

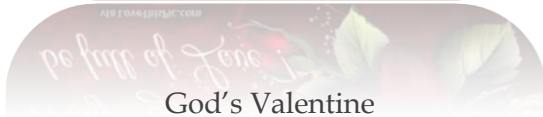


GRACE NOTES

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211
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Happy Valentine's Day

Persons, places, vistas we have seen



God's Valentine

FEBRUARY 2019

From Our Pastors



Rev. Tran reports on the Annual Meeting.



Rev. Erickson writes about God's love.

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Ministry Reports



God's Valentine

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Mike Frosolono reports on the last Council meeting.

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David writes about Valentine's day.

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President's Day

"The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope."

Barack Obama

Catherine's Commentary

At our Annual Meeting on the Jan. 27th, we gathered to have a look at the business of the church. The Annual Meeting is not the most exciting event on our calendar, but it is necessary and requires your participation. Thanks for being there! It is a privilege to share in the responsibilities of leadership, stewardship, and relationship at Grace.

As we begin another year, I am feeling deep gratitude for our Grace family. I would like to thank Evelyn Baker, who was our Council Chair for 2018. As you know, Evelyn had a busy year personally as she was recognized around the world for her glass work. In spite of that,

she managed to keep track of what was going on at Grace and make sure all the bases were covered. Thanks, Evelyn! And thank you to all the Council members who completed their terms this year. Both Bob Yinger and Peggy Finkowski went off the Council after three-year terms and both served as Council Chair for one of those years. I have appreciated them for their wise guidance and dedication! And thank you to Carol Slater who served as our Council Secretary and Bob Freed, both of whom go off the Council this year. We have been fortunate to have such dedicated leaders at Grace!

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What a gift it is to be part of a church family like Grace. I am grateful for you all.

David's Column

God's Love



May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance."

2 Thessalonians 3:5

Every year on February 14th we celebrate Valentine's Day. On that day, restaurants are full of couples enjoying the love within their relationships, looking for ways to make the day more memorable. They buy flowers or hire quartets to serenade their loved one at work and so on. More power to them! Romantic love makes us do things we normally do not do.

When love is mentioned in the Bible it is seldom a romantic love. Love in the scriptures is given a responsibility. It takes action not because of romance or feelings; it takes action because of the character of the one who loves.

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Church Council Report

by Mike Frosolono, Chairman



Church Council met twice in January. The 2018 and 2019 budgets were the primary but not exclusive focus of both meetings. The 2018 budget was used to prepare the 2019 budget.

The 2018 budget incorporated a deficit, Income vs Expenses, of

\$1,080. David Erickson presented the 2019 budget that he had diligently prepared for consideration by the Council. This budget showed a deficit of \$5,631. The Council voted to accept the 2019 budget. Various strategies were discussed concerning elimination of the 2019 deficit. The Council agreed that the 2019 budget should be presented to the Congregation with confidence that we can raise more funds to eliminate the deficit. Members of the congregation have been contacted concerning increasing their pledges. Catherine proposed she would preach a sermon alerting the Congregation to the issues involved in crafting responsible budgets.

The Council confirmed that 10% of all church income is designated for Outreach. Also, the budget includes 7.5% of income designated to each of the Episcopal Diocese and the United Methodist apportionment.

Discussion of a memorandum of understanding between the Church and the Ladies Sewing Group led to the proposal that the sewing group would open a savings account for monies raised through the group's separate fund-raising efforts. This tactic should allow the Ladies Sewing Group to have control of their funds, thereby simplifying development and monitoring of our Church Budgets.

Valentine's Day

by David Erickson

Valentine's Day, also known as Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is an extremely popular holiday that celebrates and honors St Valentine and to express gratitude and love to dear ones.

Historically, Valentine's Day is said to have originated in Europe and made its way to North America in the 19th century by British settlers. It originated as a Western Christian liturgical feast day honoring saints named Valentinus.

Several stories associated with the various Valentines that were connected to February 14 were told. It is said that the popular hagiographical account of Saint Valentine of Rome inspired the holiday. Saint Valentine was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire. According to legend, during his imprisonment, Saint Valentine healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterias, and before his execution, he wrote her a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell.

