

Grace Notes

Grace United Methodist Church

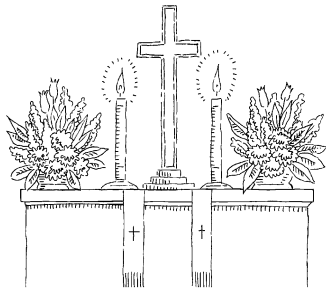
5407 North Charles Street., Baltimore, Maryland 21210 • 410-433-6650



• www.GraceUnitedMethodist.org

Volume 19, No. 9

September 2011



Worship Schedule

EVERY SUNDAY

8:30 - Early Worship

10:00 - Worship Celebration

September 4

Labor in the Pulpit Sunday

Rev. Amy McCullough preaching

The Chancel Choir returns

September 11

Christian Education Sunday

10th Anniversary of 9-11

Remembrance

Rev. Amy McCullough preaching

September 18

Rev. Amy McCullough preaching

September 25

Rev. Nancy Webb preaching

*Following worship
please come to the Coffee
Fellowship in the
church parlor to
greet and meet one
another*

Christian Education Sunday and Welcome Back “indoor picnic” – Sunday, September 11

This is the day we will celebrate Christian Education at Grace as we kick off another year of opportunities for learning. Our worship service will celebrate teachers and learners of all ages, and the children will begin their classes in preschool and GROWL for elementary students

The entire congregation is invited to our indoor “Welcome Back” picnic in Fellowship Hall immediately following the service. Sections of foot-long sub sandwiches will be provided as well as paper goods and beverages. We ask that you please bring a salad or dessert, large enough to feed yourself or your family that we will share.

No matter what the weather, we will enjoy each other’s company!

If you could help with set-up and clean up, please contact Jenai Paul, Grace Community Fellowship coordinator, or Rev. Nancy

**For more details about the full Christian Education program,
please see the 2011-2012 Christian Formation brochure**

Have you met your Pastor?

Would you like to have an opportunity to meet with Rev. Amy McCullough? As part of our transition process, each member will be given that opportunity! We have been charged by our Conference to schedule small group meetings throughout the next several months so that each of us will be able to meet with Rev. Amy in a comfortable and casual setting. As she wrote in our last *Grace Notes*, “Especially in these first three months but truly throughout our years of ministry together, I envision my role as listening closely to what you can tell me about Grace; what you love, what you feel challenged by and how you’d like to see us grow.”

Would you be willing to open your home to such a meeting? We would like to schedule morning, afternoon and evening meetings during the next few months in members’ home. Several other meetings will take place at church. Groups of 8 to 16 would be ideal. If you can host one of these meetings, would you please contact the church office at 410-433-6650 with your desired time and day. These times will then be coordinated with Rev. Amy’s schedule. Then members will be able to sign up for a time that best suits their needs.

Some members have already met with Rev. McCullough so they will not need to meet with her again. This will also be a wonderful opportunity for many persons who have not been in regular attendance to reconnect with Grace Church. Rev. Amy is looking forward to these meetings and the special opportunity to get to know each member. Questions should be directed to either Elaine Schaefer or Claire Greenhouse.

Dear Friends,

On Monday night August 1st, just as a summer storm truly let loose, the moving van finished unloading the last boxes and pulled away from the parsonage. One of you had seen the activity and stopped by to say hello. Another graciously had provided our dinner. Much work had been done to make the home ready for new occupants. It was good to turn on the kitchen lights and begin to settle in to our new home. In so many beautiful ways, you all have welcomed me and my family into your church family and for the home Christ creates amongst us, I give thanks.

Over the past four weeks, you have shared many stories about this great congregation with me. You've reminisced about discovering a church that knows how to worship well. You've spoken of the strong networks of community. You've witnessed to your deep generosity, especially to those in need. And you've talked about your hopes to pass on your love of God to the next generation.

