



# Grace Notes

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211  
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## Happy Birthday, USA!

*Persons, places, vistas we have seen*



You have to love a nation that celebrates its independence every July 4, not with a parade of guns, tanks, and soldiers who file by the White House in a show of strength and muscle, but with family picnics where kids throw Frisbees, the potato salad gets iffy, and the flies die from happiness. You may think you have overeaten, but it is patriotism." ~ Erma Bombeck

### JULY 2020

#### From Our Pastors



Rev. Tran writes about the challenges of isolation during these trying times.



Rev. Erickson report on Annual Conference.

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#### Ministry Reports



Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July!

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Ray Stwalley

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Bonnie Young writes about going to Annual Conference.

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## National Ice Cream Day

July 19 is National Ice Cream Day! The possibilities here are endless. You can eat ice cream all day long – have ice cream on your pancakes for breakfast. For lunch you can have ice cream sandwiches and ice cream dip. For dessert you can have ice cream cones. For dinner you could have ice cream fruit salad, more ice cream sandwiches, more ice cream cake, and throw in a banana split, just to be healthy.

And for a night cap.....you can have an ice cream bicarbonate of soda. Enjoy!

## Catherine's Commentary

Zoom. A few months ago, most of us probably had not even heard of it! Now it seems everyone has heard of it and we can't live without it! By the time we get through this pandemic, we'll all be Zoom experts. "Bah humbug," I say.

I hope you don't mind if I am curmudgeonly about Zoom. Preaching to a computer on Sunday mornings leaves much to be desired! And then there's the occasional technical problem or not being able to hear or be heard with the crowd on the computer screen. Zoom is great as far as it goes, but it is certainly no substitute for a hug, a face-to-face smile, and a private side conversation – things that are so much a part of our regular

worship. "Bah humbug!" I say.

Unfortunately, I think we are stuck with Zoom for quite a while. It is hard to predict, but it will probably be months before we can gather in our sanctuary again. I suppose it will depend on how the virus spreads, and who knows how that will go. So, what are we to do? How are we to cope with the limitations of these days?

I turn to the quotable Ed Butler, who once said, "I have to be patient with my ears." You may know that Ed has a hard time hearing and I suspect he meant that he has to be patient about not being able to hear clearly. But it struck me that

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*These are strange and trying times. Patience is a challenging virtue and I am getting plenty of practice these days.*

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## David's Column – Conference Report



Each year in June, your United Methodist pastor and lay delegate to the Annual Conference (this year Bonnie Young-Stwalley) head off to join with other United Methodists from around Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and two churches in Idaho (the Mountain Sky Conference). This year, we traveled to a comfortable seat in our homes since the conference was held virtually.

Annual Conference is one of the most powerful examples of our connectional church we experience throughout the year. As a connectional church, we believe that our church of Grace Church is not its own church, but that we are connected together with all the other United Methodist Churches throughout the world in one global church., as well as connected to the Episcopal Churches in the Colorado Diocese and around the world.

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## Church Council Report

by Ray Stwalley, Chairman



The council and the clergy of Grace Church developed and submitted a plan for reopening Grace Church in accordance with the guidelines we received from the Diocese and The Conference. This plan

was approved at the end of June and is being implemented. The plan calls for initially, in person small social group activities which have started. Approval was also received to allow limited viewing and dedication of the Quilts of Valor.

Supplies of cleaning and sanitizing equipment have been ordered and received and are available as we get approval to further reopen and expand our in-person activities. It is anticipated that virtual alternatives for worship and study will be offered for the foreseeable future. Additions and modifications to our existing audio-visual setups will be required as we move forward.

The continued support of you the membership has been gratifying to the council and clergy. We are in a better position to move forward than I expected when we entered this shutdown necessitated by the spread of the Corona Virus.

Stay well and stay safe. See you all at Church, however we are meeting.

## Annual Conference

By Bonnie Young

MSC represents the former Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone Conferences. The area includes Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and one church in Idaho. There are seven jurisdictions in this HUGE PART of the Western Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church (aka UMC) of the United States.

Karen Oliveto was ordained a Bishop in 2016 and was appointed to the MSC. Bishop Oliveto came from the Glide Memorial UMC, San Francisco which has a congregation of 12,000. Her vision "My dream is that we live boldly as the body of Christ." Her Opening Message for the Conference was on Racial Justice in Living Into Beloved Community. It was inspiring in this time of "Black Lives Matter" and Justice for ALL people.

