



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211
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Cottonwood Lake

Persons, places, vistas we have seen



Photo by Sherry Thomas

AUGUST 2020

From Our Pastors



Rev. Tran writes about changes during COVID-19



Rev. Erickson asks for prayer for our schools.

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Ministry Reports



Sherry Thomas's 1st place picture.

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Ray Stwalley writes about keeping the church running smoothly.

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Bonnie Young thanks everyone who worked on the Quilts of Valor and St. George's meals.

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National Senior Citizens Day

This is the holiday for which Reagan would have wanted to be remembered. On August 19th, 1988 a proclamation was made by the then-president that deemed August 21st as a national day to give older U.S. citizens thanks and a heartfelt salute. Decades later, we're still doing it.

Catherine's Commentary

For a time, there are things we don't have or can't do at Grace Church. We can't gather on Sunday mornings for worship and fellowship. We miss hearing our summer choir – we missed them, especially on the 4th of July. There are summer events that we can't have, such as the Blessing of the Animals and the Parish Picnic. We miss all these events and being together to celebrate them.

The good news is there is much about our life together that continues. There is still so much that gets done. Both the Men's and Women's Bible study groups continue to meet on Zoom. The Spiritual Discovery Group also meets over Zoom. The Outreach

Committee continues its work and sends financial support to good causes. The Quilts of Valor sewers have completed 16 quilts which were on display in the church and will soon be on their way to veterans. The sewing group won't have the usual sales this year but is still working to contribute items and make items to sell. The sewers are working from home, which is not preferred (chatting over projects and lunch in the sewing room is half the fun!), but all kinds of items still get made!

The church office continues to function as usual. Judy works her usual hours in the office and

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If we have a heart that can accept the challenges, these times will bear fruit in our life together and in our individual lives as well. God is at work in our midst.

David's Column – Prayer For Our Schools



Praise the Lord for the new school year. Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead and guide those families who are still making the decision related to school this year. Pray for the Lord to provide for those families who seek guidance.

Pray for rest, renewal and re-energizing for our teachers and staff. Pray for blessings on their time with family and that the Lord would prepare their hearts for another season of education to students and families. Pray for strength as they prepare for a new school year with some different guidelines in place.

Pray for wisdom, direction and discernment for the School Board, Superintendent, School District Staff and Principals as they lead our schools through these future months and the ever-changing guidelines and mandates

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Church Council Report

by Ray Stwalley, Chairman



The Grace Council has continued to meet during our closure and has kept up with the essential business of the Church.

Thanks to the efforts of Dorothy Miller, Judy Epperson, and Sarah Roecker our

bookkeeper for their continuing efforts on the behalf of Grace Church. I do not know how to thank Catherine and David for all that they have done to keep us viable as a congregation during this period.

I personally feel that we as a congregation will emerge from this stronger than we went in.

Looking ahead, fall is stewardship time, so please keep that in mind as we go forward. October will bring the Methodist Conference, no doubt to be held virtually, rather than in the church with the traditional potluck afterward. Hopefully, we will be able to hold some of the advent activities in person, but we probably should consider that we may still be under restrictions at that time. The virus is, no doubt, with us for the near or even intermediate term and we as a church need to plan accordingly.

The Wi-Fi connection in the sanctuary has been upgraded so David and Catherine are able to conduct virtual worship from there. We are looking at adding equipment to allow mixed in-person and virtual worship from the Sanctuary when we are given authorization to do so.

Going forward, I think we will be well served by providing virtual worship in conjunction

Thank You

By Bonnie Young

St George Episcopal Church. Because of Grace's abundant generosity, this past week they received about \$1,500 toward their Community Meals Program.

Ladies Sewing Group gave them \$1,000, plus \$350 from individual members that was added to the \$150 that was sent by members the first of July. This money was so needed by them and should sustain them through July, August and Sept. Thank you everyone who participated.

Quilts of Valor. There were 35 people who viewed the Quilts of Valor and there were 20 people who sponsored the quilts. This provides a healthy amount of money to be able to send the quilts to the recipients. Some of the money was also donated so that we could get a start on needs for this coming year. We were able to register four quilts to be presented to veterans or soldiers of our congregation members.

