

September 2018 Grace Notes



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

New. Every single day.



by Pastor Dave Wegner

A new program and school year has begun at Grace! The building, classrooms, hallways, offices, computers, and committees are humming with activity. Kinks in new academic software are being worked out, the facilities calendar is growing in length, and the newsletter and weekly announcements are filled to the brim with new and returning opportunities for faith formation, discipleship growth, learning, worship, and prayer. I admit that, after the more relaxed pace of summer, the energy is both invigorating and a bit nerve-racking!

Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

2 Corinthians 5:17

As is the case before anything new, I find myself reflecting on hopes and dreams for the months ahead. What can be done better this time? What doesn't need as much attention? What needs more? What will be the convictions or passions that drive and define ministry at Grace? Where is God calling us to go?

What is God calling us to be and do?

I commend to our common reflections these words from Scripture. "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

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Leaving space for the Spirit to do new things

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While the activity of making resolutions is more common as January approaches, I wonder if we might consider how our new life in Christ is beginning anew right now. As we begin to fill our personal calendars, have we considered leaving space for the Spirit to do a new thing in us? As our country prepares for another election cycle, on which voices will we lean and from what noise will we abstain? Who will we allow to define who we are? What convictions and passions will we exercise with both confidence in ourselves and respect for the other?

Because we are uniquely created and gifted for ministry one answer to these questions will not suffice. The hard work of reflecting on these things, however, begins to reveal to us that, indeed, the old life is gone and a new one has begun. There is one call upon our lives, though, that is constant for all of us: the people of Grace Lutheran Church and School are called to reflect the light of Christ into a darkened and hurting world.

We honor and remember how this congregation and community have done this important work in the past. We dream vivid and wonderful dreams of how our future will unfold. Then we engage our present with courage and energy hinging on the absolutely absurd promise-made-truth that we are loved by a God who will never let us go. Every day that you remember this is the day, the hour, the very moment your new life has begun again.

As this “new year” of life and ministry begins at Grace perhaps you might consider doing something new. How might the allocation of your time, your financial giving, and your stewardship of gifts reflect the new thing God is doing in your life? Look for and say “yes” to the volunteer or service opportunity that comes to your overflowing email inbox. Join a FEAST group and meet fellow faith sojourners. Risk introducing yourself to someone you see in the pews – even if they might have been a member longer than you. Serve. Rest. Pray. Worship. Learn.

FEAST 2018-19

FEAST is short for “Fellowship, Education And Spirit Together.” People from the Grace Church and School community sign up to participate. Organized into groups of approximately 10–12 individuals, they get together regularly for a meal and conversation—whenever, wherever, however they decide to do so.

Last year’s FEAST groups met four to six times during the year. Some gathered for brunch, some met in restaurants. They shared casual home-cooked meals, potluck-style suppers, pizza, or a glass of wine after a cantata service. One group went bowling together. The main thing is not what you do, but simply finding time to get together. A FEAST gathering includes a faith-related conversation, but it’s not a class or formal Bible study. There’s nothing you need to read or prepare beforehand.

FEAST is about including everyone—couples, families with children, single people, old and young, long-time Grace members and folks new to the school and church. You have the option of choosing whether or not you would like to be in a group that includes children. There’s no expectation that everyone in the group will host a gathering, nor do you have to have a large home or a formal dining room to do so.



[Sign up online](http://GraceRiverForest.org) at
GraceRiverForest.org or
at the reception desk by
Monday, October 1.

**Come to the First
Feast potluck**
Sunday, October 14, 4 p.m.

Please sign up for FEAST by Monday, October 1, either online or at the Grace reception desk. Then come to the First Feast gathering at Grace on Sunday, October 14, at 4 p.m. At this kick-off potluck you’ll receive your group assignment. Groups will eat together and make plans for future gatherings.

It’s a powerful thing when we welcome one another into our homes and our lives beyond Sunday morning, beyond the church building. “Every one brought a very open, willing, and listening spirit to the table,” said one facilitator about her 2017-18 FEAST group.

So come to the table! Make new friends, deepen relationships, and make the commitment to be part of a FEAST group. All you have to do is show up and be yourself.

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. This issue was mailed via U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail on Friday, August 31, with the hope that it will arrive in your mailbox no later than September 8. Copies are also available at Grace.

Deadlines and submissions. The October issue of Grace Notes will be mailed on Friday, September 28. The deadline for copy is Wednesday, September 19; the issue covers events through early November. Send news to 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.

