

January 2019 Grace Notes



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

A Time for Hope

by Pastor Dave Lyle

The beginning of a new year gives us time to take stock of things. The turning of a page on a calendar is an arbitrary marker, but one with power nonetheless. As 2019 dawns, I imagine many of you are not sad to see 2018 grow smaller in the rearview mirror. It was a difficult year. The government is still partially shut down as I write this. The financial markets are erratic. We have watched fires burn in California; mass shootings unfold in schools, a synagogue, a newspaper office; children dying at the border; and racism revealed in our own backyard. I could go on. Will 2019 be any different?

Surely the woes of this world won't go away simply because December has turned to January. I don't know if people still make New Year's resolutions, but if they do, statistics show that they don't really work. Neither the chaotic suffering in the wider world nor the brokenness in our own lives will be cured by our own resolve. The forces of sin and evil aren't so easily rooted out.

**Jesus call us to bring
hope where hope
seems lost.**

This is not, however, a time for cynicism. As the people of God, we do not throw up our hands in despair. Neither do we believe that if nothing can change, we may as well just get whatever we can for ourselves. No, we will do what Christians have always been called to do. We will hope.

We place our hope in Jesus Christ, for it is Christ alone who holds the future of this world in his hands.

On New Year's morning, we heard in worship from St. Paul. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul reminds us that we don't need to make resolutions to become someone new or better. We simply have to trust the promise that God has already made us who we need to be: "But when the fullness of time

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*The Window of the Blessed Hope (rear balcony, south window)
"It shall be the purpose of this window to send forth each worshipper as
he leaves this house of God with a high hope in his heart and a new
sense of courage wherewith to go forth and meet the problems of life."
Otto Geiseman, Pastor at Grace, 1922-1962*



A Time for Hope

Continued from page 1

had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, though God" (Galatians 4:4-7).

You are a child of God, a child of the promise. The world will continue to change around you, and 2019 will bring new challenges. But God has made you into the person God desires you to be. All we need to resolve to do is to live like this is true. What does this life look like? Jesus showed us in our gospel for

New Year's Eve. He calls us to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger, to clothe the naked and to visit the sick and imprisoned. To care, in other words, for those who suffer in this world. To bring hope where hope seems lost.

I have no more insight into what this calendar year will bring than does anyone else. I would certainly like to see a year with more joy and less sorrow. But whatever the year brings, we are called to live as the people God has made us to be. Put your hope in Christ. Bear this hope to the world. While the world may disappoint us, hope never will.

Get your tickets now for the annual Slovak dinner benefit for the CCE in Martin, Slovakia

Grace's annual benefit dinner for the Center for Christian Education (CCE) in Martin, Slovakia, will celebrate *Fašiangy*, the Slovak pre-Lent season of carnival, on Saturday, January 26, in Fellowship Hall. Come and enjoy an evening filled with food, music, warm fellowship, and fun!

The dinner begins with a cash bar and silent auction at 5:30. Dinner is served at 6:30. Guests from Slovakia will talk about their work. They'll also entertain with Slovak music. Tickets (\$50/person; \$400 for a table of 8) are available online at GraceRiverForest.org.

Proceeds from the dinner support the Lutheran preschool, elementary and high school in Martin. These schools provide a high quality academic experience while sharing the good news of Jesus with a generation of young people whose parents grew up under communism with no religious education.

2019 Slovakia Mission Trip, June 27 — July 9, 2019

There are still places open on the mission trip team teaching Vacation Bible School in Martin next summer. You don't have to be an experienced teacher. Just come and share the good news of Jesus Christ as you meet and work with new people. Look for the brochure at the reception desk at Grace or contact Julie Modrich for more information (jmodrich@graceriverforest.org;



Benefit Dinner for the Center for Christian Education in Martin, Slovakia

January 26, Fellowship Hall

5:30 p.m., cocktails, silent auction 6:30 p.m., dinner

\$50/person \$400/table of 8

Tickets at GraceRiverForest.org

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, January 4, with the hope that it will arrive in your mailbox no later than January 11. Copies are also available at Grace.

Deadlines and submissions. The February issue of *Grace Notes* will be mailed on Friday, February 1. The deadline for copy is Wednesday, January 23; the issue covers events through early March. 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.

WORSHIP

Sunday, January 6

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

Holy Communion at 10 a.m.

Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-11
Bach Cantata 65, *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen* (They will all come forth out of Sheba)

Sunday, January 13

BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

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

Isaiah 43:1-7, Psalm 29, Acts 8:14-17, Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Sunday, January 20

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

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

Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 36:5-10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11

Sunday, January 27

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

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

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a, Luke 4:14-21

Sunday, February 3

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

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

Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Luke 4:21-30

Sunday, January 27, 3:45 p.m.

BACH CANTATA VESPERS

Alles nur nach Gottes Willen, BWV 72

All things according to God's will

Organ prelude: Steven Wenthe, Concordia University Chicago

Homilist: Frederick Niedner, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Ind.

Guest choir: Kapelle of Concordia University Chicago,

Charles P. Brown, conducting

Preview lecture (3 p.m. in the Seminar Room): Mark Peters, Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights

Frederick Niedner is the homilist for the January Cantata Vespers

Trusting in God's will is an important theme in the cantatas of J. S. Bach, including Cantata #72, *Alles nur nach Gottes Willen* (All things according to God's will). This is the cantata for the January 27 Bach Cantata Vespers. It will be sung by Concordia University's Kapelle, conducted by Charles Brown.

"Everything according to God's will, both in pleasure and sorrow, both in good and evil times. God's will should calm me in clouds and sunshine," sings the choir in the opening chorus.

The music for soloists that follows includes a litany-like prayer for health and happiness, sung by the alto, and a joyful aria for soprano about relying on Jesus' promises.

Frederick Niedner, Senior Research Professor of Theology at Valparaiso University, is the homilist for the service. Niedner has been a frequent guest at Grace through the years, remembered with respect and affection by Grace members who attended Valpo.

Steven Wenthe of Concordia University, another frequent guest at Grace, plays the organ prelude, beginning at 3:45 p.m.

The Grace Senior Choir will also participate in the music for the service. The preview lecture, by Mark Peters, begins at 3 p.m. in the Seminar Room.

Chamber Music Concert by the Kontras Quartet

The Kontras Quartet, Grace's string quartet in residence, will present a chamber music concert on Sunday, February 3, at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary. There's a pre-concert talk at 3 p.m. More information at kontrasquartet.com.





ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education classes meet at 9:45 a.m. on Sundays in the Seminar Room. 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).

January 13

“Christian Living With St. Ignatius”

Harry Parker, former pastor at First Baptist Church, Oak Park

The practices of Ignatian spirituality, based on the experiences and insights of the 16th-century Catholic theologian Ignatius of Loyola, are designed to foster self-awareness and help Christians better discern God’s will for their lives. Pastor Parker will talk about how he discovered these practices and how he, as a Baptist minister, has found them important in his own spiritual life.

January 20

“Teaching Nonviolence on Chicago’s West Side”

Leaders of the Institute for Nonviolence Chicago

“Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.” That was the vision of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. On the 90th anniversary of King’s birth, leaders of the Institute for Nonviolence Chicago will discuss how they apply King’s principles and practices of nonviolence as they seek to reduce violence and homicides on Chicago’s West Side and build a more safe, peaceful, just community—what Dr. King called “the Beloved Community.”

January 27 and February 3

“Life Together”

Pastor Dave Lyle

What does it mean to live together in Christ? Surely it is more than simply occupying the same space. Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s reflections in his book “Life Together” point us in the right direction. For Bonhoeffer, life together for Christians is always lived under the Word, fed and fulfilled by the sacraments.

Read “Life Together” before attending the class

Copies of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s “Life Together” are available at the reception desk in January for anyone who would like to read the book in preparation for Pastor Lyle’s Adult Ed sessions. You are welcome to take one — they’re free.

The number of books available is limited. If you discover that you do not have time to read the book or will be unable to attend the class, please return your copy to the front desk so that someone else may read it.

Sunday Bible Study

Led by Bob Jandeska, the Bible study group meets on Sunday mornings at 9:45 in the Conference Room on the lower level. The group will not meet on January 6 or 13. They are currently studying Revelation.



Grace Youth enjoyed celebrating Christmas together. Middle School youth (right) gathered for a caroling party, and High School youth (above) enjoyed a special Christmas brunch.



GRACE NEWS

KNITTING/CROCHETING GROUP. The knitting group will be back at their stitchery on January 15 at 1 p.m. in the church library. Beginners are welcome.

LECTIO DIVINA meets next on Monday, January 28, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the church library. Contact MaryBeth Buschmann for more information (marybeth1942@sbcglobal.net).

GRACE NOTES MAILING CREW will be at work on the February newsletter on Thursday, January 31, at 9:30 a.m. They welcome more helpers.

