



GRACE NOTES

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211
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Alleluia, He Is Risen

Persons, places, vistas we have seen



The cross appears in the morning cloud. Who could doubt the sign? Christ is risen indeed!

Photo by Sherry Thomas

APRIL 2019

From Our Pastors



Rev. Tran writes about the Easter events at Grace.



Rev. Erickson explains why he is ready for Easter.

2

Ministry Reports



Alleluia! He is Risen.

1



Mike Frosolono reports on the last Council meeting.

3



Margaret Gillikin's monthly message.

3

Holy Week Schedule

Final Lenten Meal: April 10, 2019 6:00 pm CUCC

Palm Sunday Service: April 14, 2019 9:00 am

Maunday Thursday Communion Service & Vigil April 18, 2019 6:00 pm

Good Friday Service: Stations of the Cross April 19, 2019 5:00 pm

Catherine's Commentary

Our Easter preparations during the season of Lent conclude with Holy Week. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday on April 14th. We will also observe Maundy Thursday on April 18th with a service at 6:00pm and will do Stations of the Cross at 5:00pm on Good Friday, April 19th.

Palm Sunday begins with the Liturgy of the Palms in the Parish Hall. From there we process with palms into the sanctuary. The procession recalls our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The mood then becomes somber, as we read through the Passion Gospel. In this liturgy, we recall in song, word, ceremony, and action the

main events of Holy Week. This is a service full of paradox as we are reminded that Jesus is both king and sacrificial lamb.

Maundy Thursday will begin at 6:00pm with a Communion service. After the Eucharist, the altar will be stripped, and the blessed sacrament will be processed to the Altar of Repose in the Parish Hall. A vigil will begin at approximately 7:30pm and will conclude on Friday morning. The Maundy liturgy enacts the events of the evening before the crucifixion as described in St. John's gospel. The liturgy reminds us of the call to obey the Lord's new

Continued page 4



The new life of the resurrection is only complete when we do as Jesus asks when he says, "Take up your cross and follow me!"

David's Column - I Am So Ready for Easter



I am so ready for Easter! I need it. We **all** need it. We need the earth shattering, tomb opening message of Easter. The message that begins with a whisper and then **shouts**, "No matter what - Love and Life win out in the end." Yes, I am so ready to celebrate Easter this year.

Too much despair, death and dark deeds have been popping up here and there. I will not go over the list of shootings, bombings, and disunity. You know all the things I mean. Sin which brings separation from God, from others and from our truest selves is one of the problems that Easter addresses and we cannot. Death which brings another sort of separation is the other problem that Easter addresses and we cannot.

There is part of every soul which yearns for unity of our ideals and the way we live in the world. God offers us a new creation in the "Second Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:47) who gives us the spiritual fuel to grow into that unity and beyond our fractured selves.

Continued page 4

Church Council Report

by Bob Yinger, Chairman



Grace Church continues to have a strong financial position, as illustrated by a topline summary from the February 2019 Finance Report: February 2019 – Income \$13,788; expenses 11,909; Total \$1878; as compared to January 2019 – Income

\$16,100, Expenses \$12,772, total \$3,328. More detailed information about our assets, budgets, minutes, and other documents are available for review in the Parish Hall.

Two motions were made concerning the handbells the church uses:

- (1) Counsel approved Susan Shampine and Margaret Butler's proposal that approximately \$1,000 from the memorial fund be taken to purchase an F3 (low F) bell in memory of Billie Love for the Easter bell choir performance. The music was written in memory of the students killed at the Columbine shooting, and Easter will be one day past the 20th anniversary of that event.
- (2) Margaret asked the council to consider accepting the gift of the handbells and equipment the Butlers own. Council tabled that decision in order to consider how and where the bells and equipment can be stored.

Council discussed our perceived need to respond publicly to the decision by the United Methodist Church at General Conference 2019 affirming that the LGBTG lifestyle is incompatible with Christianity and excluding LGBTQ persons from full inclusion in the United Methodist Church.

Trinity Views

by Margaret Gillikin

Have you heard of the TV. program, “Nailed It!”? Amateur bakers are challenged to replicate a professional’s cake, and their results are generally far, Far, FAR from perfect copies of the original. The winning cake “nailed it” – even if anyone with sight can tell it’s nowhere close to the model. I mention this show because this idea of giving someone a “Nailed It” award is seeping into the vernacular of our culture and is applied with varying degrees of cynicism, sarcasm, humor and generosity.

