

# Grace Notes



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH • 7300 W DIVISION • RIVER FOREST IL 60305 • 708-366-6900 • WWW.GRACERIVERFOREST.ORG

January 2017

## Enter the New Year with hope unbounded

by Pastor Dave Lyle

When the New Year arrives, one of the first things to happen in the Lyle household is the changing of the calendar that hangs in our kitchen. Unlike our electronic calendars, which are already riddled with commitments, the calendar that hangs near our kitchen table has, as of yet, nothing written into it. It's a blank slate. Soon it will be filled with play dates and appointments, but right now it is nothing but row upon row of unfilled potential and opportunity. The New Year is new, and we don't yet know what it will bring.

From a certain point of view, we know that 2017, like 2016, will be a bit of a mixed bag. There will be joys and triumphs, large and small. And there will be setbacks and disappointments. But from another point of view, God's point of view, there is a new kind of newness. As the old year wound down, we gathered in worship to prepare for 2017. Among our readings from scripture that night was a passage from

Revelation: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more" (Revelation 21:1). These words revealed so long ago to St. John point us toward comfort and hope, no matter what the New Year has in store for us or for this world. God has a new kind of newness for creation, a world unfolding in which death and crying, mourning and pain have no place, for they have been conquered by Jesus Christ.

It is in this newness, not the blank pages of a new calendar, that God's people discover promise and potential as we enter 2017. These words point us to the simple truth that we live our lives not according to the rhythms and patterns, the ups and downs, of this world or its keeping of time. We live as people anticipating the new Kingdom that is already being revealed in our midst, for

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We enter, therefore, the New Year with hope unbounded. Why?

Because we, in Christ, have been unbound. We are no longer captive to sin and death. As such,

the people of God are free to seek the Kingdom of God here and now, no matter what else happens. We are free to seek to better understand matters of race that continue to challenge our world. We are free to celebrate our Reformation heritage while continuing to seek the unity of the church that comes as a gift

from God. We are free to develop and deepen partnerships at home and around the world for the sake of the gospel. As you'll read in these pages, the people of Grace are boldly claiming this freedom for the coming year. May God bless the work of our hands!

Whatever may come, however, God's new creation does not depend upon our success. The end of the story is already written. The Christ who is the Alpha, the beginning, of all things is also the Omega, the One who guarantees that the water of life will finally flow over this whole creation, making all things new. May we, at Grace, seek above all things to be faithful to this promise and to Jesus Christ, who makes all things possible. We will see success, and we will no doubt fall short from time to time. But Christ will not fall short. The promise is secure, and the New Year is truly new.



# Jim McClanahan brings decades of experience to Grace's business office

The Church Council has hired Grace member Jim McClanahan as the new Director of Administration and Finance. He will take over from Lars Bostrom who is retiring at the end of January. There's a month of overlap in the business office—Jim starts on January 3 and Lars retires on January 31.

Jim is a Certified Public Accountant. He taught college accounting briefly after graduating and then spent over 30 years in public accounting, helping organizations with the accuracy of their financial records and statements. For the last few years, Jim has provided independent consulting services helping financial organizations comply with federal regulations regarding mortgage and online lending.

Jim brings decades of experience and involvement to the responsibilities of managing Grace Church's finances. He says, "It's an opportunity to continue my involvement at Grace, to give back to the church and to the membership, to serve in a little different capacity than I have in the past." Plus, "It's an exciting time at Grace. I look forward to contributing to the energy and enthusiasm."

Jim believes being a resource and providing clear, useful information for church and school staff, Council and congregation members is an important part of the business office's responsibilities. "For the first month or two I'll mainly be getting my bearings—learning the day-to-day routine, the software, and the mechanics. But I also want to meet with church and school staff and members in leadership positions, to learn how the business office can best help them with their goals and responsibilities. I also welcome thoughts and suggestions from any staff person or Grace member."

The hiring of the new business manager was an open process. The position was advertised last September and October, and there were multiple candidates for the job. It was clear, however, that Jim would be an ideal choice. In the words of Council President Dan Luther, "It was like a baseball team needing to find a left-handed-hitting first baseman and learning that Lou Gehrig was available to be claimed on the waiver wire."



Jim and his wife, Beth Smoots, joined Grace when they moved to River Forest 20 years ago. Over the years, Jim has served Grace Church as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer and has also chaired the Board of Trustees and the Stewardship and Endowment Committees.

Jim and Beth have been married for 30 years. Their children, Pierce and Annie, both attended Grace School through fourth grade. Annie is currently attending Hamilton College in New York, and Pierce works for Ernst and Young, an international accounting firm.