Participants reflect on love, hope and grace at the Youth Gathering

"I saw the commonality of the love of God in all of the other high schoolers and adults that were there, which was a really special thing to be a part of."

Sarah Danganan

"This Changes Everything" was the theme for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering, June 27–July 1. The five teens and three adults from Grace who traveled to Houston for the Gathering came home with lots to think about. How were they changed by God's call, God's love, God's grace and hope?

Pastor Lauren Wegner, who led the group, asked them to reflect on their experience in writing and in a conversation at a recent get-together. This fall they'll report to the congregation during an Adult Ed session, scheduled for Sunday, September 23 in the Youth Room. But meanwhile, here are some of their reactions and thoughts.

Pastor Lauren, as a native Texan, had the inside track on where to go to have fun in Houston, and having fun together is part of growing in faith together. So when asked about "God sightings" on the trip, Ella Bullock, a freshman at Oak Park River Forest High School, thought back on their first-day surprise outing to the beach. "Our surroundings were beautiful and I saw God in the beauty of hanging out with the people and in the beach." Ella also was inspired by a trip to Hank's Ice Cream, a Houston landmark:

When we were in line for ice cream, the topic of the shop's history came up. Hank's daughter was working and talking about it, but then this woman cut in and started raving about how amazing that place was and the family and history of it all. She was very cheery and her energy was contagious. I saw God in the way she carried herself and talked about Hank.

The main event, the four-day Youth Gathering, was impressive, said Jake Van Santen, a junior at Fenwick.

Although everyone was from different places and different backgrounds, we were all the same under God, and everyone was able to relate and be friends.



Teens and adult leaders enjoyed Texas barbecue on their way to the airport after serving communion at the final worship service of the ELCA Youth Gathering on July 1. (Left to right) Sean Vogen, Amy Van Santen, Sarah Danganan, Kaitlin Vogen, Jake Van Santen, Ella Bullock, Jordyn Van Santen and Pastor Lauren Wegner.

It was interesting to see such a large gathering of Lutherans in one place. Outside of the gathering, people don't talk about their faith that much, for fear of offending someone or having assumptions made about them based on their religion. Due to the vast amount of believers who came to the gathering it was easy to see the community of God — and that was just a fraction of the churches and people from those churches.

For Sarah Danganan, a senior at OPRF, the experience broadened her understanding of Lutherans:

From the evening mass gatherings, my image of a "typical Lutheran" changed. I saw Lutherans in leadership positions of all different colors, ages, and genders. It was great to see so much diversity on the stage, as Lutheranism has such a reputation of consisting of mostly older, white folks (at least the way that I've seen it!).

Kaitlin Vogen, a senior at OPRF, enjoyed the "southern hospitality" in Houston, as well as meeting new people.

My faith was impacted by all of the different people we met and heard speak. Although everyone was from different places

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Eye-opening experience at the Gathering

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and different backgrounds, we were all the same under God, and everyone was able to relate and be friends.

Being with others who share the same faith was empowering for Sarah:

It's nice to know there are other people who are similar to us, who share our values and our faith and who are our age, because I feel like Christianity is dwindling among people our age. ... Sometimes it feels a little tricky to keep that faith strong when people don't talk about it a lot, amongst, like, your friends. I think the gathering reinforced the reality that there are so many practicing Lutherans among our age group. It made me so much more proud to practice my faith openly and talk about it.

"I was reminded that there is grace for everyone and everything."

Jake reflected on what he learned about how to live out his faith:

In life it is easy to let our faith be swept away, but the gathering reaffirms that we should wear it proudly as a badge of honor, not as leverage over a non-believer, but as an equalizer between all people.

Kaitlin came away with "more ideas about what people of our age are going through."

There are people going through really serious problems right now that I might not know about. I might be more accepting [as I remember about] not knowing what's going on at home for some people.

Students and adult leaders participated in Synod Day, a time for small-group activities with other representatives from churches in the ELCA Metro Chicago Synod. Grace students Ella Bullock and Sarah Danganan served as emcees, and they brought energy and excitement to the stage as they led many portions from the microphones.

