



# Grace Notes

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

*Persons, places, vistas we have seen*



### MAY 2021

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## Memorial Day



Originally named Decoration Day, it was officially made into a federal holiday in 1971. Traditionally, people will visit cemeteries and memorials for American soldiers, and there are several parades around the country. It also unofficially marks the beginning of the summer season.

## Catherine's Commentary

As some of you may be aware, Grace Church is part of the North Western Region of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. Several weeks ago, a group did a survey of Episcopal Churches in the Region concerning the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The results were mixed. Here is a summary:

*The emotional toll and financial challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and accompanying restrictions on church activity have been significant. Although the congregational leaders surveyed for this evaluation effort reported potentially serious impacts (loss of members, reduction in revenue, fatigue after so many months of the shut-down), many also expressed*

*a commitment to hope and optimism for congregational life after the pandemic. At least two leaders mentioned they are excited about what lies ahead and what being a "post-pandemic" church might entail. Congregations have been forced to re-evaluate their priorities and what is deemed most important to a community's life in faith. Whether the difficulties of the past year or so will make for stronger, more resilient congregations is yet to be seen.*

The results of this survey provided some helpful information. One thing is that Grace Church, compared to other Episcopal congregations, has done fairly well through this

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*We have managed to do alright financially and for the most part, people have stayed engaged – not just in worship, but other activities also.*

## Bishop Visits



Grace church was delighted to entertain the Right Reverend Kym Lucas, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese this weekend. Her visit began with a Wine and Cheese reception on the Grace patio Saturday evening attended by members of the Grace Council and Bishop Kym and her family, including their two well behaved dogs, Ares and Calypso. This was the Bishop's first in person visit since the beginning of the pandemic.

After the reception, the council had a chance to visit with the Bishop after the issues of reopening and other matters. She said that context is everything, when thinking or reopening and that what might work for Buena Vista, wouldn't work for Denver. We just have to follow county guidelines and keep our people safe. She also said that we could hold services outside with very few restrictions but indicated that masks regulations and social distancing protocols would have to be observed. The Bishop also stated that many

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## Church Council Report

by Becky Arthur, Chairman



Grace to you all and Peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

Bishop Kym Lucas visited us this last weekend. What a treat it was to meet her and to talk with her. She gave a

sermon that was exactly what I needed to hear, and I realized yet again the wisdom and the power of our little Grace Church community. Bonnie summarized the sermon in How Grace survives COVID, so I will go directly to her Oregon Trail illustration.

So many of our churches have set out from St. Louis with our most prized possessions; Aunt Fannie's old piano or the bureau that's been in our family forever and simply cannot be left behind. Our oxen were fresh, and we had so much hope and so much energy!

We've arrived at the foot of the mountains and we're past where we can turn around and go back. We need to make it over the mountains before the snow sets in or we will starve. That's when the hard decisions need to be made. Can we support a Sunday School (the bureau?)? Can we maintain the choir (Aunt Fannie's piano?)? All the things we grew up thinking were necessary may actually be in our way as we attempt to bear fruit as branches of Christ. We may need to reduce the weight of those things so we can continue to go forward.

We have so few members, but so much grace. And Grace, in its wisdom and that of Christ, has pruned itself to support the most important

## St. George's Meals

By Bonnie Young

The history of Grace Church and St. George Episcopal Church began around 2010 when Rev. Ali Lufkin was a 5th Sunday supply priest for Grace. This worked out well because their Sunday service was in the evening. Rev. Ali Lufkin was popular, so Grace invited her to continue the 5th Sundays until, because of her illness, she had to quit.

From information Ali shared about St. George, the Ladies Bible Study became interested in the small Episcopal church in Leadville. In 2017, several members of Grace visited with Ali to discuss how Grace might provide help to St. George.

From a laundry list, Grace chose to help St. George in three different ways:

Removal of the gigantic 40' pine that was threatening to fall on the church building. From a contact to Excel Energy, the top third of the tree was removed because it interfered with the electrical lines. St. George members cut it down to the 5' it is now.

Knitted Scarves and Hats For many years, knitter from BV provided knitted scarves and hats for St. George's Christmas Gift project. Serendipity Yarn and Gifts and Grace members participated. Grace has continued this and last year during the Pandemic, Carol Slater knitted over 50 hats and scarves that were delivered to St. George.

Adopt a Meal St. George provided free meals to the community almost every day for several years. As a trial for 6 months, Grace adopted the 1st Saturday evening meal making home-cooked meals for 30 adults that they took to St. George and ate with them. Friendships were made. So the 6 months turned into 2 1/2 years until the Pandemic shut down all in-door activities. Grace also presented 48 sets of Corelle dishes needed in their dining room.

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## Bishop's Visit continued from page 2

people are suffering from PTSD due to the pandemic and these individuals needed "grace and space."