*You can contact Jim in Grace's business office (extension 202) or email him at [jmclanahan@graceriverforest.org](mailto:jmclanahan@graceriverforest.org)*

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**Grace Notes** is published monthly by Grace Lutheran Church and School, 7300 Division St., River Forest, Ill. It is mailed to Grace members, parents of students at Grace School, and friends of the congregation. The newsletter is online at [www.graceriverforest.org](http://www.graceriverforest.org). This issue was mailed via U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail on Friday, January 6, with the hope that it will arrive in your mailbox no later than January 13. Copies are also available at Grace.

**Deadlines and submissions.** The February issue of Grace Notes will be mailed on Friday, February 3. The deadline for copy is Wednesday, January 25; the issue covers events through early March. Please send news to [ggotsch@graceriverforest.org](mailto:ggotsch@graceriverforest.org). Please limit your submissions to news relating to Grace Lutheran Church and School, its mission, ministries, and the benevolences the congregation supports. Articles should be no longer than 500 words. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and relevance.

# Companions on Your Journey

*Women's winter retreat on Saturday, January 21, offers time to think, pray, reflect, and worship*

Ruth and Naomi, Elizabeth and Mary—these women of the Bible, old and young, shared their sorrows, joys, adventures, and challenges. Their care for one another brought love and hope to their lives and to the world around them.

Women of all ages at Grace Church are invited to reflect on these women's stories at a women's retreat, "Companions on Your Journey," on Saturday, January 21, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Participants will reacquaint themselves with these familiar Bible stories and consider how the stories of these women intersect with today. It's an opportunity to study the Bible with others, to celebrate the companions that have been a part of your faith journey, and to get to know new companions for the road ahead.

Pastor Phyllis Kersten and Deaconess Louise Williams will lead the retreat. (See below.) There will be time for small group discussion and sharing of stories, as well as time for worship using Holden Evening Prayer at the close of the afternoon.

Please register by Wednesday, Jan. 18. The registration fee is \$20 and includes a continental breakfast and a box lunch. Sign up at the Grace reception desk, or use the online form at [GraceRiverForest.org](http://GraceRiverForest.org). Bring a friend—you don't have to be a Grace member to attend.

Please phone Nancy Wohlford or email Linda Bernard ([lm\\_bernard@hotmail.com](mailto:lm_bernard@hotmail.com)) if you have questions.



*In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-57).  
Illustration: He Qi, The Visitation*

**Phyllis Kersten** was Associate Pastor at Grace from 1996-2008. Following her retirement, Phyllis served eight months as interim pastor at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church on the north side of Chicago and then more than a year as the interim ELCA pastor at the Chapel of the Resurrection at Valparaiso University. From April 2015 through September 2016, Phyllis was back at Grace, River Forest, serving as the interim Associate Pastor.

**E. Louise Williams** is executive director emerita of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, Valparaiso, Indiana, and a past president of DIAKONIA World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Communities. She teaches theology part-time at Valparaiso University, serves as spiritual director for several people, and is a freelance writer, homilist and retreat leader.

**Together Phyllis and Louise** have co-authored three Bible studies for women, "Talented, Tired, Beautiful Feet" (Concordia Publishing House), "Companions on Your Journey" (Women of the ELCA, Augsburg) and "Philippians: Christian Citizenship 101," also for the Women of the ELCA.



# ADULT EDUCATION

Come to Adult Education sessions at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings for thought-provoking presentations and discussions that build faith and fellowship. Look for more information about classes and locations on the signs in the atrium.

If you have ideas or suggestions for Adult Ed programming, please contact Ted Anton, chair of the Adult Education Committee (tanton@depaul.edu).

**January 15 and 22**

## **Why History and Historical Thinking Are Vital to Christian Discipleship**

*Tracy McKenzie, Professor, Wheaton College.* Professor McKenzie, who has taught previous classes at Grace on "The First Thanksgiving" and "The Faiths of Our Founding Fathers" will speak on "faithful remembering." *Seminar Room.*

### **Sunday Bible Study**

Led by Bob Jandeska in the conference room, the Bible study group meets every Sunday morning at 9:45 a.m. in the Conference Room on the lower level.

**January 29**

## **Why Don't My Children or Grandchildren Go to Church—and What Can I Do?**

*David Lose, President, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.* This session addresses the pressing question of how we reach out to the emerging generation, particularly, how can we address what often seems like a disconnect between the expectations and experience of church by our elders and by their children and grandchildren? *Seminar Room.*

## **Good books for winter reading in the church library**

Now that the busy holiday season is over, turn off those devices and the TV for a while, and enjoy these and more good reads from the church library. Look for these books and CDs in the Grace Church library. If you'd like to check out a book displayed in the case in the atrium, just ask the person at the reception desk for assistance.