Service Day was a highlight, said Jordyn Van Santen, a freshman at Fenwick. "Even though it was hot (and there were lots of fire ants), I think everyone had a really great time." Jake notes that Service Day got off to a slow start, but the rewards were well worth it:

Despite all the lengthy build up to actually doing anything, I really enjoyed service day. It was well worth the wait. That was the day I met more people from other churches, and the work we did for the people there was really inspirational to me. It was a simple task of painting, but our effect on their church and community felt monumental, and I truly felt God's presence that day. Despite how long the day was and how exhausting it got, God was present giving me strength and energy to persevere.

At the heart of the Youth Gathering are Mass Gatherings every evening, with worship bands and an incredible variety of speakers. The list included criminal justice reform advocate Bryan Stevenson and author and pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, as well as poets, spoken word artists, and storytellers. There were pastors, including a Navy chaplain and Pastor Steve Bouman, and young people involved in advocacy and service on issues that included hunger, addiction, disability, and transgender equality.

"The speakers all seemed to have a strong calling from God" said Jordyn. "I saw God all the time in the speakers," said Jake. "I saw God telling me of others' pain and struggle, leading to success and peace, and everything clicked."

Sarah Danganan described how the speakers affected her as a "reiteration of the power of grace."

From all the motivational speakers' stories, I was reminded that there is grace for everyone and everything. It's something that is easy to lose sight of and it was reassuring to hear that message again.

Worship and music were a core ingredient in the Gathering experience. Asked about "God sightings," Amy Van Santen, one of the adult leaders on the trip (and mother of Jake and Jordyn) talked about the remarkable experience of praising God with so many people:

God sightings: In the 25,000 kids and their 6,000 adult leaders singing, swaying, and nodding their heads, feeling the Holy Spirit move in them during the Mass Gatherings.

Sarah also commented on worship at the Gathering:

There are so many more ways to worship than a traditional church service. The music and dancing were so enlivening, and I found that I was able to praise God with more passion than I had before.

Pastor Lauren had signed the Grace kids up to be communion servers at the closing worship service. "It was a great experience to be able to serve communion to so many others who share our faith," said Jordyn.

Pastor Lauren sums up the Youth Gathering experience:

There's just nothing like a youth trip. And the Gathering provides uniquely eye-opening opportunities for teens (and adults!), who clearly come away with a deeper understanding of just how much our God loves us — every one of us.

Next summer Pastor Lauren is planning a service trip for Grace youth and looking forward to another opportunity for high schoolers to travel and grow together, bolstered by enthusiasm and insight from these student leaders.

WORSHIP

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Sunday, September 2

15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Psalm 15, James 1:17-27, Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Sunday, September 9

16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Isaiah 35:4-7a, Psalm 146, James 2:1-17, Mark 7:24-37

Sunday, September 16

17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Isaiah 50:4-9, Psalm 116:1-9, James 3:1-12, Mark 8:27-38

Sunday, September 23

18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jeremiah 11:18-20, Psalm 54, James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37

Sunday, September 30

19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; Psalm 19:7-14, James 5:13-20, Mark 9:38-50

Cantata season begins on September 30

The 48th season of Bach Cantata Vespers at Grace begins on Sunday, September 30. The cantata for the service is *Es erhob sich ein Streit* (There arose a great strife), BWV 19, composed for the Feast of St. Michael's Day in 1726. The opening chorus depicts the heroic battle between St. Michael and the dragon described in Revelation 12:7-12. Subsequent movements are reminders of how angels continue to care for us.

BWV 19 was the first cantata performed in Grace's Bach Cantata Vespers back in 1971 when Carl Schalk and Paul Bouman founded the series. The September 30 cantata service is being sponsored by the Bouman family in honor of Paul's centennial birthday. It will include hymn settings by Paul Bouman, and his son Stephen P. Bouman will be the homilist. The instrumental prelude is Bach's Concerto for Flute, Violin, and Harpsichord in A minor, BWV 1044, with soloists Cynthia Fudala (flute), Betty Lewis (violin), and Andrew Rosenblum (harpsichord).

A reception follows the cantata service in Fellowship Hall, with more music by Bach: *Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht*, (Be quiet, don't chatter), BWV 211. Also known as the "Coffee Cantata," it's a domestic drama set to music by Bach, with a flirtatious young coffee enthusiast running circles around her frustrated father. We will also sing "Happy Birthday" to Paul at the reception.

Grace's Bach Cantata Vespers present these cantatas within the context of congregational worship, the setting for which Bach composed them. Scripture texts, preaching, hymns and additional music in the service all relate to the themes of the cantata.

