



Grace Notes

The Newsletter of Grace Church • PO Box 1559 • Buena Vista, CO 81211
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Merry Christmas

Persons, places, vistas we have seen



Photo by Peggy Finkowski

DECEMBER 2021

From Our Pastors



Rev. Seay talks about changes coming to Grace



Rev. Tran says good-bye.

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Outreach project of the month.

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I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day by Longfellow

I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play, and loud and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth goodwill toward men.

The in despair I bowed my head, there is no peace on earth I said, for hate is strong and

mocks the song of peace on earth goodwill to men.

Then pealed the bells more loud and sweet, God is not dead nor doth he sleep. The wrong shall fail and right prevail with peace on earth goodwill toward men.

From the Desk of Rev. Seay.....

The retirement of Rev. Catherine Tran from Grace Church after eleven years of service as pastor came as an unwelcome announcement. Most health-related issues are without a welcoming mat when we expect the worst, and find it is not so, then is it welcoming news. However, all things work together for the good for those who love the Lord and one another. In sharing our love and appreciation on last Sunday for Pastor Tran's service to Grace, we are heeding to her call for our spiritual discernment in moving timelessly forward to continue our love to God and one another with the ministries at Grace Church.

A cliché says hindsight is twenty - twenty vision clear and foresight is blind. However, that expression on foresight for Christians does not apply because Christians travel forward in life through death by faith. In coming to the close of this pandemic year with new variants of Covid on the horizon, we continue to press on, looking up for our help. As the Psalmist said (#121) "All my help comes from the Lord." God alone delivers us from the variants of evil that masquerades in different forms. Today we are witnessing these various forms. One day we will look over our shoulder and see with clarity the



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Catherine's Commentary



Thank you all so much for the wonderful retirement celebration! All your good wishes mean so much to me and Tam. You have been so generous with your comments and gifts. Your personal words of thanks and the feelings you have shared have been so moving. I am so fortunate and blessed.

As you can imagine this is a bittersweet time for me. I will miss you all and Grace Church. I will miss traveling to BV and seeing you at sewing, or dinner, or for a glass of wine. I will miss sharing communion with you. Perhaps most of all, I will miss engaging with you on the spiritual journey.

But I am also looking forward to retirement. I have quite a to do list already. In addition to spending time with my family, I have lots of organizing and sorting to do around the house followed by some remodeling. I am looking forward to being home for Christmas for the first time in 27 years! I am looking forward to attending all the

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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!

Since November's
newsletter we have
been a busy bunch here
at Grace! We had a
lovely gathering to wish
Catherine well in the
next chapter of her life,

and it's starting to get "real" now. We will miss her enormously. The council and personnel committee are settling in to begin the calling process for a new priest. I've been on the phone to a number of supply clergy in the last few days, and I think we'll be able to get at least some help next year. They are a fun group to talk with! I think it will be next year, after the holidays, before we'll be able to make any actual progress.

We now know we are blessed to have Rev. Seay as our lead pastor. His wisdom has begun to be offered and applied at our council meetings. We'll continue to work with him to see what directions Grace will be headed in the future.

The women had a successful Holiday Sale and are poised to give some thoughtful donations to other organizations in our community. Huge thanks to all who participated. We had a lot of fun and did a lot of good work. We hope to have some sort of crafting weekend at least quarterly going forward.

Ed got the organ blower fixed and, after a fair amount of crawling around under the church and dragging a new motor down there, the organ sounds fabulous again! Sometimes it takes a little absence to make the heart grow fonder, but it was such a joy to hear it again after a conspicuous time without it! Thanks so much to Ed and Margaret. I understand Rev. Seay lifted the new organ blower into the Butler's car down in Colorado Springs,

Shop With a Cop

By Kathy Prather

Chaffee County Shop with a Cop is an opportunity for kids to spend time with local law enforcement in a casual setting that allows them to shop for gifts for their families, while also giving back to the local community.

Local officers, in both Buena Vista and Salida, donate money into a fund that is given to students to purchase Christmas presents. On their own time. The officers take these students shopping to get presents they may not otherwise be able to afford. This event is put on by the Salida Police Department in conjunction with the Buena Vista Police Department, Colorado State Patrol, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Chaffee County Sheriff's Office.

Fourth grade teachers pick the students to participate. Typically, they look for students who are in need, and sometimes students who have done something outstanding during the year. In past years, there have been exemplary students who made a lasting impact on their peers and thus were chosen for the event.

Participants receive gift cards to local businesses throughout the community and also enjoy lunch at the police departments. The food comes from one of three local restaurants.

Shop with a cop is a regular recipient of donations from the Grace Church Outreach Program.

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Catherine's Column continued from page 2

Sunday events I have had to miss over the years. This new schedule will take some getting used to!

Grace Church is in a good position to grow over the next months and years. I have seen how you all share your love and wisdom, which will bring many to your doors. And the welcome is always so warm and friendly, they will stick around. I pray for God's abundant blessing on you.

Many thanks to Peggy Finkowski and Bonnie Young for taking the pictures that appear in this issue of Grace Notes.

Rev. Seay's Column continued from page 2

hand of God in what has happen, then understanding, that is why it had to be that way.

