



GRACE NOTES

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211
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Grace in Action

Persons, places, vistas we have seen



A group of Grace Church members presented a new set of dishes to St. George Episcopal Church Leadville as a Christmas Present

JANUARY 2018

From Our Pastors



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Happy New Year



Catherine's Commentary

If you have paid attention to the news at Grace Church, you are aware that the Council has been doing some discernment about God's call for the congregation in 2018. In the past year or so, ongoing events demanded the attention of the leadership and we worked hard to keep the congregation together as best we could in the midst of some conflict. Now that the conflict is resolved (although we are aware of the need for continued healing), we felt it was time to form some positive, proactive goals and expectations for 2018.

To begin, we surveyed council members about how we did last year and asked about hopes and

expectations for next year. We thought, under the circumstances, we survived the past year fairly well. Everyone in the congregation pitched in and made things work. So we turned our attention to the future and discussed the mission of the church - to call all people to unity with God and each other (BCP p. 867). Our discussion coalesced around this mission as the underlying motivation for our goals.

We then discussed how we might reach out in today's secular environment and agreed that we needed to be creative in how we invited people to

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What's important is that we spread the Gospel. We intend to do that in 2018. Everyone at Grace is invited to join the effort!

Sharon's Column



HAPPY NEW YEAR! It's good to be back in Colorado after two and a half months in Texas! However, we are missing the good "spoiling" we were able to give our grandchildren. Now I might speak more Texan than before we were in Texas. Howdy, Y'all!

As we begin 2018 we have an exciting opportunity to respond to who God needs us to DO and BE for the Buena Vista area. The first Sunday of January is known as The Baptism of The Lord. Baptism, no matter what age, charges us to a life of a disciple - one who is learning and growing into how God empowers us to live.

Both Churches, Episcopal and United Methodist, baptize adults and infants/children. If you were baptized as an infant/child someone believed that you were God's child even before you knew who God is! They accepted the responsibility to have you reared in the Church and grow into being a faithful child of God! If you

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Church Council Report

By Bob Yinger, Chairman



At the Grace Council meeting on December 10 we received great news on the financial front. Our fall pledge drive was very successful! Due to increased generosity and new member pledges, we will begin 2018 with almost the

same level of projected income as we began 2017. By adding to this number our budget savings from the 2017 fiscal year, the Council anticipates presenting at our January 28 annual meeting a 2018 budget that is balanced and sustainable at the same level as this year. Thank you all for your generous support of Grace Church's community and mission!

The council also approved using building endowment interest savings to allow us to conduct important maintenance on our historic building. Expect to see in coming months some overdue exterior painting and window resealing in the Sanctuary. The Council also initiated plans for creating a new member update insert for the church directory. Isn't it wonderful to have a problem like this!

Finally, as I step aside as Council Chair I would like to express my many thanks to the members of the 2017 Grace Church Council: Evelyn Baker, Martha Bauman, Peggy Finkowski, Junia Fitzgerald, Bob Freed, Kurt Miller, Nancy Rem, and Carol Slater. These hard working volunteers have held together in a difficult transition year and have, along with Catherine and Sharon, helped build a renewed spirit and energy in our fellowship. It has been my pleasure to be a part of this group! I also want to thank all of you for your love for and commitment to Grace Church. We continue to be a unique congregation that has the potential for even greater fellowship and service in 2018.

Christmas at St. George's

By Bonnie Young

St. George Episcopal Church in Leadville serves free community meals five times a week. Grace Church became involved in October by taking on the responsibility of the first Saturday night of every month for 6 months. Grace has done 3 months.

Teams of 5-7 people from Grace chose the menu of a balanced meal for 30-40 people. The meal is then prepared by the team at home. The team meets at Grace to drive to Leadville, sets up the meal with the assistance of the staff, serves the meal and eats with those who attend. At the end of the meal, the team cleans up, washes the dishes and returns to BV.

Because of Grace members' involvement, they became aware that St. George sorely needed dishes. The Grace Women's Bible Study and Ladies Sewing group purchased 48 sets of dishes plus serving bowls and platters and presented them to Rev. Ali Lufkin as a Christmas gift from Grace. The Outreach Committee committed money to support St. George's meals as well.

Everyone who has participated in the first three months of this endeavor has thoroughly enjoyed the experience without exception. "The people at St. George are just wonderful and thankful" says one participant. Grace will make a decision in March whether to continue. We are hopeful that other members of Grace will become involved and sign up for the next 3 months and beyond. Any questions can be directed to Bonnie Young or Dorothy Miller.

Sharon's Column

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were baptized as a baby/child, ask your parents about your baptism. If your parents are not living, perhaps you can find your Baptismal Certificate, remember the Church in which you were baptized and who the clergy person was who "initiated you into Christ's holy church." (Both denominations have "Confirmation" in which youth learn how to become a faithful disciple and then take vows of the Church to accept for themselves the faith in which they were reared!)