The Bach Cantata Vespers are led by Grace's Cantor, Michael D. Costello, conducting the Grace Senior Choir, with professional vocal soloists and instrumentalists. There is no admission price; a free-will offering is received during the service.

Congregation meeting on September 9

There will be a regular meeting of the congregation on Sunday, September 9, after the 11 a.m. worship service in Fellowship Hall.

The meeting will include a financial report for the fiscal year 2017-18.

From the Stewardship Committee



Sunday, October 21 is Faith Promise Sunday

We ask that in the coming weeks you prayerfully consider your 2019 pledge of time, talent and treasure to Grace Church. We support the ministry here at Grace because of our gratitude for what God has first given us.

"And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8



ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education classes meet at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings. When there is only one class scheduled it meets in the Seminar Room on Grace's lower level. On Sundays when two classes are scheduled, the Learning Faithfully class meets in the Seminar Room and the Living Faithfully class meets in the seventh grade classroom in the southwest corner of the first floor of the school. Classes are led by Grace members as well as guest speakers.

If you have ideas or suggestions for Adult Ed programming, please contact Ted Anton of the Adult Education Committee (tanton@depaul.edu) or Pastor Dave Wegner (dwegner@graceriverforest.org).

LEARNING FAITHFULLY

September 9 and 16

Comparing the Bible and the Qur'an
Mark Swanson

Learning about the role of the Qur'an for Muslims can help Christians better understand their own scripture and its place in the life of faith. This class will compare the sacred scriptures of Christianity and Islam and explore points of similarity and difference. *Mark Swanson teaches Christian-Muslim studies and interfaith relations at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago.*

LIVING FAITHFULLY

September 9 and 16

The Gospel in Black and White
Pastor Dave Kluge

Born in 1899, the son of a textile worker, the German artist Paul Sinkwitz depicted the Gospel lessons from the historic one-year Lutheran lectionary in a series of woodcuts. This slide presentation of his work covers Advent through Pentecost Sunday on September 9 and what was once called the Trinity season through the closing Sundays of the church year on September 16. *Dave Kluge is a retired pastor and a member of Grace.*

September 23 Can Poetry Be Written After Auschwitz? with Jill Baumgaertner

The Holocaust was the occasion when all of the central questions about God's justice and love, and humanity's capacity for evil, rise to the surface. Some have said that the only proper response to such horror is wordlessness; others have attempted to reflect the memories and record the sufferings in their poetry. We will examine some of these responses and consider the importance of lament, the oldest form of writing present in most cultures but disappearing in ours. *Jill Baumgaertner is Professor of English Emerita at Wheaton College and a member of Grace.*

September 30 and October 7

Faith and the Native American Experience
Gordon Straw

This presentation will follow two paths to understanding Christian faith and Native experience: 1) explore some of the theological themes that are important to Native Christians, along with some of the history about how they developed that way; 2) learn more about the history of the Christian Church with Native nations and individuals, with a particular focus on Lutheran Christians and Native communities. Together, these two paths paint an interesting picture of how communities who have little in common with Western European ways of thinking and being have adopted the Christian faith. *Gordon Straw holds the Cornelsen Chair of Spiritual Formation at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.*

September 30

Report from the 2018 Slovakia Mission Team

In late June Grace members and staff again traveled to Martin, Slovakia, to teach VBS at the Center for Christian Education. Hear about their trip and the continuing mission of the CCE to bring Christianity to post-Cold War Slovakia.

Sunday Bible Study

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

News from Harmony Community Church

Harmony Community Church's annual fundraising gala is being hosted at Grace on Saturday, October 13. The team of Grace and Harmony members working together to plan the event hope to raise significant funds to support the church's work in the North Lawndale community, including the repurposing of the sanctuary into a space that can be used seven days a week as a safe haven for children and families. The gala committee will be selling tickets in the Grace atrium between services on Sundays, September 16 and 30 and October 7. If you would like to sponsor a table, underwrite expenses for the gala, or contribute in another way, please contact Sue Foran (sforan4@comcast.net) or Connie Zyer (cruschz@aol.com). They are eager to tell you more about all the new things God is doing at Harmony and about how we at Grace can partner with them and support this work.

Peace Marches: “We must be intentional about being light in the darkness.”

James Brooks, pastor of Harmony Community Church, was a recent guest on Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s podcast “Chicago Stories,” where he described the work of the church in the community. Emanuel was particularly interested in the Peace Marches Pastor Brooks has been leading on Wednesday evenings in July and August.