On Sunday morning, Bishop Kym conducted the worship service, assisted by Rector, Catherine Tran. She gave an inspirational sermon on the life of the church and changes that needed to be made in the future. Using John 15:1-8 as her text, Bishop Kym compared the church to a vine that needs to be pruned. She said that in order for the church to grow, unproductive programs needed to be "pruned", so that new ones could prosper. She reminded us that sometimes old traditions needed to be discarded for the health of the spiritual growth of the congregation. This is also true in our personal lives. She compared making changes in our person life was like an Oregon Trail experience, when it became necessary to lighten the wagon and leave family heirlooms behind, so that the mountains could be crossed, and the destination reached. So it is with our spiritual journey. It is sometimes necessary to make hard choices, so that we can do the work that God is calling us to do.

## Catherine's Column continued from page 2

time. We have managed to do alright financially and for the most part, people have stayed engaged – not just in worship, but other activities also. I sense that people are getting tired of Zoom, but we have warm weather coming just in time to have outdoor, in-person services. (Many people have expressed a concern about continuing to meet by Zoom as well. We are working toward a permanent, combined in-person and Zoom experience.)

Unfortunately, Colorado is not doing well at this moment as far as the pandemic is concerned. Visitors are starting to fill BV once again. We will be attending to the statistics and making sure we continue to be safe.

I appreciate what this survey summary says about going forward. The post-pandemic church, Grace included, will need to re-evaluate priorities and what is important to our life in faith. I believe we can come through this stronger and more resilient. I believe in resurrection! Our life together will be made new.

## TRANSITIONS

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Please continue to pray for Sharon and Max Robertson and their family. Sharon's mother died on Sunday.

Susan Shampine had a rotator cuff repair last Wednesday and is recovering at home.

Please pray for her speedy recovery.

Continue to pray for Evelyn's sister-in-law-, Vickie. She is home from the hospital but has a long recovery ahead.

Continue to pray for Vi Hardy, as she continues to cope with her cancer.

Christina Randle asks for prayers for her daughter-in-law and son. They are expecting a baby, and also have to give up their beloved dog.

Carol's friend, Jack, has been breathing on his own for two days, and hopes to be moved out of ICU into a room. Please pray for his continued recovery.

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## St. George's Meals continued from page 3

When the Pandemic shut down the community meals, St. George immediately regrouped. They could no longer have sit-down meals, so they started providing daily take-out meals. They also turned their church sanctuary into a community pantry store.

Closed down by the Pandemic, Grace was no longer able to go to Leadville with the Saturday meal. So, Grace, too, choose different ways to support their feeding the community program. Ladies Bible Study arranged for pizza be delivered to them for a take-out meal. In 2020, with donations from members, Ladies Sewing and Bible groups, clergy discretionary funds, over \$2,500 was donated to St. George, including funds to help with the remodeling of their kitchen.

In 2021, Grace started Break the Bank for St. George program. When donations reach \$500, the bank is broken, and a donation is sent to them. In March, Grace presented them with \$1,300 that had been donated.

Thank you to everyone who has supported St. George like the teams that participated in the Saturday meal, Ladies Bible Study, Ladies Sewing, and all who donated money. They are also on the Outreach list of organizations we donate to.

## Bishop's Visit continued from page 2

After the service, Reverend Kym administered the curb side communion, and greeted members of the congregation.

Bishop Kym was appointed Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Colorado in May of 2019 and is the 11th bishop of the Colorado Diocese. She is the first woman bishop and the first African American Bishop in the 132-year history of the diocese. She and her husband, Mark Retherford, have four children.



Bishop Kym and Catherine



Ares and Calypso

## Council News continued from page 3

to support the most important things: Outreach, fellowship, and the Word of God. I've been thinking we need to grow our congregation, but maybe we need to be exactly where we are.

Technology has allowed us to continue to see each other, and to include our friends in other locations and in places in life where they cannot be with us in person. Our Bible studies are alive and well and flourishing with folks who don't or can't attend weekly services, the Ladies are starting to get together in small numbers to resume sewing to support our Outreach, and we have wonderful pastors who shepherd us and feed us the good food of God's word and messages to us. I'm thinking with gratitude of Catherine, Sharon, David and all the other past pastors who live in our memories and continue to impart wisdom, and our supply pastors who supply "cross-pollination."

Thank you all at Grace for your wisdom and your faithfulness!!

The Council was blessed to have a wine and cheese party, or Meet and Greet, as you prefer, Saturday May 1 with Bishop Kym Lucas. We had a wonderful time visiting with each other and exploring how in-person events might be managed in the future. We spread out the food in the Parish Hall (almost like Coffee Hour!!!) and then took our plates outside where we could sit and visit without masks. What a treat that was. I was reminded of the hymn Don Cummings told us the Methodist circuit riders sang at their annual meetings:

And are we yet alive, and see each  
other's face? Glory and thanks to Jesus  
give for his almighty grace!