Grace Church falls in the Trinity Jurisdiction, one of the seven jurisdictions. We are chartered as a Fellowship, not a full church. We are unique in our existence as United Methodists and Episcopalians and others. Our two clergy serve part time, according to the joint understanding, with Rev. Catherine Tran, Episcopal, as lead pastor and Rev. David Erickson, UM, as co-pastor. Our support for UMC and the Episcopal Diocese is split evenly.

As small as we are, we have a vote in the decisions at the UMC. This past weekend, the Conference was held as a Zoom virtual event; I had the privilege of attending as a voting delegate along with Rev. David who was a voting clergy. The over 550 clergy and delegates made decisions on so many items, including Apportionments of churches, Conference budget, (including salaries),

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## David's Column

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Normally we gather in-person with hundreds of other Methodists and remember that we are not alone. We meet new friends and spend time with old friends. This year we met virtually so our connections were virtual in nature.

One of the things that always strikes me is the diversity of our annual conference. We are diverse in many areas including race, gender, social economical, urban, and rural, age and sexuality. At annual conference, we are reminded that we are part of a bigger body of Christ, and we get to celebrate both our similarities and our differences.

I want to share with you some snapshot highlights:

We heard reports of what other churches around the conference are doing. Since March, most churches have been holding worship services virtually (live or recorded) and drive-in (in the parking lot using FM radio).

In the Laity Session (a breakout session at Annual Conference for the laity to do the work specific to them), Two new co-lay leaders were elected.

## Catherine's Column

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being patient with one's ears could also have to do with deep listening, as in having ears that wait patiently to hear what someone has to say. What a wonderful way to think about listening! What a wonderful way to think about a lot of things

Right now, I have to be patient with my hugs, patient with my smiles, patient with private side conversations, patient with preaching to a computer, patient with not seeing the people I love, patient with, well, everything that waits to happen till this pandemic is over. We are all waiting for these things to happen, to get back to some sense of what is normal. But as far as our worship is concerned and other church related gatherings, patiently waiting means Zoom instead.

In this time of waiting, I must also say how thankful I am that we have a tool like Zoom. It is a delight to see you all once a week and to know that you are well and safe. If we didn't have Zoom - and other apps like it - I don't know what we would do. So, I say, "Bah humbug!" but also "Thanks be to God!" for Zoom.

These are strange and trying times. Patience is a challenging virtue and I am getting plenty of practice these days.

## TRANSITIONS

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Please pray for all the members of the church who haven't been able to attend through the Zoom meetings.

Prayers are requested for Bob and Sharon Martinez who had a death in the family.

Please remember Bev and Fred Gunderman who are working through health problems.

Sharon and Max requested prayers for their friend Carolyn who is having the lower third of one of her lungs removed.

Pray for all the places in the county that have had a recurrence of the COVID-19 virus.

Please pray for David's sister-in-law who recently had surgery.

Pray for Carolyn's daughter, Susan, who is going through marital problems.

Please pray for Kim and Kathy's daughter, Zoe, who took a year off from college and has an eating disorder.

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## David's Column

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During the session, each gave a video speech about their own call to be a Conference Lay Leader. A Lay Servant Presentation was made which identifies the Lay Servants and Quiet Disciples selected for each of the Districts of the Mountain Sky Conference.

In Clergy Session (a breakout session at Annual Conference for the clergy to do the work specific to them, like approving candidates for ordination, retirement, etc.). Ten candidates were approved for ordination. During the session, each gave a video speech about their own call to ministry and how they are living out their call as pastors in the United Methodist Church. During the session new chairs for the Clergy Orders (i.e., Elders, Deacons, and Local Pastors) were elected.

During the plenary session the conference attendees were presented with information related to 2021 budget, minimum compensation (clergy, district superintendents and conference treasurer), relocation of the conference headquarters, closure of churches (John Collins, Edgewater, Rush and Harlowton), disaffiliation of churches (Culbertson and Geraldine), disposition of property exchange proceeds for Spirit of Hope UMC and nomination report. After each presentation voting members were asked to vote on each petition presented. It was also announced that the Sargent Community Church had terminated its working relationship with the United Methodist

## Continued from the first column

Church. One of the final acts was a motion which was approved to add a member with voice and vote from the Committee on Religion and Race to the Roundtable (this is the group that handles decisions in-between Annual Conferences).

