



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211
719-395-8868 • gracechurchbvco.org

Hug Your Pet

Persons, places, vistas we have seen



Give your pet a hug on National Pet Day

FEBRUARY 2020

From Our Pastors



Rev. Tran discusses preparation for Lent.



Rev. Erickson writes about God's love.

2

Ministry Reports



National Pet Day

1



Ray Stwalley reports on the last Council meeting.

3



Information on the Alliance.

3

National Pet Day

On February 20, we celebrate National Love Your Pet Day, a day to embrace one special trait that makes us human: our love of our pets! There are many things that differentiate humans from the rest of the animal kingdom, but one of the more unusual behaviors is our longstanding tendency to keep other animals as pets. Gallup reports that sixty percent of Americans are current pet owners. It only makes sense to commemorate something that's so important to so many people, so on February 20, we celebrate our pets with Love Your Pet Day!

Catherine's Commentary

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 26th. Our Ash Wednesday service will be at the CUCC this year and I hope you join us.

On page 264 of the Book of Common Prayer you will find an invitation to observe a holy Lent. In it, we are urged 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." These might sound like antiquated words and ideas, but they are practices that have been tested over the centuries and found to be useful by people who are attentive to their spiritual well-being. Perhaps you will have the opportunity to try

some of these spiritual disciplines in the weeks of Lent.

There are many ways to practice fasting. It is customary to fast one day a week. A fast day may be observed from sunrise to sunset. Or you may fast from sundown the night before to sundown the next day. A cup of tea or broth in the afternoon might help give a lift to get you through the rest of the day. A fast day may also be observed by fasting from certain types of foods (for example meat or sweets) or by eliminating only one meal. It is fine to be creative about how you fast - what is important is that your fast is a

Continued page 4



Fasting is a discipline which reminds us of our mortality and our need for forgiveness.

David's Column - God's Love



"May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance." 2 Thessalonians 3:5

Dear friends,

Every year on February 14th we celebrate Valentine's Day. On that day, restaurants are full of couples enjoying the love within their relationships. Look 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.

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.

Continued page 4

Church Council Report

by Ray Stwalley, Chairman



The Annual meeting of Grace Church was held on January 26, 2020 after the Sunday Service and was followed by a delicious potluck dinner. There were approximately 20 members of Grace

Church in attendance.

Catherine Tran, lead pastor and rector gave her report in which she thanked Mike Frosolono for his leadership as Council Chair during 2019 and thanked Ray Stwalley for stepping in and completing the term when Mike moved to Texas. She also thanked Cheryl Wilderman for her work as treasurer and council members Kurt Miller and Evelyn Baker whose terms expire this year.

Attendance is down from last year due to members moving away, and some conflicts that exist in the United Methodist Church. This has affected our revenues and our clergy coverage. Catherine will become half-time, meaning that she will be in Buena Vista 8 days a month instead of 10.

Ray reported that the accounting reports have been simplified and the budget reflects this. The 2019 budget deficit of \$4,452.46 was covered by our savings account. The 2020 budget is for \$125,321.64 and reflects a deficit at \$4,141.64, making it a faith budget. The council is working on ways to decrease the deficit. The budget was adopted by the congregation.

The Alliance

by Judy Epperson

The Alliance, formerly, the Alliance for Domestic Abuse, is a non-profit founded in 1982 and is in its 38th year in serving victims of the crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault. The mission of the organization is to eliminate domestic violence and sexual assault and to empower victims through education, services, and social change.

The Alliance provides victims with a variety of services including financial assistance, groceries, household supplies, utilities, rent, childcare, transportation and relocation costs. Other services provided include, among many others, long-term housing, legal advocacy, support groups for women and children, and emotional support services.

The non-profit is funded by grants, private donors and proceeds from fund raisers. The group currently puts on three fund raisers a year. The Chocolate Lovers Fantasy is held annually in Buena Vista and includes, chocolate and wine tasting, live music and a silent auction. This year the event will be held on Saturday, February 8, 2020. Tickets are \$20.00.