## Continued from column 1

Preserved by power divine to full  
salvation here, again in Jesus' praise  
we join and, in his sight, appear.

What troubles have we seen, what  
mighty conflicts past, fightings  
without and fears within, since we  
assembled last!

Yet out of all the Lord hath brought  
us by his love; and still, he doth his  
help afford and hides our life above.

Although most of us cannot imagine the hardships those circuit riders endured, or the anticipation they felt just to see who had survived the year, still, we have had a year of trial and have endured our lives largely in the absence of each other. It was such a treat to have that "fast" broken, and to see each other there and at communion the next morning.

We are planning to meet outside for an in-person service May 30. We can even sing together!! We do need to figure out the logistics which will likely involve bringing our own chairs and lots of hauling of equipment and whatnot out to the patio. We will also "broadcast" the service on Zoom.

Woo Hoo!! Our life is about to get even richer.

May God's abundant and rich blessings be with us all as we look expectantly into the future!!

## Mother's Day by Christina Randle

Mother isn't a word that brought me comfort, encouragement, and safety. As early as I recall, it seemed uncomfortable, uneasy, filled with judgment, as if I'd been brought home to the wrong family. Like a square peg for a round hole. It was confusing as greeting cards seemed to make mother the best of everything good.

As a young adult I began to look at my friends' mothers. They seemed very different from mine. And as an adult, I've since learned many elements of 'mother' that I didn't know as a young child. What I learned from my birth mother is the best list of what not to do. In retrospect, this is a cherished and highly valuable list that most young ones aren't exposed to, but that are great guideposts for life.

As I matured, I allowed myself to move toward the person who best represented 'mother' for me. That is an aunt, my dad's younger sister. We now are legally mother and daughter. Every day I continue to be inspired, loved, and be guided by this woman I call 'Dink' (her nickname when she was young).

As a mother to my own son, Russ, and to two stepchildren I call my own, Kelsey and Mitchell, I've been able to take the best of both to help them grow up in safety, strength, and love. They are all adults now living healthy and full lives.

Mothering is now a verb to me. Mothering is an act of daily loving, caring, guiding, and sharing what I've learned and what I cherish. I'm blessed for all these forms of mother. And this coming Sunday, as I celebrate Mother's Day, I'm grateful for the learnings that I was shown, both good and bad, as well as sharing and growing as a mother and now grandmother. To all the mother's out there, I celebrate you! Happy Mother's Day!!

## The Story of Charlee by Christina Randle

I knew there was something special about Charlee the first day I got him. Well, I thought it was a girl dog and a Maltese that I had named Bailey. Turned out to be a whopping 2.1-pound boy Bishon and toy poodle mix who wouldn't come when I said his name. I had to rename him Charlee, and then he has come when called ever since! That first day I ended up with a migraine. That little guy jumped on my bed, walked up to my pillow, and laid himself front legs one side of my head and back on the other side. Soon after my headache was gone. Since then, Charlee has been a major helper to anyone sick.

He's a lover of toys! We have 31 toys, and just enough stuffed toys to fill each slot in the staircase. His favorite is Lamb Chop, given to him by Bob and Maryanne Freed. His second is the toy bear made by Vi Hardy in sewing (see pic). Vi was busy working on a quilt one day during sewing. She quietly shifted to working on sewing a bear. Charlee went to her and begged for the bear. Vi gave in and gave him the bear. He loves those teddy bears so much that he jumped 3' onto the table at the craft fair to make sure he got a second one!

Today Charlee is 5 years old, 6 ½ pounds, loves hiking, walking, curling up with his mom to sleep and his afternoon treats. His biggest accomplishment is being the Grace Church mascot and sharing his love and playing with everyone in the parish hall after church. He looks forward to when that time returns!



## Announcements

Bill and Junia Fitzgerald have a new grandson. His name is Bryson Alexander Fitzgerald, born on April 20, 2021. Congratulations, Bill and Junia!



Bryson Alexander Fitzgerald

Congratulations to Cheryl Wilderman and her fiancé, Bob Vanderkooi. The couple plan a May wedding. Cheryl says that all her Grace friends are invited. Details of the wedding will be sent out via email.



Cheryl and Bob

## Birthdays and Anniversaries



### Birthdays and Anniversaries

#### Birthdays

5/8 Jennifer Wright

5/14 Martha Bauman

5/16 Maryanne Freed

5/23 Catherine Tran

5/28 Jim Finkowski

#### Anniversaries

5/5 Tom and Barbra Clark

5/25 Tom and Martha Bauman

5/29 Ed and Margaret Butler

5/30 Dan and Jo Rodeheffer

5/31 Bill and Junia Fitzgerald



*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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