“I think what jump-started everything was the twins,” said James. A shootout erupted between four young men just outside of their family home.

A bullet went through their front window. They called me immediately. They didn’t just call me so I could say, I’ll pray for you. They are looking for action. So that week we called some folks in the church and some other churches and said, let’s partner and meet up on the corner of 19th and Lawndale. That was a Wednesday evening. From there we decided we would do it every Wednesday and not stop. ... because we have to be intentional about being light in darkness. Many people are not coming to the church any more, therefore the church must be intentional about going out and entering the pain of the community. That’s the theology we have. We serve a God that did not run from our pain. He enters our pain. If we are followers of Christ we should enter the pain of the others. [We work] with the commander of the 10th [Police] District and say what are the hot spots, what are the areas that have experienced violence recently? Any area that they identify as high drug traffic or where violence has taken place, we’ll enter right there on a Wednesday night....

If we believe as a church that we are all in the image of God, then we need to affirm everyone’s dignity. And it’s walking by everyone and saying hello, speaking to everybody. There’s a lot of tension in the community, a lot of people are hurting and struggling. We break communities into smaller subgroups and just meet with them—you are in the image of God, your pain is important to us. Your pain, what you need to voice, is important.



Harmony summer reading program

A summer program supported in part by a grant from the Legacy of Grace fund provided intense reading instruction for a group of elementary-age students at Harmony Church this summer. Program director Liza Raino-Ogden reports:

This summer, I was lucky enough to oversee the Harmony Reading Program with six tenacious and passionate students, determined parents, and five amazingly giving and gifted tutors: Janay Brooks, Kaylah Thornton, Joe Zyer, Dominique Wallace, and Alexis Boddy. After a week-long training in phonics, symbol imagery, and comprehension, they began working with students with ease, bringing fun, games, and laughter to every activity they did. As a reading teacher, one of my absolute favorite joys in life is watching the progress students make as lightbulbs click and words start to jump off the page — and I definitely saw a lot of that in our almost seven weeks together. However, what was even more amazing and beautiful to watch were the relationships that formed.

I designed this program, largely based on fundamentals that I learned both while working at Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes and at Harvard University, where I earned my Masters in Education in Language and Literacy. Students worked to increase their ability to quickly and accurately decode and recognize words while also working to increase their reading fluency and, eventually, comprehension. ... All made significant gains in our short time together. All of these accomplishments should be celebrated, as any growth over the summer is cause for celebration.

HARMONY COMMUNITY CHURCH GALA

Saturday October 13, 6 p.m.
Grace's Fellowship Hall

Dinner, Cash Bar, Live Music
Video, Program, Live Auction and Paddle Raise

Grace's Creation Care group invites you to help all become better stewards of the earth

by Laura Merwin

Few things remind us more of both the beauty and brokenness of God's creation than an examination of nature, big and small. There are moments of grace to be found in the contemplation of a backyard flower or the awe-inspiring views of Yellowstone, and disillusionment and sadness greet us when a beloved tree is felled or when we see photos of vast swaths of Amazon deforestation.

The increasing ravages of climate change, the loss of animal and plant species, and the toll that environmental damage takes on human communities confront us every day. Yet we also are blessed to live at a time of increasing commitment to thoughtful stewardship and an outburst of creative ideas for increasing sustainability, combatting climate change, and improving the health of ecosystems and the humans who live in them.

In July, Grace members with an interest in sustainability issues gathered at the home of Mary Margaret Bartley and Stewart Clarke for the first meeting of the Creation Care group. Participants shared their visions for projects that the group might take on. A few initial objectives emerged:

- Improve recycling and composting at Grace Church and School through education and signage.
- Host Winter Farmers Market with Faith in Place, an event that seeks to support local farmers during the winter months and improve access to fresh food for all in the Chicago area.
- Coordinate and communicate already ongoing efforts to improve sustainability and environmental health by individuals

and committees at Grace; for example, the switch to eco-friendly landscaping services and the use of native plants in gardens at Grace and in members' homes.

- Explore ways to continue and extend current efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the church and school buildings.
- Involve Grace students and youth in sustainability projects.