### **Non-fiction**

*For Everything a Season: Simple Musings on Living Well*, by Philip Gulley. (Multnomah, 1999). The author, a Quaker minister, offers everyday truths about much-needed clarity in our befuddled world. [242 GUL]

*Without Reservations: The Travels of an Independent Woman*, by Alice Steinbach (Random House, 2002). An account of one woman's journey through Europe and into the self. [818 STE]

*The End of Your Life Book Club*, by William Schwalbe (Vintage, 2012). A son's heartfelt tribute to his mother's courage and grace, and a vivid testimony to the power of books to connect us to each other. [616.99 SCH]

*The Pope's Maestro*, by Sir Gilbert Levin (Jossey-Bass, 2010). The inspirational story of an unlikely friendship between a Jewish-American conductor and Pope John Paul II, who collaborated on symbolic acts of reconciliation: a series of internationally-broadcast concerts designed to bring together people from all religious backgrounds under the auspices of the Vatican. Includes a CD. [784 LEV]

### **Fiction**

*La's Orchestra Saves the World*, by Alexander McCall Smith (Pantheon, 2009). A heart-warming story about the life-affirming powers of music and company in England during World War II. [FIC MCC]

*The Prodigal*, by Brennan Manning (Zondervan, 2013). A popular "people's pastor" of a mega-church loses his moral compass and as he hits rock bottom, his long-estranged father appears and implores his prodigal son to "come home." [FIC MAN]

*The Guernsey Library and Literary Society*, by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows (Dial Press, 2009). A story of the Island of Guernsey during the German occupation, and of a society as extraordinary as its name. [FIC SHA]

*My Mrs Brown*, by William Norwich (Simon & Schuster, 2015). A woman with a secret travels to New York on a determined quest to buy a special dress that represents everything she wants to say about her secret... and about herself. [FIC NOR]

# WORSHIP

## EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

Friday, January 6

Holy Communion, 7 p.m.

Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12

## SUNDAY MORNINGS

Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

January 8

### BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 29, Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17

January 15

### SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 40:1-11, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, John 1:29-42

January 22

### THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Isaiah 9:1-4, Psalm 27:1, 4-9, 1 Corinthians 1:10-18, Matthew 4:12-23

January 29

### FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, Matthew 5:1-12

## BACH CANTATA VESPERS

JANUARY 29, 3:45 P.M.

*Wär Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit*

Were God not with us at this time, BWV 14

David J. Lose, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, homilist  
Timothy Spelbring, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Mount Prospect, organist  
Kapelle, Concordia University Chicago, guest choir; Charles P. Brown, director

## January 29 cantata features noted preacher David Lose

Pastor David J. Lose will be the homilist at the Bach Cantata Vespers on Sunday, Jan. 29. The cantata is BWV 14, *Wär Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit* (Were God not with us at this time). The organ prelude begins at 3:45 p.m.

Pastor Lose is a well-known preacher—and a teacher of preachers. He speaks widely in the U. S. and abroad on preaching, Christian faith in a postmodern world, and biblical interpretation. During his visit to Grace Church on January 29 he will also lead a morning Adult Ed class titled “Why Don’t My Children or Grandchildren Go to Church—and What Can I Do?” Pastor Lose is currently the president of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Before that, he held the Marbury E. Anderson Chair in Biblical Preaching at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., where he also served as the Director of the Center for Biblical Preaching. He is the author of “Preaching at the Crossroads: How the World -- and Our Preaching -- Is Changing” (2013), “Making Sense of the Cross” (2011), and other titles.

At this cantata service we once again welcome Concordia University’s Kapelle, directed by Charles Brown, as the guest choir for the cantata. Timothy Spelbring, organist at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Mount Prospect plays the organ prelude. Tim serves as the regular accompanist for the Senior Choir at Grace, as well as organist for the Bach Cantata services. He received his Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance from Oberlin College and earned his Master of Music at the Yale University School of Music.

## New book, “Baptized for This Moment,” by Steve Bouman

Rev. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the ELCA, has written a new book, “Baptized for This Moment: Rediscovering Grace All Around Us,” that includes several topics he has shared in Adult Ed presentations here at Grace, including post-9/11 reflections. He writes:

The book traces the world which emerged from Ground Zero, fearful, divided, graceless. I hope and pray that the book is helpful to congregations trying to find their voice and space in this public arena and its many manifestations of terror, racial violence, immigration, disaster, refugees, space for listening and engaging in new ways. I hope and pray that the book will be an invitation to young adults to consider church as an institution supporting their desire to show up and make a difference in our polarized world.