CORNERSTONES fellowship and Bible study meets on Wednesdays, starting January 9, in the church library, with treats and conversation at 10 a.m. and Bible study with the pastors at 10:30. There is Morning Prayer at 11:30 on January 16, followed by lunch. There's a hymn sing on January 23.

RELIGION IN LITERATURE. The book group meets next on Friday, January 18, at 8 p.m. for a discussion of Robert Penn Warren's "All the King's Men," led by Bill Clapp. Hosts for the evening are Michael and Chrissy Nelson, 639 S. Lombard, Oak Park. All are welcome.

RETIRED LEADERS AND OTHERS meet on Tuesday, January 8, at 10 a.m., in the Church Library. Louise Williams, retired Executive Director of the Lutheran Deaconess Association will talk about "Diakonia in the Early Church." Guests are welcome.

YOGA, taught by Ackli Howell, meets on Thursday evenings, 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 (708-366-4487).

MOMS OF LITTLES. The group for mothers of young children meets on Wednesday, January 16. 6:30–8 p.m. All are welcome! Contact Pastor Lauren for more information (lwegner@graceriverforest.org).

FINDING HOPE. The support group for people with chronic illness meets on Friday, January 11, 10 a.m. in the church library.

SANDWICH-MAKING AT FRATERNITÉ. Grace members will be making lunches at Fraternité Notre Dame, 502 N. Central, on Monday, January 21, at 7 p.m. Contact Kate Hogenson with questions or to arrange a ride (hogenson@msn.com; 708-445-9687).

Congregation meeting on January 27, 12:15 p.m.

The annual election of officers, council members, and board and committee members will take place at the congregation meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2019, 12:15 p.m., in Fellowship Hall. In addition to the election, the business at the meeting will include annual reports.

Please note the change in the date of the meeting, which was originally scheduled for January 20.

The list of nominations can be viewed at graceriverforest.org. Or pick up a copy of the list at the church administrative assistant's desk at Grace.

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.

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. .

December 30 — from Carl and Donna Gruendler in celebration of their 55th wedding anniversary; from Bob Burke in celebration of his 80th birthday..

January 13 — from Marge, Debbie and John Sanger in memory of Robert Sanger; from Deanna Marotz, in memory of her father, Charles Broggi.

PASTORS' EMERGENCY PHONE

Call 708-689-3032 for emergency pastoral care on weekends, or when the Grace building is closed.

Grace Family Retreat

Grace families are heading to camp on Presidents Day weekend! We are planning all sorts of family activities, crafts, games, and worship opportunities, with plenty of additional time for relaxation and family free time.

When: Friday, February 15 – Monday, February 18

Where: Imago Dei Village, Clintonville, Wisconsin

Cost \$100 per person age 6 and up, free for children 5 and under. Includes food, lodging for 3 nights, and use of camp facilities.

Click on the link at GraceRiverForest.org to register by January 10.

In preschool, the main rule is “to be kind”



is ‘be kind,’ because if you’re kind, that’s going to take you a lot of places. I think that’s where character starts in preschool.” Faith starts here, too, in a Christian school, because Jesus was kind.

Circle time in preschool offers opportunities to practice listening and other basic academic skills. As they count things, check the calendar, learn each others’ names, and say the alphabet in silly voices, children learn one-to-one correspondence, that each symbol has a meaning, and that reading goes from left to right. There are many other opportunities to have fun with academics in the preschool classroom, depending on what children are interested in and ready for. They also work a lot on fine motor skills, using pencils and scissors and picking up small objects. Snack time is about community: “This is mine, this is yours. We’re coming together, praying together, eating together and having some conversation. There’s a lot

of interesting little conversations that come about.”

This is Tina’s first time in a long time managing her own classroom. It’s gone smoothly, but, she says, “I’m learning why preschool teachers are either young or middle-aged. I couldn’t do this and then go home to little kids. I have more patience and attention for the little ones now that my kids are big.”

Her family did a lot of shopping around for a church after their recent move from Colorado to River Forest. They discovered a lot of connections at Grace Church and found a strong sense of community here.

Tina also appreciates the families of Grace Lutheran School: “Living in the bubble that is River Forest, coming here I found diversity that I wasn’t expecting. I appreciate how diverse the school is.”

Grace Lutheran School’s three-year-old preschool students are taught by Tina Baird, who is new to the staff this year. She and her husband, Mick, and their children, Caelin, Clayton, and Cole, are also new members of Grace Church.