In the months to come, we hope you will join us as we develop these ideas and identify future projects. We would love to hear how Grace members think we can become better stewards! Here are some ways to get involved right away:

- Attend the Green Team Summit sponsored by Faith in Place at the Field Museum on Saturday, September 22, and get inspired by workshops, speakers, and members of Green Teams from other houses of worship. Faith in Place is a local not-for-profit that works to empower Illinois people of all faiths to be leaders in caring for the Earth, providing resources to educate, connect, and advocate for healthier communities. Visit the Faith in Place web site for more information.
- Attend Adult Education on October 7, when farmer Terra Brockman will be talking about "Food, Faith, Community."
- Volunteer at the Winter Farmers Market. We have a tentative date of November 10. Watch for future announcements and calls for volunteers!

For more information contact Laura Merwin at lamerwin86@gmail.com or Mary Margaret Bartley at mmbartley@ameritech.net.

Check out the new books in the church library

Recent additions to the church library include books by authors featured in recent Adult Ed programs on racial justice as well as memoirs, essays and devotional topics. The library is open and staffed on Sunday mornings and is also open for self-service during the week. You can search the library collection online at GraceRiverForest.org > Welcome > Learn. Scroll down to the bottom of the page for the catalog link.

Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Living, by Tish Harrison Warren. IVP Books, 2016. [248.3 WAR]

My Life's Journey as a Palestinian Christian, by Nabil R. Ailabouni. 2016. Glimpses of both city and rural life in mid-20th century Palestine. [275.694 SLB]

Vanishing Grace: Whatever Happened to the Good News? by Philip Yancey. Zondervan, 2014. [277.3 YAN]

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption, by Bryan Stevenson. Spiegel and Grau, 2015. The author's TED talk was

featured in a summer Faith Perspectives Adult Ed program. [353.4 STE]

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, by Michelle Alexander. New Press, 2010. The author's TED talk was featured in a summer Faith Perspectives Adult Ed program. [364 ALE]

The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row, by Anthony Ray Hinton. St. Martin's Press, 2018. [364.66 HIN]

What Are We Doing Here? by Marilynne Robinson. Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2017. Essays on politics, science and faith by the award-winning novelist and essayist. [813 ROB]

Wounds Are Where the Light Enters: Stories of God's Intrusive Grace, by Walter Wangerin. Zondervan, 2017. [813.54 WAN]

Faith Under Fire: An Army Chaplain's Memoir, by Roger Benimoff. Three Rivers Press, 2009. [956.7 BEN]

Eating healthy meals as a family: Fun and good for you!

Sitting down for family meals seems harder to do these days when everyone is running in different directions. But a recent study published in the Journal of Pediatrics found young adults who ate just one or two family meals a week as kids were 45 percent less likely to be overweight as compared to those who had never eaten with their families.

Some of the thinking behind this is that when we eat as a family we eat more slowly and intentionally. Parents may be more careful about the kinds of foods they serve. Portion sizes or how much we actually consume tends to be less.

Eating together can also promote connection and a sense of love and belonging which helps reduce the impact of stress on the body. We know that stress can stimulate the production of hormones that can affect our metabolism, or our ability to burn fat. Caring, supportive interaction with other people is one of the most powerful ways to help our bodies release stress.

Busy schedule? Try setting a couple of days each week when family members commit to sharing a family meal. Encourage children to help prepare the meal; teens might be assigned to plan and cook dinner one night a week. Collect recipes that are quick and healthy from friends and relatives, from favorite cookbooks, or from social media or online resources. Take advantage of all the meal preparation shortcuts available at the grocery store, from cut-up fruits and vegetables to heat-and-eat entrees. Eating as a family is fun and doesn't take as much time as you might think. Give it a try!

Hidden ingredients to watch for in prepared foods

"Being able to grab and go with prepared meals, like frozen lunches and packaged snacks can be very easy," says Kayla Hansmann, dietitian at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center in Chicago. "Convenience is great, but what's the long-term cost to your family's health? A few extra minutes spent

preparing fresh foods now can be less costly than the risks to our family's future health." Hansmann says it's especially easy to overlook possibly harmful ingredients in prepared foods, if you're not reading

the nutrition labels fully. She says there are four hidden ingredients you should look out for:

1. Partially hydrogenated oils.

These oils may also be labeled as trans fats on the nutrition label, but the amount listed may be tricky because any amount of trans fat less than 0.5 grams can be reported as 0, so you may end up getting trans fats even if the nutrition label says 0. Hansmann suggests looking at the ingredient list and avoiding any hidden trans fats listed as "partially hydrogenated oils."