In the spring, the Monarch Crest Crank, a non-competitive mountain biking event on the Monarch Crest Trail is held. The riders solicit sponsors for the Alliance and participate in the ride which ends at Riverside Park in Salida. The final event is a baseball game between the members of the local high school baseball teams and local law enforcement personnel, held in the summer.

Continued page 5

David's Column

continued from page 2

"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 article.

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

Catherine's Column

continued from page 2

practice beyond your ordinary spiritual discipline. And of course, it is important to remember any particular health risks which may inform your choice about how to fast.

Fasting is always accompanied by prayer. If you don't already have a time for daily prayer and scripture reading, start with fifteen minutes a day. A good place to begin might be with the Psalms, reading two or three each day. There are also some good daily reflections available online.

Fasting is a discipline which reminds us of our mortality and our need for forgiveness. It helps us to focus our attention on God's presence with us in the midst of our human frailty. May you find this Lenten observance to be a powerful blessing in your spiritual growth.

"Life is an opportunity, benefit from it. Life is beauty, admire it. Life is bliss, taste it. Life is a dream, realize it. Life is a challenge, meet it. Life is a duty, complete it. Life is a game, play it. Life is a promise, fulfill it. Life is sorrow, overcome it. Life is a song, sing it. Life is a struggle, accept it. Life is a tragedy, confront it."

TRANSITIONS

Thanks to all of you who prayed for Courtney Hanson. She had surgery and is doing fine. There was no cancer.

Please remember David and his family in your prayers. He is moving his mother to assisted living in Colorado Springs.

Kurt Miller is doing well after surgery, but still needs our prayers for a complete recovery.

Carolyn Hayes had shoulder surgery and is doing fine. However, her son-in-law passed away last weekend after complications from surgery, so the family needs our prayers after this tragic loss.

Mary Hallman-Lee is having problems with her shoulder and is waiting on results from tests. Please remember her with prayers of healing.

Prayers of thanksgiving for Carol Slater's grandson who is home safely from Iraq.

The Alliance

continued from page 3

The organization operates with a 9-member Board of Directors, six full-time staff members, two part time staff members and 8 volunteers, and won several awards including the 2016 El Pomar Award for Excellence. For more information on the Alliance go to www.alliancechafee.org, or call 719-539-7347.

The Alliance is one of the projects of the Outreach Committee of Grace Church.

A Brief Overview of the Christian Year – David Erickson

Quite literally, the story of God revealed in Jesus Christ is a story that will save your soul.

But how do you tell a story that really is That Big?

If you just focus on the Scriptures, we are working with a library of material that came into final written form over a period of about 1,000 years. There is the legacy of the people of faith – the Tradition, Reason, and Experience components of our Wesleyan Quadrilateral – that stretches nearly 4,000 years from Abraham (1750 BC) through Jesus and onto today. No matter whether you prefer your Christianity with a liberal or conservative flavor, there is a lot more to tell than can ever be covered in any one worship service or any one year in any tradition.

Council Report

continued from page 3

Jennifer Wright and Susan Shampine were elected to the council.

A brief council meeting was held after the annual meeting to elect council officers. They are: Chair, Ray Stwalley; Vice-Chair, Jennifer Wright; Secretary, Becky Arthur, and Treasurer, Dorothy Miller.

The Council voted to change the schedule for the Council meeting to alternate between the second and third Sundays of the month so the both David and Catherine will have the opportunity to attend the council meetings in person instead of David having to always call in.

Give Back Box

"Got empty boxes laying around? Retailers such as Amazon are teaming up with local charities to use empty shipping boxes and get rid of clutter filling homes. After removing your order from your shipping box, fill it with clothes, etc. you want to donate, and visit GiveBackBox.com to print a free shipping label. The box can be dropped off with USPS or picked up. You can also print a receipt for tax use." -Megan Andrew

Council Meeting Schedule

February 16, 2020

March 8, 2020

April 19, 2020

May 10, 2020

June 21, 2020

July 12, 2020

August 9, 2020

September 20, 2020

October 11, 2020

November 8, 2020

December 20, 2020

The meetings are at approximately 10:30 am in Parish hall or the annex and all members of the congregation are welcome to attend.

If you have an item you wish to bring before the council, contact Ray Stwalley, Council Chair so it can be put on the agenda.