You can order the book online from Acta Publications ([actapublications.com/baptized-for-this-moment](http://actapublications.com/baptized-for-this-moment)).

Steve Bouman grew up at Grace Church and School and is a continuing friend of the congregation. He notes that any royalties from the book will go to the domestic ministries of the ELCA Hunger Fund.

# Invitation to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

*“Reconciliation—the love of Christ compels us”*

by Pastor Hans Dumpys

Concern for Christian unity has been an important theme throughout the church's history, but it has become especially vital since the Reformation. The Reformation was a “tragic necessity” to restore the gospel to the center of the church's identity, but it also divided the Western church into many denominations. Luther never intended to found a separate church body; he wanted merely to reform the Catholic Church. In 1530 Luther's colleague Philipp Melancthon sought to preserve the unity of the church with the Augsburg Confession (1530), a summary of the Christian faith held by Lutherans that was presented to the Holy Roman Emperor. This effort to repair the division in the church failed.

Through the centuries church leaders have continued to attempt to heal the divisions in the church. In January 1908 Paul Wattson, an Anglican priest who later became a Roman Catholic, initiated the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with an 8-day Church Unity Octave. The Octave began on January 18, the festival of the Confession of Peter and ended on January 25, the Conversion of Paul. Thus the Week of Prayer is framed by commemorations of the two great apostles of Christianity. Abbe Paul Courtier in 1935 advocated a universal week of prayer for Christian unity on the basis of Jesus' prayer “that all may be one” (John 17:21). An institutional breakthrough for the Roman Catholic Church's participation came at the Second Vatican Council in 1964, with the adoption of the Decree on Ecumenism, stating unequivocally: “During ecumenical gatherings it is allowable, indeed desirable, that Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren.”

Today the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is sponsored by the Commission of Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. The theme for the 2017 Week of Prayer was chosen with this year's 500th anniversary of the Reformation in mind: “Reconciliation — the love of Christ compels us” (2 Corinthians 5:14-20). You can read more about this year's Week of Prayer at [www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/week-of-prayer](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/week-of-prayer).

Unity is Christ's gift to the Church: we cannot destroy it, but we can obscure it. Over the past 500 years both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches have undergone significant reforms. This historic anniversary is a God-given moment for us to seize and pursue reconciliation with the Roman Church. What better way to do so than to actively participate in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

The way has been paved for us by fruitful dialogue with Roman Catholics over the past 50 years. In addition, we can point to several recent agreements: the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification” by the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation (1998); “From Conflict to Communion,” the recent



document by the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; and the “Declaration on the Way” adopted by the ELCA Assembly in August 2016, detailing Lutherans' and Catholics' agreements and differences on church, eucharist, and ministry, with suggestions for further steps to be taken.

The barriers which both sides have developed over 500 years of history are significant obstacles to be overcome. However, the disunity of the church is the single greatest obstacle for the credibility of the church's witness in our world. Disunity is a wound on the body of Christ, and unless we are involved in healing that wound, we are perpetuating the pain. I find the statement issued on the occasion of the Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration of the Reformation with Pope Francis on October 31, 2016, in the Cathedral in Lund, Sweden, both realistic and hopeful: “Our common faith in Jesus Christ and our baptism demand of us a daily conversion, by which we cast off the historical disagreements and conflicts that impede the ministry of reconciliation.”

Ecumenical agreements and documents are ineffective without reception and implementation by the churches, bishops, synods, clergy, and especially congregations. A hopeful sign locally is the joint task force of the Metro Chicago Synod of the ELCA and the Chicago Catholic Archdiocese working on the establishment of covenants between Lutheran and Catholic congregations to take steps toward reconciliation.

The prayer movement for Christian unity has been a vital part of my ministry, and I would urge Grace members to become actively engaged in the ecumenical Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, possibly even considering a relationship or covenant with a neighboring Catholic congregation. In this year of celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, may the people of Grace, with Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and all Christians, strive to actively live into the unity with which Christ has gifted his church,

*Pastor Hans Dumpys, a member of Grace, is the bishop emeritus of the Lithuanian Lutheran church in Diaspora*

# Join a book group, be part of a timely congregation-wide conversation on racism

As Lent approaches, the Faith Perspectives Committee invites you into a timely, spirit-filled, conversation about racism. Timely because issues regarding race continue to echo through the news, spirit-filled because we believe God has something to say in and through us, and a conversation because we do not journey alone.

Talking about racism is not easy.