In sharing the positive stories, you've also named your concerns for the future. Like many mainline Protestant congregations, Grace has experienced declines in worship attendance. We have relied heavily upon a core group of members, increasingly asking them to give more and work harder. Although active in missions, Grace is still discerning how to best be a church that makes a difference in Baltimore. During my first meeting with SPRC last February, committee members spoke frankly about the potential and the hurdles of our congregation. That conversation affirmed my sense of being called to Grace and I continue to be excited about what God is doing in and through us.

We never worship, study or serve in a vacuum. Our lives beyond the sanctuary constantly inform our prayers, witness and work. And we live in a time of uncertainty, turmoil and fear about the future. We're facing a volatile stock market, rioting in England, civil disobedience throughout the Middle East, an uneven global economy and worries about our nation's employment and financial foundations. We bring these burdens with us to worship, and look for guidance from this place.

Whenever I get anxious about the future, I turn to the prayers of Walter Brueggemann. Brueggemann, a retired Old Testament scholar, prays with refreshing honesty about the frailty of human life and the unfailing strength of God. Here is one of my favorites:

On Generosity

On our own, we conclude:
that there is not enough to go around
we are going to run short
of money
of love
of grades
of publications
of members
of years
of life

We should seize the day
seize the goods
seize our neighbor's good
because there is not enough to go around.

And in the midst of our perceived deficit:
You come.
You come giving bread in the wilderness

You come giving children at the 11th hour
You come giving homes to exiles
You come giving futures to the shut-down
You come giving Easter joy to the dead
You come – fleshed in Jesus.

And we watch while
the blind receive their sight
the lame walk
the lepers are cleansed
the deaf hear
the dead are raised
the poor dance and sing.

We watch
and we take food we did not grow and
life we did not invent and
future that is gift and gift and gift and



families and neighbors who sustain us
when we do not deserve it.

It dawns on us – late rather than soon –
that “you give food in due season
you open your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.”

By your giving, break our cycles of imagined
scarcity

override your presumed deficits
quiet our anxieties of lack
transform our perceptual field to see
the abundance ...mercy upon mercy
blessing upon blessing.

Sink your generosity deep into our lives
that your muchness may expose our false lack
that endlessly receiving, we may endlessly give,
so that the world may be made Easter new,
without greedy lack, but only wonder
without coercive need, but only love
without destructive greed, but only
praise
without aggression and invasiveness...
all things Easter new...
all around us, toward us and by us
all things Easter new.

Finish your creation...in wonder, love, and praise.
Amen.

Lay Liturgists in Sunday Worship

Each week, a lay member of the congregation participates in worship by reading the morning's scripture lessons. We are currently recruiting new congregation members who would be interested in joining the rotation of Sunday lay liturgists. Training will be given to all new participants. So, if you have a heart for God's Word, are comfortable speaking in front of the congregation and would like to be more involved in worship, you are invited to become a liturgist! Please speak with either Rev. Amy McCullough or Bill and Carol Polk.

ACOLYTES



Be one of our acolytes

We are inviting all youth who
have been confirmed to
become one of Grace
Church's acolytes. There's
going to be a training session
immediately after the 10:00
service on September 18 in

the chancel area of the sanctuary. Please come and join
other young folks who assist the ministers during
worship on Sundays and at special services during the
Christmas and Easter seasons. You'll get an entirely
new perspective on worship and provide a valuable
service for your church.

If you cannot come on the 18th but are still
interested in becoming an acolyte, please contact Linda
English (410-323-0222), Jody Wiseman (410-823-0852)
or the church office (410-433.6650). We're looking
forward to seeing you on the 18th!

*ED NOTE: We are so grateful to these young
people and coordinators for their dedication to the
worship life of Grace.*



Calling singers of all ages, voice parts!!

CHANCEL CHOIR - adults and youth
rehearsals Thursday evenings 7-8:30 p.m.
Contact Bruce Eicher, 410-561-9948

YOUTH CHOIR - grade 7 and up
rehearses Sunday mornings after 10 a.m. service
Contact Robert Cantrell, 443-326-5660

ALLELUIA CHOIR - grades 2 through 6
rehearses Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m.
and the

CHERUB CHOIR - age 4 through grade 1
rehearse Sunday mornings at 11:15 a.m.
Contact Kathryn Arnold, 410-523-1583



Dear members and friends of Grace,

Each of us who has been connected to this congregation for any period of time during the past 20 years has our special memories of “the way it used to be.” We

are grateful to all those who have come before us from the founding congregations here in Baltimore City and through the years of growth and development of this congregation.