I hope that we continue to remember that these quilts are to honor those who are or who were in harm's way in war or conflict for our country. While it would be nice to send one to anyone who served, the majority should be granted through Quilts of Valor Foundation for people who need them physically or mentally.

This is a thank you to those quilters who put in so many hours to create these magnificent quilts, to those who sponsored the quilts and to those who were able to see and understand the meaning of them. We will try to continue to make the quilts until there is no more war or conflict that devastate our families and our country.

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issued by the State of Colorado and Chaffee County Health Departments in regards to schools.

Begin to pray for the students that will attend this school year, that God will impact their hearts with a meaningful education experience. Pray that they will experience the grace of God in their school and community. Pray especially for those who may be new to the community or to their school, that their hearts and minds will be open.

Pray for new teaching staff that will be added for the school year. Pray for the Lord to work out all of the details for moving and housing for those coming outside of the area. Pray for a smooth transition and integration with the rest of the faculty and the student community. Pray that for any remaining staff vacancies that still need to be filled, for the Lord to lead to the right persons to fill those positions that will be a blessing to these students.

Continue to pray for the financial resources needed to keep these schools healthy and strong. Pray for wisdom and direction for the School Board and Administrators as they consider all possibilities and

Catherine's Column continued from page 2

our bookkeeper, Sarah, still comes in once a week to do the books and pay the bills. Dorothy keeps our financial reports up to date. All the administrative tasks are getting done. We are also managing to keep the budget in good shape, thanks to the continued financial support of all of you. David and I are now traveling to BV and working in the Annex on our weekends and leading the services from the church.

New things have developed because of the pandemic. The Connection gatherings have allowed us to gather in small groups and catch up with each other. It is so nice to actually *see* you in person! We have also appreciated having people in worship who are far away or home bound. Our plan is to keep offering the virtual service even after we can worship together again.

The Corona Virus has led to change - change we could never have imagined a few months ago. It has been challenging. But it also stretches us and moves us out of complacency. If we have a heart that can accept the challenges, these times will bear fruit in our life together and in our individual lives as well. God is at work in our midst.

TRANSITIONS

Prayers of thanksgiving. David's sister-in-law is at home and improving slowly.

Prayers of thanksgiving for Kathy Prather's mother's 87th birthday.

Prayers for the Yinger's friend Russ who is in severe pain from an unknown cause.

Prayers also for Janet's friend Kathy who was caught in a microburst and broke her femur.

Please pray for Sharon's friend Karen who has advanced cancer.

Sherry's macular degeneration is progressing but still hasn't reached the wet stage. So, prayers of thanks that it hasn't reached the advanced stage and prayers for healing that it doesn't get any worse.

Please remember Dorothy and Kurt Miller on the loss of their dog Monty.

David's Column

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ideas to move into the future, to expand our current capabilities, and assure the best possible environment for education at our schools. Pray that the Holy Spirit would lead people to continue to actively support the activities of our schools with their prayers, skills, time and gifts as we celebrate what God is doing in the lives of the students and families of Buena Vista.

Pray for the Lord's protection over our staff, students, and their families from the Covid-19 virus. Pray that our schools will be a safe place to engage in education and build a Blessed Community. Pray for the Lord to bring an end to this pandemic and healing in our community, nation, and world.



Photo contributed by David Erickson

Church Council Report

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with live worship. We have many members of the congregation who spend part of the year away from Buena Vista so virtual services will allow us to remain in contact with those people year-round rather than the six or nine months they spend in BV.

Stay well and stay safe

Announcements

The Episcopal Church Convention will be held, virtually, October 8-10. If you are interested in being a delegate contact Ray Stwalley at araystwalley@gmail.com, or 719-395-8414 for more information.

If you would like to be a part of the Saturday small group meetings on the church patio, please contact Catherine or David to sign up.

COMING SOON JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS! The new Grace Church cookbook will be out in the fall. You will be able to pre-order your copy and copies for Christmas presents in a few weeks. It is going to be a great cookbook and one everyone will want to have on their shelves. Watch for more announcements in Grace Notes and via email.