2. MSG and sodium. Packaged foods often contain a great deal of sodium, as

not only reported on the nutrition label, but in the ingredients list as MSG.

Ethnic dishes can be particular sources of MSG, which is often used as a flavor enhancer. Other foods that may contain hidden sodium are lunch meats, cheeses, pizzas and even fresh baked breads.

3. Sodium nitrates/nitrites. This hidden ingredient is often included as a food preservative, helping extend the life of a packaged food item. However, Hansmann says there is growing evidence that this preservative is linked to certain types of cancer.

4. High fructose corn syrup. This ingredient is simply a fancy name for sugar and may be contributing to the growing diabetes epidemic in the U.S. Watch ingredient labels for anything ending in "-ose," which indicates that the ingredient is a form of sugar. Look closely—there can often be three to four such ingredients in one food item.

Hansmann says, "Many chronic diseases are preventable with a proper diet. You just need to build in a little extra preparation time and make certain your family is getting a properly balanced diet. Making meal preparation fun by including family members can make it seem less of a chore and teach good nutrition, at the same time."

Bulletin insert from Advocate Health Care Congregational Health Partnerships (CHP).

Prayer before meals

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our
God, king of the world, who
brings forth bread from the
earth.

Ancient Jewish blessing

Health Ministry News

Lunch and Learn, Wednesday, September 26, noon (after Cornerstones). Come for a Healthy Aging program, "Nutrition Nuggets," presented in collaboration with the West Cook YMCA program. Sign-up at the reception desk, in the church library, or email Sue Ames, Parish Nurse, sames@gracriverforest.org.

Flu shots, Sunday, October 21, 9 – 11 a.m. Flu and pneumonia shots will be available in the gym, provided by Walgreens. Bring your insurance card.

GRACE NEWS

KNITTING/CROCHETING GROUP meets at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, September 18, in the church library. Beginners are welcome.

LECTIO DIVINA meets on Monday, September 24, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the church library. Contact MaryBeth Buschmann for more information (marybeth1942@sbcglobal.net).

RETIRED LEADERS AND OTHERS meet on Tuesday, September 11, at 10 a.m., in the Church Library. Liene Sorenson Scherer is the presenter on “Church and Politics in Latvia.” Guests are welcome.

GRACE NOTES MAILING CREW will be at work on the October newsletter on Thursday, September 27, at 9:30 a.m. They welcome more helpers.

CORNERSTONES fellowship and Bible study resumes on Wednesday, September 5, with treats and conversation at 10 and Bible study with the pastors at 10:30. There is a service of Morning Prayer at 11:30 a.m. on September 19, followed by lunch. You don’t have to think of yourself as “senior citizen” to join the group—all are welcome!

RELIGION IN LITERATURE. The book group meets to discuss “The Brothers Karamazov” on Friday, September 21, 8 p.m. Jeff Wood will lead the discussion, hosted at the home of Barbara Hofmaier and David Heim.

YOGA, taught by Ackli Howell, resumes on September 6, 6:30–7:30 p.m., in Fellowship Hall. Newcomers are welcome! Bring a mat and a towel (preferably a beach towel), and wear comfortable clothing. Call Ackli if you have questions.

MOMS OF LITTLES. The Moms of Littles group meets at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, September 5 and 19, in the Youth Room, 6:30–8 p.m. All moms of little ones are welcome to join us as we explore various topics around motherhood, womanhood, and faith. Contact Pastor Lauren for more information (lwegner@graceriverforest.org).

PASTORS’ EMERGENCY PHONE

Call 708-689-3032 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. (Consider storing this number in the contacts on your cell phone.)

Family or group service opportunity

SANDWICH-MAKING AT FRATERNITÉ

On the third Monday of every month Grace members car pool over to Fraternité Notre Dame, 502 N. Central, to pack lunches for homeless people. It takes about an hour and kids as young as first grade can participate, accompanied by a parent. The next lunch-packing date is Monday, September 17, at 7 p.m. Contact Kate Hogenson with questions or to arrange a ride.

PRAYERS

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

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

IN CELEBRATION

WE CELEBRATE with Paige Beer, daughter of Emily and Jason Beer, granddaughter of Karen and Tim Halter, who will be baptized on September 16; and with James Flahive, son of Jason and Kelsey Flahive, who will be baptized on September 23.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Donate flowers to remember a loved one or commemorate a special birthday or anniversary. Use the sign-up sheet at the reception desk in the atrium.