Racism has been called “America’s original sin,” so the Lenten journey of repentance provides an appropriate framework for learning about the persistence of racism in America. As a congregation of Christ-followers, we seek the good of our neighbors, recognizing Christ in all, regardless of race. “We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another,” says the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:5. We are called to respond. We are called to listen.

Members of the Faith Perspectives Committee have been exploring ways to shape a discussion about racism at Grace Church since last summer. They have talked with pastors and members of other churches who have opened similar conversations in their own congregations, and have met with representatives of the ELCA Metro Chicago Synod’s Antiracism Task Force.

The ELCA representatives noted that there are many understandings and approaches to the topic of racism. They suggested that a congregation center their conversation through a shared book discussion. Reading a book together provides focus and common language for talking about a many-faceted issue. This approach can be especially useful in congregations that themselves are not racially diverse.

Pastor Lyle and Pastor Dave Wegner suggested that the conversation at Grace take the form of small discussion groups that meet throughout the season of Lent. On the first Sunday after Easter, April 23, participants from the different groups will gather for a potluck meal, a time to share what they’ve learned and look to the future to begin to discern how God is calling us to live and love in the world around us.

The hope is that this will be a significant congregational initiative, offering Grace members opportunities to learn more about one another, grow together spiritually, and listen for the Holy Spirit as we engage a serious challenge facing our world. The unity we share in Christ gives us room for fruitful discussion.

**The hope is that this will be a significant congregational initiative, offering Grace members opportunities to learn more about one another, grow together spiritually, and listen for the Holy Spirit as we engage a serious challenge facing our world.**

Books will be available at Grace starting February 12, along with the opportunity to sign up for a discussion group. Groups will meet at different times during the week; you can choose what works best for you.

If you feel led to facilitate one of these groups, we would like to talk with you. A study guide and other supportive material will be made available and training will be provided. Please contact one of the following people for more information:

Pastor Dave Wegner  
708-366-6900 ext. 208  
dwegner@graceriverforest.org

Sue Foran  
sforan4@comcast.net

Gwen Gotsch  
708-366-6900 ext. 122  
ggotsch@graceriverforest.org

John Lattyak  
jlattyak@gmail.com

## Interested? Here are some important dates.

<b>February 12—26</b>	Books available at Grace
<b>March 1</b>	Ash Wednesday, beginning of Lenten discussions
<b>April 9—15</b>	Holy Week
<b>April 16</b>	Easter Sunday
<b>April 23</b>	Potluck gathering



# Weight loss: Tips from a toddler

By Sue Ames, Parish Nurse

Happy New Year!

Statistics from 2015 show that 45 percent of people make New Year's resolutions, and topping the list was the resolution to lose weight. I recently read an article from the fall 2016 issue of *Church Health Reader* titled "How to Eat Like a Toddler," by Sheila Harrell, and thought I would share some of those ideas with you! Nutritionist Nicolette Pace says that babies have a natural rhythm when it comes to eating. When babies are hungry, they make sure to let you know. They do not wait until their tummies are empty and they are weak and lightheaded. The same is true when babies are full. They do not eat past the point where they feel comfortable.

However, at some point adults lose this rhythm. If we eat when we are not hungry, we can't recognize when we are full.

Weight gain occurs when we establish a pattern of eating until we are uncomfortably full and beyond.

Pace suggests that if we tap into our natural rhythm of eating, we can better manage our weight by eating only when we are fairly hungry, or when we feel slightly uncomfortable and our stomach is rumbling. A good question to determine true hunger is, "Am I hungry enough to eat a carrot?"

Challenge yourself to eat only until your stomach feels neutral or pleasantly satisfied, not full. It's possible to eat more at this point, but you can choose not to. A toddler would push her plate away or even throw the food on the floor.

The food we choose to feed our little ones is of the highest nutritional quality. Parents read labels and avoid additives, preservatives and sugar. Why not follow the same criteria when



For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you,  
for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works;  
that I know very well.

Psalm 139:13-14

grocery shopping for yourself? If you can't pronounce an ingredient, you definitely would not feed it to a baby, and you might want to put it in your mouth either.

Our digestive systems were created by God to utilize fresh foods; they do not know what to do with the added chemicals in highly processed foods. The saying rings true, "Fresh is best," and better foods are found in natural wrappers than in man-made ones.

## Tips for eating like a toddler

- Eat only when you are hungry, and when you feel full, push the plate away.
- Take your time and try to devote at least 15 minutes to each meal.
- Carry a snack-pack of fresh fruit or nuts. When you feel a hunger "tantrum" coming on, grab your healthy snack.
- Designate a "high-chair" for yourself—a place where you sit at a table and eat with a plate, cup and silverware, rather than eating in the car or on the way to the next thing.
- Eat food that is low in sugar and without additives or preservatives.

