



# GRACE NOTES

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211  
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## God's Glory

*Persons, places, vistas we have seen*



A beautiful sunrise last week in Buena Vista.

Photo by Sherry Thomas

### FEBRUARY, 2018

#### From Our Pastors



Rev. Tran writes about "backdoor evangelism."



Rev. Robertson writes about observing lent.

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#### Ministry Reports



Beautiful Sunrise

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Evelyn Baker reports on the last Council meeting.

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Highlight

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## A Prayer for Lenten Grace

Loving God, during the sacred season of Lent, bring me closer to you. Prepare a place in my home and heart for silence and solitude, so that I may re-discover the grace of a prayer-full life. Help me to fast from those things that threaten the well-being of body and soul and remind me of the grace of simplicity. Enlarge my heart so

that I give to those in need and, in so doing, rediscover the grace of gratitude and generosity. May this season be a grace-filled time to rekindle my love for and faith in you. Amen.

## Catherine's Commentary

In a Gallup Poll taken a few years ago, 30 percent of Americans described themselves as "spiritual but not religious." For all of us church goers, that's not good news. All mainline denominations have experienced the effects of this trend. Bringing people into our churches is becoming more and more challenging. Fortunately, an even greater number, about 48 percent, of respondents to the same poll, described themselves as "spiritual *and* religious." That helps.

Lately, you may have heard me talking about "backdoor evangelism." This term could be interpreted in many different ways, but what it means to me is

trying to address the needs of those folks who describe themselves as spiritual, whether religious or not. Both the "spiritual but not religious" and "spiritual and religious" are people who may eventually be looking for a spiritual community to call home. Reaching out into the community by offering spiritual experiences seems like the logical way to go. That is something we can do!

You may have noticed that Grace Church, being who we are ecumenically speaking, necessarily holds lightly to our religion. The nature of our

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*Reaching out into the community by offering spiritual experiences seems like the logical way to go. That is something we can do!*

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## Sharon's Column



Oh! My goodness! We have finished Advent, Christmas, about to finish Epiphany & all of a sudden it's going to be Ash Wednesday & Lent!

When we are faithful & pay attention to God's movement in our lives, we need the seasons of the year to slow us down & reflect! Now as we prepare for the season of Lent, please join me in a time of reflection during the 40 Days of Lent. This "Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline" is one way to stop & reflect each day:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism.

It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by

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## Church Council Report

By Evelyn Baker, Chairperson



The Grace Council meeting on January 14 for our first meeting of 2018. The first order of business was to elect new officers. Evelyn Baker was elected as Chairman, Martha Bauman was elected as Vice Chairman, and Carol Slater was re-

elected as Secretary. We want to express our most sincere thanks to Bob Yinger for his service as Council Chairmen for 2017.

As Bob stated in our Annual Meeting on January 28, we were able to finish 2017 in the black. And due to the generosity of the pledges, we were able to present a balanced budget for 2018. We look forward to a successful financial year ahead.

At the end of the year, each of the Council members, as well as Catherine, Sharon, and members of the SPRC, were given an opportunity to state their top three goals for the congregation for 2018. During a work session, these goals were discussed and summarized will be the focus of the Council's retreat on February 2 & 3. We plan to use turn goals into an action plan for the upcoming year and will be presenting the final plan to the congregation in early February.

We are excited about what lies ahead in 2018, and ask for your prayers for guidance and wisdom as we move forward.

## Outreach Report

By Tom Clark

The Outreach committee supported some 25 organizations/projects with its budgeted funds of \$14,342 for 2017.

This included the following:

- Alliance Against Domestic Abuse\*
- Alas de Amor
- Ark Valley Humane Society\*
- Arkansas Valley Christian Mission\*
- BV Strong
- Chaffee County Fire Protection\*
- Chaffee County Search and Rescue\*
- Chaffee County Habitat for Humanity
- Chaffee County Boys & Girls Club\*
- Chime Time
- Foreign Missionary - Martha Eshelman's son
- Hope 21
- La Puente
- Ladies Sewing Group
- Mini-Blessings\*
- Quilts of Valor
- St. George church\*
- Samaritan Fund
- Samaritans Purse
- Sweet Dreams Colorado
- UMCOR (hurricane disaster relief)
- Valley to Valley Senior Center\*

In addition you, the congregation, supported the six Monthly projects with in-kind or monetary donations that were scheduled throughout the year: BV Pregnancy Center, Sweet Dreams Colorado, Quilt of Valor, Arkansas Valley Christian Mission, Samaritan Purse and Valley to Valley Senior Center.

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## Sharon's Column

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penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church.

In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent:

by self-examination and repentance;  
by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;  
and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.

To make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us kneel before our Creator and Redeemer  
*"The United Methodist Book of Worship"*

## Catherine's Column

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community is that our personal relationships with God and each other are more important than our religious tradition. Not that our religious tradition is not important – we treasure that as well (and I don't mean to imply that our Sunday worship is not a spiritual experience!). But God and each other come before our denominations. So, it seems that we are well positioned to reach out through the back door by offering spiritual experiences while holding lightly to religion. It's who we are.

We will always bring people into our welcoming church family through the front door on Sunday mornings, but there is a whole other group of folks who might come through our door at other times and in other ways. So I hope you will all continue to invite people to our Sunday service, and in addition, invite people to our other spiritual offerings. There will be plenty of opportunities to do that in this coming year!

## TRANSITIONS

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We need continued prayers for Mary Lou Bouman as she continues to have health issues.

Please be in prayer for Andrea Frosolono. She is having tests and isn't feeling well.

Congratulations to Martha Bauman on the birth of a new granddaughter this week.

Good news! Barbara O'Donnell reports that her daughter, Tanya is feeling much better and able to return to her normal routine.

Please pray for Susan Massman. She is having trouble with her legs.

Please remember Nancy Bruce in your prayers as she continues to battle cancer.

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## Outreach Committee Report

Continued from page 3

Finally there was a carryover of 2016 Outreach funds of \$4485 that resulted from an accrual as the 2016 Outreach funds were not released until starting in May 2016. These funds were distributed in January of 2017 to the organizations/projects highlighted with an \* and two other organizations - The Navigators (Jecka Walker) and St. Francis Shelter (Denver food and shelter for homeless)

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## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### Birthdays

2/18 - Bev Gunderman

2/28 - John Epperson



## Lenten Schedule - 2018

Feb. 14 Ash Wed at CUCC

Feb. 21 6:00pm at Grace  
(Women are in charge of this service)

Feb. 28 CUCC

March 7 Grace Church  
(Men doing this service)

March 14 CUCC

March 21 Grace Church - Tenebrae

March 25 Palm Sunday 9:00am

March 29 Seder Meal

March 30 Good Friday Service 6:00pm at Grace

April 1, 9:00am - **EASTER SUNDAY**





## Lenten Meals

Remember that Grace Church will serve 3 Lenten meals of soup and bread. The dates are: February 21, March 7 and March 21.

Maryanne Freed has the schedule in the Parish hall if you would like to sign up to help with either set, clean-up or providing a pot of soup.

We host the meals with the CUCC who does the alternate weeks. Please remember that it is important to support our sister church by attending their services as well.

If you have questions about these meals, please contact Maryanne Freed.

## Happy Birthday, Sharon



*Rev. Sharon Robertson blowing out her birthday candles.*

*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.*

*Please send articles and pictures to Editor Judy Epperson at EppersonJudy51@gmail.com.*

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