Now the church is in Advent season, celebrated as Christmas, a time of remembrance on the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, and predicated on His virtue of Him saying. "Who soever will let him come." I feel we should all say the same with Covid protocols in place at the church, our Christmas Eve Service will be **December 24th at 6 pm**. We invite all to come, who soever will. Although things will be a little different with the Covid protocols in place.

Nevertheless, our Christmas Eve Service serves our hindsight well, our foresight with inspiration when we recall this Christmas Eve service held during the pandemic era. So, let us ring the Church bell in the tower a little louder, and a little longer to say to the city, our friends and family, the Church is open, and we are here. Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and goodwill towards all on this holy night to remember when Christ was born.

Blessing Extended

TRANSITIONS

Please pray for Charles and Carol Covert on the sudden death of their son-in-law on November 27, 2020.

Keep Christina and her family in your prayers as they make some decisions about her mother who is suffering from dementia.

Bonnie requests prayers for Ray who is suffering from back trouble and will have a procedure done on December 13.

Please keep praying for Jennifer's friend, Tom, who continues to have health issues.

Remember to pray for Catherine as she faces her Parkinson's diagnosis and transitions to retirement.

Offer prayers of thanksgiving for Christina's sister, Bobbie, as she continues to recover from lung cancer that has disappeared.

And as always, pray for Grace Church.

Council Report

by Becky Arthur

Colorado Springs, and he attests to its heaviness and awkwardness. How Ed got it moved I do not know but thank you!

Dorothy is stepping down as the Treasurer, and unless I hear from someone else, I will be assuming that position, assuming no one objects (which I don't expect since that person might get stuck with the job!) We are planning for Jennifer Wright, the current Vice President of the Council, to step up into the chairperson position so we keep some continuity in leadership during this difficult and adventurous time. The congregation will, of course, need to elect her at our annual meeting in January.

We have a few council positions to fill, given that I'll step into a non-voting position and Ray and Martha have decided to step off the council. Anyone who is willing to help lead Grace as a council person should contact one of the current council folks. I'm sure any of us would let you know what is required.

May God's abundant and rich blessings be with us all as we move into the cold of winter and the season of Jesus' birth.

Update on St. George's

by Bonnie Young

Donations from Grace members broke the bank again and \$500 was sent to St. George. Thank you for your ongoing participation. Please continue donating until we break the bank and support them again.

St. George was excited to host **Taste of Leadville, Friday, December 3rd | 4:00 - 7:30 PM**, its annual fundraiser in conjunction with the Parade of Lights! Guests explored tastes" from over fifteen restaurants

The Kitchen remodel is underway; construction is now started, and they expect to be done in December. This is a project that began in the fall of 2018 but was delayed during the pandemic.

The Food Bank and the Community Meals continue; Thanksgiving (Nov 25, 11-1) and Christmas (Dec 25 11-1) have been added. Everyone welcome.

If you would like to donate to the St. George's meal program, checks made payable to St. George's Church can be sent to Grace at P.O. Box 1559, Buena Vista, CO 81211.



Christmas Shoe Boxes by Bonnie Young

Grace members filled eighteen boxes for Christmas shoeboxes for children who don't normally get a gift in two weeks. Fifteen boxes were taken to Calvary United Methodist in Colorado Springs and added to their project.

They expect to have one hundred boxes, plus ours. All the boxes will then be shipped to Spirit Lake Ministries to be distributed to children on reservations in Montana, North and South Dakota.

Other boxes were given to Operation Christmas Child, Samaritan Purse. Clearview Church collected boxes from the entire BV community. Thank you for your instant call to provide these boxes. We are awesome!!



Mini-Blessings Fund Raiser



Mini-Blessings is pleased to announce the return of our



SPECTACULAR
LIGHT DISPLAYS

Friday, December 10 & Saturday, December 11
5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Drive-thru light display in McPhelemy Park in Buena Vista
(Cars enter the park from the north on Hwy 24 and leave by the south, only using the right hand lane on Hwy 24)

We are raising money to support our programs and wonderful miniature horses for the coming year

\$3/person or \$10/car



Saying Good-bye to Catherine



Announcements

The Grace Church Council will meet on Sunday, December 12, 2021, immediately following the service in Parish Hall. All members of the church are invited to attend.

The Christmas Eve Service will be held at 6:00 pm on Christmas Eve. If you are going to be in town and would like to participate in the service, please contact Junia Fitzgerald or Judy Epperson.

Charles and Carol Covert's address is 7700 E. Mesteno Rd., Prescott, Arizona 86315, ;if anyone wants to send them condolences on the death of their son-in-law

Coffee Hour has been discontinued due to high COVID numbers in Chaffee County and by suggestion of the Episcopal Diocese. We will begin the fellowship hour as soon as these restrictions are relaxed, or warmer weather comes.

If you are interested in serving on the church council in 2022, please see any member of the Council and let them know. Terms are for three years.



Birthdays and Anniversaries



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

12/7 Evelyn Baker
12/25 Cheryl Vanderpool
12/27 Junis Fitzgerald
12/31 Barbara O' Donnell

Anniversaries

12/27 David and Lenee' Erickson



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