## Books on healthy eating in the Grace Church Library

*Diet and Nutrition: A Holistic Approach*, by Rudolph Ballentine (Himalayan International Institute, 1978). An explanation of the ecology, biochemistry, physiological and pharmacology of nutrition, and food and consciousness. [613.2 BAL]

*What to Eat*, by Marion Nestle (North Point Press, 2007). Tours the sections of a typical American supermarket, offers advice on how to make good food choices, with information on reading food labels and definitions of food-related items and more. [613.2 NES]

*Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy: The Harvard School Guide to Healthy Eating*, by Walter Willet (Free Press, 2005). A practical guide to developing healthy eating habits. [613.2 WIL]

*Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, by Barbara Kingsolver (HarperCollins, 2007). The author tells how she and her family relocated to southern Appalachia from Arizona in order to live a simpler life, grow their own food, and live among a community of local organic growers.



# Grace hosts benefit dinner on January 28 for the Center for Christian Education in Martin, Slovakia

Celebrating ten years of partnership with the Center for Christian Education (CCE) in Martin, Slovakia, Grace Lutheran Church will sponsor a benefit dinner on Saturday, January 28. The event, hosted in Fellowship Hall and beginning at 5:30 p.m., will include an authentic Slovak dinner, a cash bar, entertainment, and a raffle of exciting items.

Special guests will include leaders of the Center for Christian Education, who will bring a 2016 update on their ministry.

The cost is \$50 per person. Proceeds of the evening will benefit the CCE's Lutheran High School. Make your reservation for the dinner at the table in the atrium between services on January 8, 15, and 22, reserve your place at the dinner online, using the link at [GraceRiverForest.org](http://GraceRiverForest.org), or sign up at Grace's reception desk.

Founded in 1998, the Center for Christian Education works to rekindle the faith of people in Slovakia, who endured four decades of Communist rule aimed at eliminating religion in eastern Europe. CCE's programs include education from preschool through master's degree as well as numerous community-outreach programs.

**The Lutheran Academy** offers accredited, Christ-centered education. It consists of a preschool, an elementary school, and a five-year bilingual high school.

The school opened in 2003 with one class of 19 first-grade students and added a grade with each successive year. The High School equips graduates for university study in a global world. CCE's charter class—the first-graders who began in 2003—are currently completing their fourth year of high school.

Today, the Lutheran Academy has an enrollment of more than 650 students. Recently it was named one of the top ten schools in Slovakia and is widely considered the best school in Martin.

## The Details

**When:** Saturday, January 28, 2017; gather at 5:30 pm, dinner and entertainment begin at 7:00.

**Where:** Fellowship Hall

**What:** Authentic Slovak dinner, cash bar, entertainment, and raffle

*Two ways to reserve your place at the dinner:*

1. Use the online form at [GraceRiverForest.org](http://GraceRiverForest.org). Be sure to complete your reservation by paying online.

2. Stop at the table in the atrium between services on January 8, 15, or 22.

Questions? Contact Julie Modrich (708-366-6900, ext. 229; [jmodrich@graceriverforest.org](mailto:jmodrich@graceriverforest.org))

## Did you know?

English is taught at all grades in the Lutheran Academy.

Over the years, many Americans have taught in the school. Erika Lyle was CCE's first American teacher in 2003, teaching its charter class of 19 first graders.

Former Grace School teacher Benjamin Chandler taught at the Lutheran Academy from 2011 to 2016.

In addition to English instruction, the Lutheran Academy includes practical religious education with weekly student worship services, a student choir, and a school worship band.

CCE operates the **Department of Religious Studies at the University of Žilina**, where it offers accredited programs leading to a bachelor's degree in youth ministry and master's degrees in elementary and secondary education.

CCE also sponsors numerous community-outreach programs, including **Vacation Bible School, youth camps** for middle-school and junior-high students, **peer ministry** for high-school students, and **English as a Foreign Language classes**. Led by American volunteers, for more than a decade these programs have helped engage the community and build greater awareness for CCE. Members of Grace Church traveled to Martin in July 2016 to teach VBS to 200 children. Plans are underway for a return trip in 2017 and a second year of teaching VBS.

The Lutheran High School occupies space in a three-story building adjacent to the CCE campus. CCE purchased this building in 2013. Significant renovation has been needed to make the building—once home to a publisher of Communist propaganda—functional for education. Professional building crews are supplemented by the efforts of the school community and by “builders groups” organized by U.S. partner churches. Several Grace members have participated in these builder-group mission trips.

