offer a prayer and light a candle
at the communion table.

We Gather

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Call to Worship

(inspired by Psalm 32)

Let us worship God.

Happy are those whose sins are forgiven.

Happy are those to whom God attributes no wrong,
those in whose heart there is no deceit.

**When we keep silent about our wrongdoings,
our lives disintegrate with worry and guilt;**

when we struggle to hide from God,
the heaviness in our hearts consumes our strength.

**But when we seek your truth, O God,
and acknowledge our sin, we experience your
forgiveness.**

Let all people reach out to you in prayer, O God,
and know your protection and strength.

**Surrounded by your grace-filled presence
and filled with your undeserved forgiveness,
we sing your praise; we shout for joy.**

*Hymn #436 "God of Compassion, In Mercy Befriend Us"

Call to Confession

With humility and honesty let us pray..

Prayer of Confession (responsively)

Facing temptation,
Jesus refused to turn stones into bread.

**Facing temptation,
we too often turn bread into stones.**

Facing temptation,
Jesus refused to use power for its own sake.

**Facing temptation,
we too often seek to overpower
or claim falsely we have no power.**

Facing temptation,
Jesus refused to test the promises of God.

**Facing temptation,
we too want God to do
what we are called
and empowered to do ourselves.**

— from Lent 2005, a liturgy from the Seekers Church community.

(Silence is kept for personal confession.)

When we are overwhelmed by temptation...

***Do not leave us to our own devices,
we need your guidance,
we cry 'draw us back!'***

Words of Assurance

God hears our cries and knows the longings of our hearts. Out of the God's great love with which God continues to love us...

God forgives us, calls us to new life, and empowers

us for the way forward. Amen.

Hymn #439 "O My Soul, Bless Your Redeemer"
Please stay seated and sing vs.1 (2x)

We Reflect

Prayer of Illumination

God of mercy,

You promised never to break your covenant with us.

Amid all the changing words of our generations,
speak your eternal Word that does not change.

Then may we respond to your gracious promises
with faithful and obedient lives. Amen.

Reading for Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

A time for Children and the Young in heart

Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 4:1-11

SERMON

*Hymn #783 "When We Are Tested

We Respond

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is **to Know, Love, and Serve God**

Offertory Invitation

Musical Meditation

Prayer of Dedication

God of the wilderness,
We give these offerings in gratitude,
rejoicing in the abundance of your gifts to us.
We give these offerings in faith,
trusting that you will provide for our needs.
We give these offerings in hope, knowing you can use
them to spread your love in this world.
And with these offerings, we give ourselves;
May we live with generous hearts, with open hands.

Amen ~ written by Joanna Harader, and posted on her Spacious Faith blog.

(Many thanks to all who contribute to the mission and ministry of our church in offering plates during worship and by electronic giving throughout the month).

Prayers of God's People (sharing of Joys and Concerns)

Lord, in your mercy/with thanksgiving, **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer

We Are Sent

*Hymn #819 "Be Still, My Soul"

*Charge and Benediction

Whatever wilderness the Spirit has brought you to:
walk in boldness, as a beloved child of God
walk in peace, under the shelter of the Most High
walk in faith, knowing Christ walks with you. Amen.

~ written by Joanna Harader, and posted on her Spacious Faith blog.

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Peace be with you!

And also with you.

(We invite you to offer a sign of peace to those around you and as you gather for fellowship. We remind you to ask what folks feel comfortable with...a verbal greeting, a handshake or fist bump, etc. Do not assume.)

POSTLUDE

***Indicates, please stand in body or spirit.**

All songs not from Glory to God are used by permission of CCLI #1124594

The Week Ahead at Grace Presbyterian Church: Feb. 22-Mar. 1

For additional information, call the church office or ask an usher!

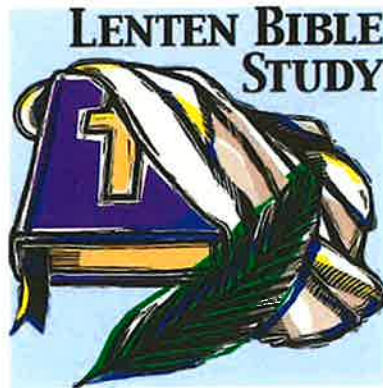
Sun. Feb. 22	9:30 am Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship
Mon. Feb. 23	9:00 am Jazzercise 7:00 pm Yoga
Tues. Feb. 24	9:30 am Iyengar Yoga 6:00 pm Jazzercise 7:00 pm Session Meeting
Wed. Feb. 25	9:00 am Jazzercise 6:30 pm Soup, Bread & Taize Service - Abiding Love Church 7:00 pm Essentrics
Thur. Feb. 26	9:30 am Iyengar Yoga 10:30 am Aging Gracefully Group
Fri. Feb. 27	9:30 am Restorative Yoga
Sat. Feb. 28	8:30 am Jazzercise 8:45 am Iyengar Yoga
Sun. Feb. 29	9:30 am Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship

Vision Statement

We are an open and affirming congregation. We genuinely welcome people of all ages, race, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, beliefs, and those who are cognitively and or physically challenged. Our vision is to be a community of love and purpose, each one engaged in ministry, seeking to know Christ, growing in discipleship, and embodying God's love for the world.