Back-to-School Blessing by the Rev. Marilyn E. Thornton

Bless my paper and my pen.
Guide my spirit deep within.
Help me think and help me play,
This whole school year, day by day.

As I move from class to class,
Guide my footsteps; clear my path.
Keep my tongue to speak your words.
Let your will for me be heard.

In every subject high or low,
May God's excellence be shown!
Keep me strong to reach the prize,
To grow in grace, becoming wise.

Whether far from home or near,
May I hold God's precepts dear.
To do my best at every task.
For this blessing, I do ask.

Help my family be a part
As I lift my mind and heart.
As I study, work, and pray,
Be with them throughout the day.

Of whom much is given, much is required.
May learning be your greatest desire!



Contest Winner by Judy Epperson

Grace church's ace photographer, Sherry Thomas entered several of her photographs in the GARNA photo contest this year.

The purpose of this yearly fund raiser is to expose the public to the natural beauty of the Upper Arkansas River Valley. The funds raised from the contest will be used to further GARNA'S programs of education and preservation of the natural beauty of the Upper Arkansas River Valley.

The categories for the contest are Flora/Fauna, Development and Nature, Water, Landscape and Winter/Holiday.

Sherry won in two categories. In the People's Choice, category Water her "Cottonwood Lake in Autumn", features on the front page of Grace Notes, took first place. And also, in the People's Choice, category Flora/Fauna, her Male Mountain Bluebird, featured below took third place.

The winners will be featured in the 2021 GARNA calendar. Congratulations, Sherry!



Enough

shared by David Erickson

Recently, I overheard a mother and daughter in their last moments together at the airport as the daughter's departure had been announced. Standing near the security gate, they hugged, and the mother said: "I love you and I wish you enough." The daughter replied, "Mom, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Mom." They kissed and the daughter left. The mother walked over to the window where I sat.

Standing there, I could see she wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on her privacy, but she welcomed me in by asking, "Did you ever say good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?" "Yes, I have," I replied. "Forgive me for asking but why is this a forever good-bye?" "I am old, and she lives so far away. I have challenges ahead and the reality is the next trip back will be for my funeral," she said.

When you were saying good-bye, I heard you say, "I wish you enough." May I ask what that means?" She began to smile. "That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone." She paused a moment and looked up as if trying to remember it in detail and she smiled even more. "When we said, 'I wish you enough' we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them". Then turning toward me, she shared the following, reciting it from memory, "I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright. I wish you enough rain to appreciate

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the sun more. I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive. I wish you enough pain so that the smallest joys in life appear much bigger. I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting. I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess. I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final good-bye." She then began to cry and walked away.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person. An hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, and an entire life to forget them!

Do you need a Spiritual Tune-up?

Here are five tune-up specials for you.

Adjust your lights so others may see your good works.

Set your timing so as to meet the needs of another.

Adjust the brakes on your tongue.

Align your direction so that you may stay on the straight and narrow.

Anti-freeze your heart and be fervent I spirit.

Above all things, love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength and mind.

Borrowed

Ladies Sewing Group

Most of you know that the Grace Church sewing group has been together 12 years or more. In those years we have had our ups and downs but have always been successful in our efforts to donate to charities that benefit our local community. Our latest donation was \$1000 to St George Church in Leadville, to support their meal program.

Presently we are inviting you to join us in sewing at home. Our goal once again is to make items to donate with an even more ambitious goal of selling things on Etsy.

Right now Vi Hardy, Judy Butler and I are sorting through fabric to make baby and children's "kits" that members can easily complete into "easy to make" quilts for the pregnancy center. We are available for supplies and direction. Even if you've "never made a quilt" if you can sew a straight line, you can make one of these!

Please give me a call to get started. We are eager to continue this ministry and need your help.

Thank you and God bless.

Martha Bauman

395-8471



Birthdays and Anniversaries



Birthdays

8/8 Susan Shampine

8/14 Betty Dethmers

8/14 Jo Rodeheffer

8/14 Barry Hayes

8/16 Judy Epperson

8/21 Joyce Logan

Anniversaries

8/5 Chuck and Carol Covert

8/9 Max and Sharon Robertson

8/18 Tam and Catherine Tran

8/25 Ray and Bonnie Stwalley



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