It is, however, now, not the way it used to be. It’s the way we will become.

It has been a special joy for me to begin to work side-by-side with Rev. Amy and to know that she, Chris, Luke, and Suzanna are, at least sometimes, right across the parking lot in the parsonage.

I just want to say a word about my new role with regard to pastoral care in the congregation. I’m hearing from some of you that you’re wondering if the notion of a blind woman providing pastoral care is rather counterintuitive. You may, in fact, feel that the Baltimore-Washington Conference, the Grace Staff-Parish Relations Committee, and I have all lost our marbles.

I first need to tell you that I am feeling very blessed to be able to continue many of the parts of my job description from the previous six years, but to have the privilege of connecting with you on an even deeper level through visitation, phone calls, personal notes, etc. This is a sacred trust and responsibility that I will do my best to fulfill.

May I let you know that I use cabs, primarily, for my transportation. I usually find the cab drivers most helpful in directing me or taking me to the door of an unfamiliar place. In most hospitals and nursing homes, there are helpful personnel and volunteers who stand ready to get me to and from the places I need to go. If I’m going to someone’s home, I check ahead to find out the lay of the land with regard to steps, etc.

Not to sound corny, but I truly do feel God’s presence guiding me as I go. I am not anxious, and I hope you will not be on my behalf.

I will also be working with some laity with regard to pastoral care in the future. Of course, I will be working with Rev. Amy. As a whole church we want to be the best caring community for one another that God can guide us to become. Please let the church office, me and Rev. Amy know your needs and desires for a visit or for another for whom you care. We’ll do our best to lead the way, but thanks to so many of you who are quiet caregivers and faithful friends to those among us who are facing difficult challenges.

Why Grace?

Why Grace, indeed.

Ruth was very happy at Govans Boundary where she had been a hard-working member since before both churches had consolidated. We had been married there.

But times changed and we no longer felt comfortable or even completely welcome there. So we started visiting churches. We visited many where Ruth had had many friends. We visited churches where some 14 other ex-members of Govans Boundary had found a home.

We definitely did not include possible advantageous business or social connections as part of our criteria. Nor did we add handsome buildings, adequate parking or an attractive balance sheet.

Ruth was looking for a spiritual home where she would be comfortable, welcome and useful. She wanted to be involved. She had been Conference Delegate for many years.

I just wanted her to be happy. So we visited. We looked. We listened. We talked. We expanded our area of search.

We were still looking when she got sick and died. Frankly Grace was not on the top of her list. She grew up in blue-collar Highlandtown.

I, on the other hand, had been immediately drawn to Grace. I had found a spiritual resting place, a church with both religious and community ties, a church with an outreach philosophy, a church with a wide variation of opinions, a church with involved laity.

And Music! Ah Music!!

I made a happy choice.

– *Bob Outman*

*Nothing before, nothing behind;
The steps of faith
Fall on the seeming void, and find
The rock beneath.*

John Greenleaf Whittier

Your cards, flowers, meals and visits are the backbone of our pastoral care at Grace.

Most especially, your prayers and loving support are what make all the difference. We just don’t want to leave anyone out though. If you know someone is lonely, please bring them to our attention.

Together we can be the hands and feet and Spirit of Christ in our community.

– *Rev. Nancy Webb*



AN INVITATION TO MISSION – BE ONE!

On October 8-10, 15,000 United Methodists are expected to serve in mission throughout the Baltimore-Washington Conference. The Change the World Mission Day will celebrate the spirit of United Methodism, a faith built on social action. A video about how you can Change the World is online: <http://www.bwcumc.org/events/changetheworld> and stay tuned for how Grace will be participating in this important initiative.