LENT

Palm Sunday - March 29 Easter Sunday - April 5



Pastor Debbie will lead our Lenten Bible Study based on the book: “Turning the Tables: A Lenten Call for Disrupting Power” by Kathy Escobar: “With keen insight and unwavering conviction, visionary pastor Kathy Escobar guides readers on a Lenten journey inspired by the ways of Jesus to dismantle the systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice. From flipping the money changers’ tables in the temple to uplifting the poor and marginalized, Jesus’ actions and words turn the world’s idea of power on its head.”

Purchasing the book is not required to participate in the Lenten Study.

We will meet in Room 3 from 11:00-12:30 on the Sundays during Lent (February 22nd through March 29th). A Zoom link will be available.

Please contact Nancy Varga at 732-543-9479 or nmvarga2011@comcast.net for more information regarding the Bible Study and/or Christian Ed.

Abiding Love Lutheran Church Lenten Invitation

Rev. Adrian Deepak of Abiding Love Lutheran Church has invited us to take part in their Bread & Soup Lenten Meditations Wednesday evenings. 6:30pm Soup & Bread -7:00 Service. It is an evening of prayer and reflection.

Will start February 25 with a Taize Service.

Women's Bible Study

Mark Your Calendar: March 4, 2026 - 12:00 pm

We will be studying and discussing:

Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ

Pick up a book from Pastor Debbie

Spiritual & Mental Wellness Team

**The Aging Gracefully “and all that comes with it “ group
will meet weekly on Thursday 10:30-11:30 am in room 3.**

A Fundraising Concert for the church

Save the Date - Saturday, April 25

Led by our own world renown artist Vince DiMura

Memorable and meaningful music of Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder

Keep your ears and minds open for how you can help.

South Brunswick Food Bank Items Needed:

Ground coffee - Jelly - Chef Boyardee, or any canned pasta
Crushed tomatoes - Pancake mix - Syrup Spaghetti, and any boxed pasta Paper
goods: toilet paper, paper towels, tissues, napkins, Boxed milk such as Parmalat -
Canned tuna. Please bring the item(s) to the church and put it in the cart by the
front door. If you have any questions contact Lee - mrsp52@comcast.net



SAND HILLS COMMUNITY
WELLNESS CENTER

TRIVIA NIGHT

FEBRUARY 28 | 7 PM-8:30 PM

57 SAND HILLS RD, KENDALL PARK, NJ 08824

RSVP BY FEBRUARY 27

BYO SNACKS & DRINKS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO RSVP

QUESTIONS? EMAIL
SANDHILLSWELLNESS@GMAIL.COM



[HTTPS://SANDHILLSWELLNESS.WIXSITE.COM/
SANDHILLSWELLNESS/TRIVIANIGHT](https://sandhillswellness.wixsite.com/sandhillswellness/trivianight)



Qigong with Elizabeth Walters at Sand Hills Community Wellness Center

Qigong means *energy work* or *energy cultivation*. It is an ancient Chinese healing practice that combines simple body movements, meditation, visualization, and breathing techniques to activate and cultivate Qi. Join us to learn about and practice Qigong.

Classes offered on the 1st
and 3rd Thursday of every
month
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

\$12.00 per class
\$40.00 for a package of 4 classes

Register by emailing
walters.ej@gmail.com

Let your energy move like water -
fluid, strong, and effortless.
Qigong reminds us to release what is heavy
and welcome what is light. Each movement
is a quiet celebration of life,
each breath a return to harmony."
Qigong Master Robert Peng



Sand Hills Community Wellness Center
57 SAND HILLS ROAD, KENDALL PARK, NJ 08824



Beyond the Silence: A Guide to Youth Suicide Prevention *at Sand Hills Community Wellness Center*

We often worry about the mental health of the young people in our lives, but the fear of "saying the wrong thing" can keep us silent. It's time to break that silence.

MARCH 28
9:30 AM - 12 PM

This workshop is designed to move us from a place of uncertainty to a place of action. You don't need to be a doctor or a psychic to make a difference; you just need the right tools and the courage to start a conversation. In this session, we strip away the stigma and focus on practical, life-saving skills.