August 26 — in memory of Shirley Eid Holm from Christa Holm

September 2 — in memory of Stephen Schmidt from Gick Schmidt

September 16 — in honor of John Sanger’s 80th birthday and in memory of Robert Sanger’s 54th birthday from the family; and in celebration of Marv Bartell’s 80th birthday on this date from Brent, Brenda, Brooke, and Judy.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Grace Lutheran Church General Fund

Church budgeted contributions

July 1 – August 29, 2018 \$ 368,000
(\$40,900 per week)

Church actual contributions

July 1 – August 29, 2018 \$ 190,500
(Last year at this time: \$ 196,800)

Church giving is \$177,600 below budget and \$6,300 behind last year.

The new school year begins at Grace School

The new school year at Grace Lutheran School began on Tuesday, August 21, with a service of Holy Communion at 9 a.m. The theme for the school year is “We all are one in mission,” based on Ephesians 4:1–6:

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Two hundred students are enrolled in Grace School for the 2018-19 school year, from three-year-old preschool through eighth grade.

Technology upgrade

The school year began with everyone learning to use the new computers purchased with funds raised at A Graceful Evening last March. Thank you to everyone who supported the Fund-A-Need auction at A Graceful Evening!

Technology assistance needed

Dan Hogan, Grace’s IT coordinator, will be leaving his part-time to take a new job as a lecturer at UIC. Church and school are in need of a new part-time tech support person. You don’t have to be an expert—just someone with an interest and aptitude for technology who is willing to learn, with help from Dan and others. If you are interested, or know of someone who might be interested, please contact Bill Koehne (bkoehne@graceriverforest.org) or Jim McClanahan (jmccclanahan@graceriverforest.org).



Legacy grants support school marketing, religion curriculum

Supported by a grant from the Legacy of Grace fund, Grace School will be working with Dr. Rick Newberry of Enrollment Catalyst on marketing and enrollment strategies for Grace School. Dr. Newberry will be visiting the school on September 10 and 11 and will provide coaching and guidance throughout the year.

Another grant from Legacy will help to support the ongoing project of writing a religion curriculum for Grace School. Through the years Grace teachers have found that published materials available for religion instruction in private Christian schools do not meet the unique needs of the Grace School community. So they have set out to create their own, for use at Grace and potentially for sharing with other schools. Assisted by Grace School alum Dr. Jan Westrick of Valparaiso University, experienced teachers from Grace’s staff have constructed a curriculum outline. The Legacy grant funds the next phase of the project—the writing of lessons and related materials.

Sunday, September 9

Blessing of the Backpacks

Bring your backpacks to church on Sunday, September 9, as we pray for the start of the school year! We will ask God’s blessing on our learning and our friendships, and all backpacks will receive a special blessing tag to remind us of God’s presence everywhere we go and learn this year.

Welcome Back Family Pancake Breakfast

Between services on September 9, at 9:45 a.m., come to the Sunday School and Pre-Confirmation Welcome Back Family Pancake Breakfast in Fellowship Hall. Age-level Sunday School and Pre-Confirmation classes begin on September 16.

Family Fun Friday

September 28, 6–8 p.m.

Family-friendly dinner, creative crafts, open gym and fellowship for families with children age PK-6th grade. (Younger siblings are welcome, too!) RSVP online at GraceRiverForest.org by Thursday evening, September 27.

More Family Fun Fridays — save the dates!

October 26	February 1 Chili Cook-Off
November 30	March 1 Mardi Gras
January 11	April 5

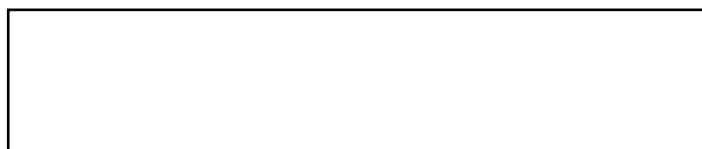


Come to Grace's Annual Oktoberfest

Authentic German fun for the whole family!

Sunday, September 23, 4–7 p.m.

**Traditional German menu • German oompah band and sing-along • Silent auction
Laterne parade • Erzgebirge booth • Special accordion tunes presentation!
Tickets available in the atrium and [online](http://GraceRiverForest.org) at GraceRiverForest.org**



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