Tina has a Masters degree in Early Childhood Exceptional Education Needs. Her BA from Valparaiso University is in communication disorders, and she has also worked in schools as a speech therapy assistant. So if you ask her to describe a typical day with three-year-olds in preschool, she focuses on interpersonal communication skills. “It’s a big word for a three-year-old,” she says, “but that’s what we’re doing.”

Much of a preschooler’s day looks like play, but when children play together, what they are really doing is learning how to solve conflicts. “That’s when all the conflicts happen, is during playing. They are learning to share and communicate their needs to others and understand what others are communicating to them.”

Three-year-olds say “what we all want to say,” says Tina, but “you can’t just tell someone you don’t like them” because they hurt you or took your toy. “We need to find a way to use kind words and be friendly.”

There’s a reason children do what they do. “So if they’re hitting we have to do more than say ‘Stop hitting.’ Why are you hitting? This is how you fix that so you don’t hit anymore.”

Grace Lutheran School is often described as a place where children grow in faith and character as well as academics. How does this apply to preschool?

In Tina’s classroom, she says, “the biggest rule

Expanded full-day options in Early Childhood next fall

Beginning in the fall of 2019, senior kindergarten (SK) will be a full-day program at Grace Lutheran School, with class from 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Children must be 5 years old by September 1 to enroll in Senior Kindergarten.

Junior kindergarten (JK) is in session Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Children must be 4 years old by September 1 to enroll in Junior Kindergarten.

Preschool (PK) offers options for Tuesday-Thursday, Monday-Wednesday-Friday, or Monday-through-Friday enrollment. Children must be 3 years old by September 1 to enroll in Preschool.

An optional afternoon program is available for students in PK and JK until 3 p.m. The afternoon program is flexible; children may attend for 1-5 days per week.

Grace Lutheran School



- **Early Childhood**
For ages 3–5
- **Grades 1–8**
Challenging curriculum with support for individual learning needs
- **Enrollment for 2019-20**
begins in January for current students and families from Grace Church

First Look Fridays Drop by for a tour!
Jan. 18, Feb. 15 8:30–10:30 am

Open House Meet the teachers, tour the school!
Sunday, January 27, 1–2:30 pm

Learn more at GraceRiverForest.org/grace-school/

GRACEFUL EVENING

MARCH 16, 2019

This year's Graceful Evening dinner-auction benefit for Grace Lutheran School takes place on Saturday evening, March 16, 6 p.m., at the Oak Park Country Club. Organizers are busy now gathering auction donations, seeking sponsors, and planning a fun evening for all who attend.

Grace members, school families, alumni and other friends of the school will soon receive a mailing with more information about supporting the event through sponsorships, auction item donations, program book ads, and, of course, attending the event.

Last year's Graceful Evening raised over \$85,000 for Grace Lutheran School's operating budget and a major technology upgrade. The Fund-A-Need for 2019 is focused on playground improvements, and the event as a whole will significant support for the high-quality education offered to students at Grace School.

Tickets for Graceful Evening will be available later in January. To learn more about sponsorship and advertising opportunities, please contact Event Chair Ryan Balock (Ryan.Balock@scholleipn.com) or Brian Schultz, Assistant School Administrator (708-366-6900 ext. 231; bschultz@graceriverforest.org).

Family Fun Friday

January 11, 6-8 p.m.

- Fellowship for families with children in kindergarten–6th grade. (Younger siblings are welcome, too.)
- Pizza supper and hot chocolate
- Open gym and craft projects
- Register online at GraceRiverForest.org by midnight on Thursday, Jan 10.
- Free will offering for meal and project.



More Family Fun Fridays in 2019

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Chili Cook-Off | February 1 |
| Mardi Gras | March 1 |



Women's Retreat: "Bold Women"

Saturday, February 2, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Sponsored by Women @ Grace

Join the women of Grace Lutheran Church and Harmony Community Church for an all-day retreat in Fellowship Hall. Pastor Phyllis Kersten and Deaconess Louise Williams will lead the study and discussion of "Bold Women of the Bible."

Please register by January 20. Space is limited. The \$20 registration fee for Grace members and friends includes a continental breakfast and a soup and salad lunch. Sign up and pay online or at the Grace reception desk. **Retreat t-shirts** (logo at left) will be available in sizes S to XXL for \$10. Order yours in the atrium on Sunday, January 13, or look for a form at the reception desk.



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