Currently, the school has completed Phase 1 of its renovation program, including several classrooms as well as a computer lab, a chemistry/physics lab, a reception area, teachers' offices, and a fully functioning kitchen. Proceeds from Grace's Slovakia Benefit Dinner will help continue the renovation effort.

The Center for Christian Education is a regular benevolence of Grace Church. The CCE was also a beneficiary of funds from the Tower Campaign in 2013-14.

## GRACE NEWS

**SANDWICH-MAKING AT FRATERNITÉ.** Grace members will be packing lunches at Fraternité Notre Dame, 502 N. Central, on Monday, Jan. 16, at 7 p.m. These lunches are given to people in need in the Austin community. Children and teens are welcome with their parents. Contact Kate Hogenson ([hogenson@msn.com](mailto:hogenson@msn.com); 708-445-9687) to arrange a ride.

**KNITTING/CROCHETING GROUP** meets on Tuesday, January 17, 1–2:30 p.m. in the church library. Contact Margaret Burke ([mrburke42@gmail.com](mailto:mrburke42@gmail.com)) for more information.

**LECTIO DIVINA** meets on January 23 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. in the church library. Contact MaryBeth Buschmann (312-802-5493; [marybeth1942@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marybeth1942@sbcglobal.net)).

**RETIRED LEADERS AND OTHERS** meet on the second Tuesday of every month at Grace for informal presentations on a wide range of faith-related topics. Wes Wilkie speaks on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Tuesday, January 10, at 10 a.m. in the church library.

**GRACE NOTES MAILING CREW.** A lively crew of volunteers led by Marlene Hallman gathers monthly in the church library to prepare Grace Notes for mailing. They will be at work on the February newsletter on Thursday, Feb. 2, at 9:30 a.m. There's always a need for more helpers!

**CORNERSTONES BIBLE STUDY.** Older adults meet in the church library on Wednesdays. Come for food and fellowship at 10 a.m. and Bible study led by the pastors at 10:30. On January 18, there is a Morning Prayer at 11:30 followed by luncheon.

**ROMEOS AND JULIETS** meets in the church library at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 17. David Heim, executive editor of *The Christian Century* speaks on "Journalism for the church and the world."

**FINDING HOPE**, the chronic illness support group, meets at Grace at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, February 3 at 7:15 p.m.

**RELIGION IN LITERATURE.** The book discussion group meets on Friday, January 20, at 8 p.m. at the home of Jim Scherer and Liene Sorenson, 224 N Kenilworth, Apt. 4C, in Oak Park. This month's book is Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*; the discussion will be led by Jeff Wood. A copy of the book is available in the church library.

**REEL TALK**, the film discussion group, meets on Friday, Jan. 13, at 6 p.m. in the church library to watch "The Impossible," a 2012 film directed by Juan Antonio Bayona.

**BUILDING HOURS.** Grace will be closed on Monday, Jan. 16.

### Congregation meeting and elections

The congregation will hold its January congregational meeting in Fellowship Hall after the late service on Sunday, January 22. The meeting includes the annual elections for certain offices and members of boards and elected committees. The ballot for the elections is available at [GraceRiverForest.org](http://GraceRiverForest.org). The agenda meeting will be posted by Jan. 12

**The Annual Leadership Retreat** is scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. This event brings together members of Grace's various committees, organizations and governance teams to set goals and plan for the upcoming ministry year.

## PRAYERS

**WE PRAY** for all mourn the death of Matthew Harb, son of Lois Harb, brother of Katie and James.

**PRAYER LIST.** The weekly Prayer List can be found in the worship bulletin on Sunday. Contact Karen Christopher ([kchristopher@gracriverforest.org](mailto:kchristopher@gracriverforest.org); 708-366-6900 ext 207) to be included on the published prayer list.

**PRAYER CHAIN.** Contact Kathy Lucht ([kathy.lucht@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.lucht@gmail.com)) or Kathy Garness (708-366-7584; [KMGfinearts@comcast.net](mailto:KMGfinearts@comcast.net)) with confidential prayer chain requests.

## ALTAR FLOWERS

Look for the sign-up sheet at the reception desk to donate flowers. Donors of flower in January:

**January 1** from the children of Walt and Carolyn Martin in celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary.

**January 15** from the Nelson family, with thanksgiving to God for the successful completion of Paul's 28-month course of chemotherapy for leukemia.

**January 22** from the members of the Grace Library Committee in memory of Shirley Holm.

## THANK YOU

Thank you, Grace members, for your donations to Social Ministry Committee projects during the Christmas season. With your help 80 Christmas stockings were distributed to homeless teens served by The Night Ministry. Many others served by local social service agencies received Christmas gifts.