The day first became associated with romantic love in the 14th century, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). Today, Valentine's Day is recognized as a significant cultural and commercial celebration in many regions around the world, although it is not a public holiday in any country.

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David's Column

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"God is love," says 1 John 4:8. God's nature and character is love. God does nothing that can go against His character and nature of love. Of course, there is more to God than love but that will have to wait for another time.

When Jesus tells us in Luke 6:35 to *"love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back,"* we understand God's view of love is radically different than our usual touchy-feely kind of love. True love takes God's working in us. In order for any of us to have a Christ-like love we have to allow the Holy Spirit to change us. We need the Holy Spirit to help us see the world and others as God sees. When we can see like God sees then we can respond and react as God's ambassadors in this world. We represent Him on this earth and so we should properly represent His love. How is your love?

"May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you." (1 Thessalonians 3:12)

David

Catherine's Column

continued from page 2

Thank you to Sharon and Max, and David and Lenee for their pastoral leadership. Thank you to Ed and Margaret Butler and to all the music participants for all the great music this year. Thank you to Bonnie Young for organizing the St. George meals, Advent Brunch, and Quilts of Valor. Thank you to Judy Epperson for all her work on behalf of Congregational Life and Administration. Thanks to Jennifer Wright and the Angels of Grace for all the prayer shawls. Thank you to Vi Hardy and Martha Bauman and the Ladies Sewing group for all their hard work. Thanks for Maryanne Freed for leading the Altar Guild and so much more. And to all the Altar Guild members for their work on the altar. Thanks to Cheryl Wilderman for her work as Treasurer. Thank you to Junia and Bill Fitzgerald for scheduling all the readers and acolytes. Thanks to Christina Randle for the Christmas craft day. Thanks for Sherry Thomas for the visitor cards. A big thank you to Kurt Miller for all the work that has been accomplished around the church buildings and grounds and for managing the sound board. Thanks to Dorothy Miller for her contributions in too many areas to list! Thanks to our ushers, coffee hosts, flower donors, snow shovelers,

TRANSITIONS

Remember to keep praying for Ali and for St. George's church as she continues her battle with cancer.

Pray for Sharon Robertson's mother. She turned 100 on February 4, 2019.

Remember Catherine and her family as they work with her parents to transition to assisted living.

Judy Epperson asks for prayers for her friend, Pat Mammenga and her family as she recovers from a hip replacement.

Continue to pray from Ampy and Fred.

Remember Bob and Maryanne Freed in your prayers. Bob is having health problems.

Pray for the United Methodist Church as we head into the General Conference meeting. Decisions will be made at this meeting that could potentially split the church.

Church Council Report

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The same person will continue to remove snow from the parking lot and the city sidewalks external to the Church property; however, we need volunteers from the congregation to remove snow from the walkways leading from the parking lot to the front and back entrances to the Church as well as the front steps and the ramps at the rear of the Church and Parish hall.

Valentine's Day

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Valentine's Day traditions include card and gift giving. Popular gifts exchanged on the day include cards, fresh flowers (mainly the rose), chocolates and sweets. Additionally, people also complement these with other gifts of love to express affection and love. Valentine's Day dinner and dance parties are organized all over the country to celebrate the occasion. Many couples hold private celebrations in homes or restaurants. Children also gift handmade gifts and cards to their friends and loved ones.



Catherine's Column

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readers, acolytes, singers, instrumentalists, sewers, leaders, worshipers, tithers, cleaners, cooks and bakers, technicians, bean counters, office workers, pot luckers, knitters, pray-ers, Bible studiers,.. That's all I can think of right now, but I'm sure I can't remember all the stuff you all do. One more thing for sure is thank you for caring so much for each other.

What a gift it is to be part of a church family like Grace. I am grateful for you all.

Catherine

Points to Ponder

The 8 Rules George Washington Carver Lived By

1. Be clean both inside and out.
2. Neither look up to the rich or down to the poor.
3. Lose, if need be, without squealing.
4. Win, without bragging.
5. Always be considerate of women, children and older people.
6. Be too brave to lie.
7. Be too generous to cheat.
8. Take your share of the world and let others take theirs.