Susan Tellone is a highly accomplished Registered Nurse, Certified School Nurse, and health educator, holding a Master's degree in Nursing and a Bachelor's degree in Mental Health and Rehabilitation. With nearly 40 years of experience as a psychiatric nurse, she has dedicated her career to the critical field of suicide prevention.



**REGISTER AND LEARN
MORE ON OUR WEBSITE**



Sand Hills Community Wellness Center
57 SAND HILLS ROAD, KENDALL PARK, NJ 08824

QUESTIONS? CONTACT MARYANN

732-419-3551 OR SANDHILLSWELLNESS@GMAIL.COM



Grace Presbyterian Church

presents



GRACE FOR DINNER

A **FREE MEAL** for anyone facing food insecurity. If you are a neighbor in need, please come to our table. All are welcome. Guests can also **choose 2 bags of groceries**. *Doors open at 4:00pm*

Saturday, March 14, from 4:00-5:30pm

57 Sand Hills Road, Kendall Park, NJ

732-297-9182

Email: office@gracepcsb.org Website: gracepcsb.org

Order meals by Mon March 9th

Call or email with name, phone number, number of meals needed and number of children under 18.

One meal per person- Choice of:

- 1: Chicken Coconut Curry (mild)
- 2: Vegetable Pad Thai (veggies, tofu and noodles)

Meals prepared by **Maricel's Kitchen, East Brunswick**

Let us know if you have transportation limits; we may be able to arrange delivery. If you are unable to pre-order, any remaining meals will be given out starting at ~5:15pm.

Look Who's Serving

	February 22	March 1	March 8	March 15
Liturgist	Cheryl Kotch	Carol Thomson	Lee Piotrowski	
Usher	Amy Miller			
Zoom	Brian Boccardi	Maryann Rappa	Janice Royer	Peter Godinez
Worship Leader	Rev. Debbie Paton	Rev. Debbie Paton	Rev. Debbie Paton	Rev. Debbie Paton
Coffee Hour	Gabi Quaely	Janice Royer	Vee Casey	Sandy Chm
Counters	Fran Trischetta Carol Thomson	Laura Taff Lee Piotrowski	Mike Royer Dottie Pickell	Fran Trischetta Carol Thomson
Musician	Vince DiMura	Vince DiMura	Vince DiMura	Vince DiMura
Open/Close	Carol Thomson Mike Royer	Carol Thomson Mike Royer	Carol Thomson Mike Royer	Carol Thomson Mike Royer

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Pastor Debbie - Debbie is in the office Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday. Works off site on Friday. She can best be reached by email pastordebpaton@gmail.com or cell phone 630-886-6785. Please honor Monday as her sabbath by only calling if it is an emergency.

Vince Di Mura - Music Director

Church Office - This Week - Maryann Rappa will be in the office Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday. She can be reached at office@gracepcsb.org or 732-297-9182.

NOT SURE WHO TO CONTACT?

❖ Questions about donations - Contact **Al Goddard**

- ❖ Questions about the children's ministry - contact **Nancy Varga**
nmvarga2011@comcast.net
- ❖ Questions about the Deacons - contact **Kathie Scott**
kathiemscott@icloud.com
- ❖ Have a prayer request? - contact **Tami Aug** tamaraaug@gmail.com
- ❖ Put an announcement in the bulletin? tell the **church office by Wednesday.**
office@gracepcsb.org
- ❖ Put an article in the newsletter? Maryann Rappa office@gracepcsb.org
- ❖ Want to get involved? **Contact an elder.**

Questions about **Finance or Personnel** - Rob Aug; **Hospitality** - Janice Royer, **Outreach** - Donna Keller; **Preschool** - Nancy Varga, Carol Thomson; **Property** - Jim Elieff, Mike Royer; **Worship** -Dottie Pickell; **Stewardship** - Rob Aug; **Christian Ed.** - Nancy Varga; **Wellness** Irene Carman; **Clerk of Session** - Peter Godinez

Elders - Rob Aug, Irene Carman, Jim Elieff, Peter Godinez, Donna Keller, Dottie Pickell, Janice Royer, Mike Royer, Nancy Varga

Deacons - Tami Aug, Gloria Bernard, Judianne Brown, Vilija Casey, Barbara Elieff, Amy Miller, Gabi Quaely, Kathie Scott

USERS' GUIDE

- **Welcome!** If you are visiting, please sign our guest book on the table in the hall before entering the worship space.
- If you have a **prayer request**, fill out a blue *prayer request card* (the other side of the welcome card) and put it on the offering plate.
- **Restrooms** are on the fellowship hall side of the sanctuary.

More information?

Grace Presbyterian Church- 57 Sand Hills Road, Kendall Pk, NJ 08824 Phone number- 732-297-9182 email us at - office@gracepcsb.org - Visit our website: www.gracepcsb.org - Or check us out on Facebook!