This year will you join me in living our Baptism? Will you remember your Baptism? Will you leave the Church each Sunday prepared, challenged and committed to. . .

. . . "Renouncing the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?"

. . . "Accepting the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?"

. . . "Confessing Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations and races?"

. . . "According to the grace given to you, will you to remain a faithful member of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?"

Catherine's Column

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become part of our loving community. "Back door" evangelism seemed to be the way to go. In other words, we would invite people into our community not only by continuing to invite people to worship with us on Sunday mornings, but also by inviting people to other events. For example, we can organize hikes next summer that include a spiritual dimension, or create a Spiritual Discovery Group for our West Main neighborhood, or do a Blessing of the Animals service in a nearby park. We had some very exciting ideas! We thought we could invite folks to attend events with the hope that they would have a spiritual experience that would eventually bring them into our community and perhaps even bring them to worship on Sunday mornings.

I believe that we will continue to bring in new members in the traditional way - by providing a welcoming, inspirational Sunday morning worship service that brings people back. I also believe that we can grow our congregation by "back door" evangelism. What's important is that we spread the Gospel. We intend to do that in 2018. Everyone at Grace is invited to join the effort!

TRANSITIONS

Continue to pray for Mary Lou Bowman and her health problems.

Remember Carolyn Hayes as she continues to regain her health.

Please pray for Bob Freed and Dorothy Miller who have been under the weather lately.

Danny Simpson sends the following:

Now that I can finally "see the light at the end of the tunnel" with my spinal surgeries, I would like to thank all of the people who helped me get here: Bobbie and Henry Eisenhand, Tom Clark, Junia and Bill Fitzgerald, Lynette Neesen, Jennifer Scoggin, and Nancy Zoeller.

Thank you for your support and the prayers of so many others. All of you truly embody what the family of God means to me.

Happy New Year from Mike Frosolono

We have no choice other than to go forward into the future. We cannot return to the past, no matter how wonderful it may have been or how gloriously we misperceive it. Genesis also speaks to this point. God expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, and prohibited their return to that idyllic place.

January is named after the Roman god, Janus, who had two faces. The Romans often placed two-sided representations of Janus' face in doorways looking both to the past and future. This depiction teaches that we should not go into the future without understanding our past. The philosopher, George Santayana, gave us good advice: *Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.* We must remember and learn from the past as we traverse the vanishingly short present on our way to the future.

Christians look to the past for evidence of how God keeps his mighty promises. We see God's faithfulness to our ancestors and to us, even when they and we were not faithful to God; hence, we approach our future with confidence. We hear the awesomely victorious declaration of the Christ of Revelation, *See, I am making all things new!* Our hope in Christ, propels us into the future toward an always-beckoning new life. Let us fix our hearts and minds upon the hope Christ offers us. May we all have a Hopeful New Year!

From the Treasurer

Hello, Grace Church! This is Becky Arthur, the treasurer of the Church. I need to make an appeal to you.

We have had several members of the Finance Committee leave the church early this year, and we're in need of 2 or 3 folks to replace them. The job involves counting offerings after church, recording them in the computer, preparing a bank deposit and taking the deposit to the bank. We also will resume having budgeting meetings; probably 2 or 3 a year. Ed Butler gallantly remained in his position for the remainder of the year, but we need to have some volunteers to go into this new year.

The church also needs a good Treasurer. I can serve only in a very limited way this year because the bank I work for is being acquired at the end of this month. My work schedule is already expanding (not a good thing...) and will become totally overwhelming toward the end of the year. I would be happy to serve in this capacity again in a couple years, but if anyone who can give this the time it needs and the respect it deserves has an interest in this position, please let me, Catherine, or Bob Yinger know.

I think Dorothy Miller or Jo Rodeheffer would be able to answer questions about the actual mechanics of the finance committee offerings-counting needs, and Dorothy has offered to train anyone who is interested. All cash is counted in what we bankers like to call "dual custody" so that gives us all some protection.

Thank you so very much for your prayerful consideration of our church's financial needs, this time not from your treasure, but from your time and talent!

Announcements

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH, is about one month away. Yes we just finished Christmas! That means we will join with Congregational United Church of Christ on Crossman Ave in BV in the Lenten season with every other Wednesday an early evening Service followed by a meal of Soup and Bread. We will once again take turns with the service and the meals with them. Check with Maryanne Freed for more information and helping with the upcoming meal. Thank You

The new sign-up sheets for Altar Flowers and Coffee Hour are in Parish Hall. Please sign up to dedicate flowers and bring snacks for coffee hour.

Congratulations to the Foxes



Nancy and Rick cutting their cake at coffee hour on Sunday. The cake was in celebration of their recent marriage.

Grace Notes is a publication of Grace Church in Buena Vista, Colorado

Grace is an Episcopal-United Methodist Ecumenical Fellowship where people of all Christian faith traditions are finding a spiritual home.

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