In this season of Lent and Holy Week, the stories of the Gospel depicting the journey of Jesus moving inexorably toward Jerusalem, frequently arouse my sympathies for the disciples. For if anyone was trying to play “Nailed It!” in real life, it was the disciples after all.

These ordinary folks heard the invitation, “Come” and left jobs and families behind in order to follow an itinerant preacher around Judea without really understanding what they were doing or why Jesus asked it of them. In barely three years, they discovered that they didn’t get to keep their Teacher to themselves... sure, sometimes they had some quiet times together. But mostly there were interruptions, when other folks trailed along as they walked, simple meals and times of worship or teaching saw folks barging in, demanding healing or scripture interpretation or countless other services. Why, even the very weather caused disruption, turning simple trips across the lake into object lessons and tests of faith that almost always had the disciples looking like the amateurs they were.

Yes, the Disciples traveled with the Master. But they weren’t Him. They didn’t share his perspective or identity or purpose. Though they begged for Jesus to detour around Jerusalem, forgetting about Passover this year, Jesus went on ahead. All there was for them to do was to continue to follow... to continue to faithfully be with the one whom they had committed their lives to...

[Continued page 5](#)

David's Column continued from page 2

There is a part of every soul that yearns for life beyond the last word of death. We grieve the loss of loved ones. We also grieve the loss of all we have learned and become. We grieve in anticipation of our own demise. Easter makes the claim that death does not have the last word. Easter proclaims by the resurrected Jesus that when you give yourself to God – God never gives you up. Never!

It will be a joyous Easter for me. I hope for you as well. Come hear this amazing good news proclaimed. New Life and Eternal Life are yours through faith in the One who offers the whole world a chance to begin again. It will be hard for some to believe. It has always been. News this good seems "too good to be true."

But when you believe in your heart that YOU matter to God you begin to think differently. When you expand that idea that everyone you see matters to God – you treat them differently. When you believe that your life continues beyond death with God face-to-face – you weigh your actions more carefully and pray for guidance more often.

**Easter faith changes things.
Easter faith changes the world –
one person at a time.**

Catherine's Column continued from page 2

command, to "love one another as I have loved you." This is also when Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist and commanded us to "do this in remembrance of me." The altar is stripped to remind us of how Jesus was stripped when he was crucified, and the blessed sacrament is removed from the church to symbolize our banishment of Jesus to death on the cross. We participate in an all-night vigil out of our devotion to Jesus when he asked the disciples to pray with him in the garden of Gethsemane.

The Stations of the Cross is a re-enactment of the final steps of Jesus from the time he was condemned to death to his burial. Participants travel symbolically through the streets of Jerusalem to Calvary, reflecting on their own personal responsibility in Jesus' crucifixion. The procession moves around the sanctuary stopping at each station to listen to a part of the story and to pray.

I encourage you to journey with us through the events of Holy Week that lead us to the joys of Easter. The new life of the resurrection is only complete when we do as Jesus asks when he says, "Take up your cross and follow me!"

TRANSITIONS

We request prayers for Ali as she continues to battle cancer.

Please pray for David. He is experiencing health issues and is facing some important tests this week.

Prayers for Becky's Arthur's mother and sister who are on the mend.

We ask prayers for Bonnie Young who injured her shoulder while on vacation.

Please pray all members of the congregation who are in need of God's comfort and grace.

Continued prayers are requested for Catherine and her family as they adjust to life style changes.

Please pray for our country and her leaders. May they make informed and intelligent decisions.

And as always, please pray for world peace.

David's Column

continued from page 2

Catherine and David wrote a letter to the congregation stating that Grace Church will continue to be an inclusive fellowship despite, and in contradiction to, the General Conference actions.

The council discussed our perceived need to publicly respond to the decisions of the United Methodist Church regarding human sexuality and specifically excluding LGBTQ clergy. Catherine and David wrote a letter to the congregation stating that Grace will continue to be an inclusive community despite the controversial decision. David and Catherine wrote a press release based on their congregational letter. This press release has been submitted to our local newspapers but has not yet been published.

Council is aware that the inclusion/exclusion of LGBTQ persons in the church can be a divisive issue; however, perhaps we can all agree: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity, because the crucial matter in religion is steadfast love for God and neighbor, empowered by the redeeming and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit."

Council continues to explore methods for bringing awareness of Grace Church to the local community. To that end, Heart of the Rockies Radio air a series of short announcements inviting all persons to our Easter services.