**From Fraternité:** On behalf of the sisters at Fraternité Notre Dame and all of our neighbors who they serve, thank you for all of your generous donations. This year we were able to contribute 80 turkeys and all of the gravy and paper goods necessary for their Annual Thanksgiving Day meal. They couldn't do it without us and they are so grateful. God bless you all! Thanks, Sue Foran.

## PASTORAL CARE

**Emergency pastoral care number:  
708-689-3032**

Call this number for emergency pastoral care on weekends, or when the Grace building is closed. Please include a return phone number if you leave a message or send a text.

# Support Grace School at A Graceful Evening

Save the date: March 18, 6 p.m.



A Graceful Evening, the annual dinner and auction fundraiser for Grace School, takes place on Saturday, March 18, this year, beginning at 6 p.m. Once again the event is at the Oak Park Country Club, 2001 Thatcher Ave. in River Grove, a cozy, welcoming atmosphere for this event that brings together church members, school families and school alumni in support of Grace Lutheran School. Tickets, \$75 each and \$700 for a table of ten, will go on sale in early February. They'll be

available online as well as in the church atrium on Sunday mornings. The evening includes cocktails, dinner, a live and silent auction, and an after-party. There are many ways you can support Grace Lutheran School through this event, in addition to coming and enjoying a friendly evening out. Event organizers are looking for:

**Sponsorships.** Support from event sponsors helps underwrite the cost of the event and enables funds raised at the benefit to go directly to Grace School. The Gold sponsorship level (\$2,500) includes a full table at the event and a full-page ad in the program. Silver (\$1,000) includes two tickets and a half-page ad.

**Auction items.** Every year the generous Grace community comes up with creative and spectacular auction items including tickets to sporting events, time at vacation homes, airline miles, food and wine/beer experiences, spa and hotel experiences, sports memorabilia, handcrafted furniture and other unique items.

**Advertising in the program.** Business are invited to advertise in the auction booklet, along with individuals or families who want to share messages of support. Costs range from \$75 for a quarter-page to \$200 for a full page.

**Fund-A-Need.** Each year A Graceful Evening includes a Fund-A-Need project, dedicated to a specific curriculum area at Grace School. This year's Fund-A-Need is dedicated to arts programming—music, drama and fine arts. Your contribution makes a direct impact on Grace School students.

**Donate a bottle of wine worth \$20 or more.** The Wine Pull is a popular part of A Graceful Evening. Your donation supports Grace School and makes A Graceful Evening more fun.

The Committee for A Graceful Evening is also looking for volunteers and in-kind donations:

- Photography for the evening of the event
- Flowers and/or floral services for the event's centerpieces
- Printing of program booklets
- Help with set-up, clean-up, check-in, check-out, and other areas as needed

If you'd like to know more about supporting A Graceful Evening with your donation, please contact Rebecca Morgan ([rebecca.morgan04@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.morgan04@gmail.com) or 708-476-8905). Watch for a mailing about A Graceful Evening with more details.

## Family Fun Friday

January 20, 6-8 p.m.

### Grades K-6

- Craft and open gym
- Treats and hot chocolate
- Fellowship for parents. Younger siblings welcome.
- Pizza and salad supper.

### Grades 7-8

- Games for junior high kids and their parents led by Pastor Dave Wegner.
- Treats and hot chocolate.
- Bring \$5 for pizza supper.

Click on the link at [GraceRiverForest.org](http://GraceRiverForest.org) to register by midnight, Jan. 19.

**More Family Fun Fridays in 2017**  
February 10, March 10

## Help us invite prospective families to Grace School's Open House on January 25

Grace Lutheran School offers classes for children age 3, 4 and 5, as well as for elementary-age students in grades 1-8. Parents interested in enrolling their children in elementary grades or preschool and kindergarten classes are invited to talk with teachers and tour classrooms at an Open House on Wednesday evening, January 25, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Many of the parents who enroll children in our school tell us that they hear about the excellent education offered at Grace from other families and friends in the community. So please—if you know someone who might be interested in Grace School, please tell them about the upcoming Open House!

# Slovakia Benefit

## Dinner

Saturday, January 28

5:30 p.m. - Gathering

7:00 p.m. - Dinner

\$50/person

Authentic Slovak meal • Cash  
bar • Entertainment • Raffles

Stop at the table in the atrium on Jan. 8, 15 and 22 to reserve your place at the dinner, register online at [GraceRiverForest.org](http://GraceRiverForest.org), or sign up at the reception desk.



GRACE  
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& SCHOOL

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