There were moments and signs of God at work among us in the almost two days of Annual Conference. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, unrest related to racism, and discernment and uncertainty about our global connection as we prepare for General Conference 2021, this year's annual conference served as a reminder that we are not alone as we walk through the storms. It served as a reminder that God has called us to be the body of Christ for the world.

A final highlight was Saturday afternoon, when my appointment was made back to Grace Church for another year. I am truly blessed. It is with great joy that we embark on another year of ministry together.



**Conference Report**  
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Petitioned Closure of churches, Conference focuses and Appointments. Rev. David was re-appointed to Grace. Yeah!!!

There were many spiritual messages, videos of the activities and programs of the MSC. Most centered around Living into Beloved Community and Racial Justice for ALL.

I enjoyed the experience very much. Thank you for entrusting me with the responsibility of representing Grace Church. I would recommend that everyone listen to the opening message from Bishop Karen Oliveto online at: Mountain Sky Conference Homepage. Scroll to Bishop Oliveto’s Weekly Message.

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**Baby Blue Birds Taking a Bath**

**Photo by Sherry Thomas**

**Quilts of Valor Report**  
by Bonnie Young

Grace Church Ladies Sewing Group finished 16 QOV this past year. The quilts need sponsors so that we have the funds to ship them to the servicepersons and veterans. We are awaiting the okay from the governing bodies for Grace to be able to display the quilts for the congregation, sponsors, and quilters.

Soon after the viewing, we will contact the Quilts of Valor Foundation for the names and addresses of the recipients and ship them.

To sponsor a quilt, a QOV form has been sent to Grace members that needs to be filled out and returned to Grace Church, PO Box 1559 with a check for \$25.00. Sponsorship can also be done by going online to Grace Church, select Donate and check Quilts of Valor.

We will contact all donors for additional information needed. Thank you for your 15-year history of support for this Grace ministry. For more information or to desire to have a quilts presented to an individual serviceperson, contact Bonnie Young ([byoung81211@gmail.com](mailto:byoung81211@gmail.com) or 719-395-8414)



### Hit the Road

When a teenager received his driving permit, he asked his father, who was a minister, if they could discuss use of the car. His father said, "I'll make a deal with you. You bring up your grades, study your Bible a little and get your hair cut, and then we'll talk about it."

A month later, the young man returned to continue the discussion. "Son, I've been real proud of you," the father said. "You've brought your grades up and studied your Bible diligently, but you didn't get your hair cut!"

The teenager replied, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that. Samson had long hair. Moses had long hair. Noah had long hair, and even Jesus had long hair...."

"Yes," the father said, "and they walked everywhere they went!"

Borrowed

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### Rainbow



### A Franciscan Benediction

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, at half-truths, and superficial relationships - so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger: at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed; for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen

Contributed by Cheryl Wilderman

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### Bluebird in Evening



## Grace Church Cookbook

Preparations for the new Grace Church Cookbook are in full swing, and many thanks to all of you who have contributed recipes for the book.

But we still need more recipes. That's where all you good cooks of Grace, both men and women, come in. You may ask how can I help? It's easy. Just make a copy of your favorite recipes and send them to Grace Church, P.O. Box 1559, Buena Vista, CO 81211, or email them to [byoung81211@gmail.com](mailto:byoung81211@gmail.com). You can also drop them by the church office; just slide them under the office door.

However, time is not unlimited. We need to have all the recipes submitted by July 31, 2020 to get them typed and put in the book. We hope to have the book available so it can be purchased for Christmas presents.

Don't be left out. Don't get grandma angry because you didn't get her favorite casserole in the book. Submit those recipes today. Everyone knows Grace has the best cooks in Buena Vista, so let's prove it.



## Birthdays and Anniversaries



### Birthdays & Anniversaries

#### Birthdays

7/15 - Rick Fox  
7/16 - Peggy Finkowski

#### Anniversaries

7/4 - Kim and Kathy Prather



*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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