Trinity News

by Margaret Gillikin

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 says, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart."

This passage of scripture, known as the Sh'ma, is a watchword of our faith... proclaiming belief in and worship of the One true God. In Judaism, both public worship services, individual and small group prayers all begin by reciting the Sh'ma. These central words remind us of who we are and whose we are.

They also charge us with one of the most important activities for people of faith: hearing. LISTEN!

Are we listening?

In our prayers, are we doing all the talking, expecting God to listen to us? Do we truly wait upon the Lord... listening for the still, small voice of the One who creates sustains and calls us?

Trinity News

continued from column 1

In the days to come, different prayer resources will be made available to enable the Mountain Sky Conference to pray together during this pivotal time. You may already be making plans as a circuit, congregation or family. However, you choose to lift up your heart to God, I encourage you, brothers and sisters, to Hear our God and listen with faith, hope and love.

Blessings on the Journey from your District Superintendent,

Margaret

February Birthdays

Bev Gunderman 2/18

John Epperson 2/28



Grace Traditions and Practices

by Judy Epperson

I have been asked by some of the new members to explain some traditions and practices of Grace Church. So.... here is some information about Coffee Hour.

It's not hard to participate in Coffee Hour. Just sign up on the sheet for a Sunday, or two, or twelve. We welcome people who are enthusiastic. If you sign up for a Sunday, make sure that you have a partner family (not just you, or you and your spouse). It is great if you get someone who knows what they are doing.

Now to the food. The more the better, right? Not necessarily. Remember, it's a snack with coffee, not a three-course meal. What I recommend is have a little something for everyone. A sweet - which could be donuts, a sweet bread, cookies, muffins, cupcakes, one, not all of them. A healthy food - vegetables, fruit, or a combination of both. An old favorite - cheese and crackers or chips and dip, something like that.

Drinks. Usually we serve coffee, hot tea and water and so far, no one has complained.

The cardinal rule is to **KEEP IT SIMPLE**. Once you've done it a few times, you will develop your own style and can branch out, but don't kill your self at first.

Finally have fun. You can't do it wrong. Everyone in the congregation will love you because you were thoughtful enough to take the time to fix the rest of us something to eat.

If you have questions, feel free to contact me at eppersonjudy51@gmail.com.

Judy

Thanks!

For the Ladies Advent Brunch

Thank you to the Ladies of Grace for the delightful Old-Fashioned Christmas Brunch. Delicious food served by handsome gentlemen with their colorful ties, inspiring Christmas songs, Memories of the Past by Marge and brought to a close by the "Two Jesters." This is truly a gift from the heart.
God Bless,
VirJeanne

For a Prayer Shawl

A few months ago, Sherry Thomas's son, Mark, traveled to China and met a lady named Maggie that is going through a serious illness. He asked Grace to send her a prayer shawl. Following is a portion of an email sent to Mark thanking us: *Maggie was really happy to see the shawl and deeply moved by your touching letter. In the healing process, what the patient needs most is love and support from friends and family. Your thoughts and concern are great comfort to her. The blessings from the Church bring the Holy Spirit closer to us. I thin the shawl is also a symbol for the friendship between the USA and China. Thank you so much for a heart-warming gift.*

Maggie's condition has improved even though she still needs to go to the hospital to change the nutrient solution every day. We hope as the medical science develops, there will be new technologies to accelerate the process of recovery.

A picture of Maggie in her prayer shawl made by Carol Slater hangs on the bulleting board in Parish Hall.

Many thanks to the Grace Church Prayer Shawl ministry.

Maggie in her prayer shawl



A Special Day



Happy Birthday, Mike!

We wished Mike Frosolono a Happy Birthday on January 27, 2019, but he wouldn't say how old he was. We hope he had a great birthday. Thanks to Catherine for baking the cake.

Photo by Sherry Thomas

Also pictured: Susan Champine and Barbra Clark.

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.