Announcements

Census forms will be arriving in the next few weeks. Please take some time to fill out these forms as it is important to not only on the national level but on the state and local levels as well. If you are a Snowbird, and BV is your permanent residence, please remember to list it that way.

People are needed to sign up for coffee hour. I know that many times it looks like we have a three-course meal, and many thanks to the people who do that. However, it isn't necessary to go to all that trouble. Cookies, cheese and crackers, donuts and other snacks would be just as welcome. The signup sheet is in the Parish Hall on the bulletin board by the door. Please check the dates and sign up if you can.

If you are interested in hosting a Lenten meal, please let Judy Epperson know. It's easy, All you have to do is set-up by putting out bowls for the soup, pitchers of water, glasses and bowls of butter on the tables and make sure that all the soup is there and have people to serve the soup. If anyone is interested, contact Judy Epperson.



Continued from page 5

Grace Church manages the magnitude of the story by dividing the calendar year into a series of seasonal themes. Called the Christian Year, this sequence of themes covers a large portion of the scriptures and touches on the key themes of the Christian faith and life. Taken together, the themes help us tell the story and help us learn to walk in the way that leads to life.

The Christian Year begins with **Advent**. In the four weeks before Christmas Day (starting this year on December 1), we anticipate the birth of God in Christ and we remember why we yearn for this birth.

Christmastide (starting with Christmas Eve on December 24) celebrates the birth of the One we call Jesus Emmanuel. After the Twelve Days of Christmas (there is a reason for that Christmas Carol), **Epiphany** begins on January 6. This season recalls the way in which Jesus was revealed to the world as a light in the darkness through his early ministry.

Lent (starting 40 days before Easter excluding Sundays) returns to the themes of anticipation and preparation. This time, the focus is on the mighty acts of redemption through the cross of Christ. Often this season is filled with a call to spiritual renewal, growth, and redemption

Easter is the fulfillment of the anticipation of Lent and the celebration of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. One important nuance in our tradition is that Easter Sunday is not the ending of Lent, but the beginning of a seven-week celebration of life renewed.

Continued in the next column

On the 50th day after Easter is the Day of **Pentecost**. This is the third most important festival days of the Church (the other two are Christmas Eve and Easter) and it remembers the gift of the Spirit transforming the disciples into apostles and sending them into mission and ministry into the world. In the weeks following Pentecost, our worship services usually follow a sequence of readings from either the Old or New Testaments and invite us to consider the moving of the Spirit in our lives.

For the United Methodist Church and some other Protestant Churches, the season of **Kingdomtide** begins about 14 weeks after Pentecost. Grace Church and the Episcopal Church continue on with Sundays After Pentecost, with its focus of “on earth as it is in heaven” from the Lord’s Prayer, this season invites us to follow in the footsteps of the apostles and make the story of God in Christ real for all the neighbors we have from God.

So, we trust that this thoughtful way of telling the story of God in Christ will also bless us in the year to come. It is true that the Christian Year as we know it really is an invention of the Church. Of all the seasons, only Pentecost is named anywhere in Scripture. But Christian saints have been guided in worship through elements of the Christian Year for at least 1,500 years.

Happy New (Christian) Year! Welcome to the journey of faith and discovery through worship in the year to come.

Lenten Meal Services & Meals

2020 Lenten Service Schedule

February 26, 2020 – Ash Wednesday-CUCC- 6pm

March 4, 2020 – Grace Church 6:00 pm

March 11, 2020 – CUCC – 6:00 pm

March 18, 2020 – Grace Church – 6:00 pm

March 25, 2020 – CUCC – 6:00 pm

April 1, 2020 – Grace Church – 6:00 pm

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend these services. Catherine will be doing the Tenebrae Service on March 4, 2020. The other 2 services will be done by other groups in the church.

Also, attend as many CUCC services as you can. They are good to support us, and we should do the same for them.

If you are interested in making soup for one of our meals, the sign up sheet is in Parish Hall, or contact Judy Epperson at 719-395-6380 or admin@gracechurchbvco.org.



Birthdays and Anniversaries



Birthdays

2/9 Eugene Preis
2/18 Bev Gunderman
2/28 John Epperson

Anniversaries

None



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.