Becky Arthur mentioned that she has been in contact with Jennifer Wright and Shella Love about a congregational game night and, possibly, a teen night in the annex. Council agreed we would like to encourage these activities, although no motion was made. We will continue to explore these opportunities.

Trinity Views

continued from page 3

... even though they didn't understand what they were doing or why this was being asked of them.

As Christians today, we often ask, "What Would Jesus Do?" and find ourselves falling short, the offerings of our best efforts bearing little resemblance to the ideal presented by our Lord. And yet, was that even what Jesus asked of those who walked with Him? He asked for their companionship, their prayer and support. He asked for faithfulness. And though the Disciples achieved that goal with varying degrees of success, even Peter, who failed at first, came through in the end.

In this season of Lent and approaching Holy Week, and at this moment in the life of your congregation and our denomination, I wonder what is being asked of us in our discipleship? Is this truly a WWJD moment? Or perhaps are we being invited to "Come" and follow Jesus... to go with him to and beyond Jerusalem, Golgotha, Easter and beyond. Could it be that this is not a set-up for failure, with no candid camera hidden to punk us in a public moment of humiliation? Could it be that no derisive laughter awaits to ironically recount how we "Nailed It" with a wink and a head shake?

Trinity Views continued from page 5

Maybe, just maybe, our God who pours out grace upon grace and supplies our every need... including sustenance and direction in times of challenge and uncertainty... maybe our God sees us clearly and is extending a hand for us to hold... that our only test might be to trust God one step at a time as we continue our journey together.

Beloved, may we be bold to ask and patient to receive as we faith our way forward.

Blessings on the Journey from your
District Superintendent,

Margarit



Grace Church Traditions - Flowers by Judy Epperson

Every Sunday we have flowers on the altar, except for Lent and Christmas. The flowers are provided by members of the congregation in honor of in memory of family members or people that are important in their lives. They can also be given in honor of special events like birthdays and anniversaries.

Dedication flowers is easy and not even very painful. There is a sign-up sheet in the parish hall on the bulletin board by the door. To provide flowers, all you have to do is sign your name. Flowers are ordered from Buffy's Flowers and Gifts and delivered to the church. On Sunday after the service, you may take the flowers home or give them to someone else.

It is helpful if you note your dedication on the sign-up sheet so it can be put in the bulletin.

The cost of the flowers is \$27.00 and can be paid with a check put in the collection plate. Be sure to put "flowers" in the information line on the check.

It is a simple process, not at all mysterious and adds a great deal to our service. If you have questions, please contact me at eppersonjudy51@gmail.com, or phone me at 719-395-6380.

The Crucifixion

I laughed and mocked as He walked that day,
up a hill to redeem my soul.
I joined the crowd to spit and jeer,
and I watched his sorrow grow.
I drove every nail deep in His hands
with every sin in my heart.
My rebellion shoved the thorns in His head,
and my strife tore His robe apart.
I used my hatred to give Him a bitter drink,
and I glared down on Him with pride.
I thought of past disappointments,
and with my anger, I pierced His side.
I denied His power and ignored His worth
and I stood waiting for his life to end.
I watched the last drop of His blood fall,
not knowing my grief would begin.
I looked around to find His accusers,
but no one was there but me.
I looked at my hands; they were stained with
blood, and the I began to see.
Conviction slowly entered my heart,
and I dropped all my weapons of choice;
the pride, the anger, the hatred, the lust
and the I heard his voice.
"Forgive her Father, I died for her,
I paid the price for her soul,
I bore her sickness and all of her pain,
and now I have made her whole."
He looked down on me with loving eyes,
HE saw my present, my future, my past.
He knew I needed a Savior,
and my soul had found Him at last.
I looked around to find His accusers,
but no one was there but me.

By Fran Peck

Springtime in the Rockies!



Springtime everywhere else!



New Bell in Town

At the last council meeting, the Grace Church Council voted to buy a new bell for the Joyful Noise Bell Choir, in memory of Billie Love.

The bell is the low F bell and is a real addition to the bell choir. It's low tone really adds depth to the music.

The Unpacking of the bell.



The dedication plaque.



Susan playing the bell.

Happy Birthday



Barking Up a Happy Birthday

For all people born in April

Birthdays

4/13 Sherry Thomas

4/18 Bonnie Young

4/25 Kathy Prather

4/29 Carolyn Hayes

4/30 Tam Tran



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 eppej1@att.net