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

I Peter 4:10

+ + +

A note from Corey Schmidt who left for Tanzania this month:

Thanks so much for the committees' general contributions to the Light in Africa orphanage. Along with the \$1800 from the two church committees, we have raised an additional \$2,400. I'm all set to leave tomorrow. I'm very excited for the experience! Thanks again. Corey Schmidt

+ + +

Thanks to all who donated supplies and assembled school kits on August 7! These kits will help many students in Baltimore City be prepared for the start of school this year.



Congratulations to those of the Grace Church family celebrating birthdays in September:

- 1 Dr. Emora T. Brannan, Kemp Heath, Steve Mullan, Joyce O'Dwyer
- 2 Malcolm Allen, Brian Blalock, Gregory Dean, Cory Farrugia
- 3 John Grandsire, Timothy McGill, Jeffrey Wellener, Tyler J. Wellener
- 4 Beth Greenland, Kimberly Stansbury
- 5 Scott Bayne, Virginia Green, Bradley Reppert
- 6 Patrick Brannan, Janet Eveleth, Will Hanley, Molly Rice, Milton Volker
- 7 Andrew Callaway, Avery Paul, Ann Kaiser Stearns
- 9 John Graf, Chase Miller, Devan Muhly, Kacey Mullan, Kathleen Phelps, Nick Stetz
- 10 R. Stephen Frank, Jr., Ray Howington, Susan Wallace
- 11 Kathryn Arnold, Obinna Mbah
- 13 John Buchheister, Charles Greenman
- 14 Ann Landay, Rachel Perkins
- 15 Beverly Brandon, Nancy Frank, Kendall Hayes
- 16 Nathan Ander, Howard Francis, Lawrence Griffith, MD, Muriel Rauenzahn, Paul E. Redline
- 17 Erin Drummond, Laura Gamble, Sharon McIntire, Benjamin Starkey
- 18 Elizabeth Bissett, Rebecca Guth
- 19 Ryan Silk
- 20 Melayn Dorfler, Christine Hanley
- 21 Trey Heath III, Jonathan Perry
- 22 Mari Berzins, Patricia Skinner, Susan E. Smith, Rev. Virginia Starkey-Stephen, Gordon Stetz
- 23 Thomas D. Green
- 24 John G. Danz, Jr., Susan Holljes, Taylor Potter, Ellie Sargent
- 25 Jennifer Covington, Tina Doak, Ilva Doggett, Bruce McCall, Sheri Miller, Dawson Schill, Dana Yockey
- 26 Bettie Jean Howard, Rhonda Inskeep
- 27 Amy Sargent, Betty Jean Tyler, Josh White
- 28 Katherine Guth, Edith Scouten
- 29 Susan Clark, Michael Madsen, Charles McCusker
- 30 Verna Bazzell, Heather Grandsire, Joseph Mack, Diane B. Topper

**HE WHO LABORS AS HE PRAYS LIFTS HIS HEART TO GOD WITH HIS HANDS.
ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX**

Within the Family at Grace

BAPTISM

Tanner Bennett Plitt
July 24, 2011

A GOOD NEWS STORY

Eighty-one first graders of **Sara Mullan's** at the Lutherville Lab undertook a project in studying the history and process of quilting. After learning from discoveries in the Quilt Trunk on loan from the Maryland Historical Society, reading a book on the handcraft, and seeing visual presentations on how quilts have told stories throughout history, the students were ready to proceed with creating their own story. Sara had told them "they were making a quilt for someone special, to make them smile" – so the project was called "Make Someone Smile."

Each one designed and colored a fabric quilt square, depicting something that would make someone happy. Sara's mom, **Kate Mullan** and a few other professional quilters then assembled the squares into the finished quilts, much to the delight and amazement of the young boys and girls.

The big surprise was that their special quilts were presented to the Lutherville Volunteer Fire Department whose members would then give them to the family of fallen Baltimore Co. firefighter, Mark Falkenham. Mark had died while fighting a fire in Hillendale a few months before, and his loss was deeply felt in the community. The happy quilts were a testament of the love and respect for his dedication and service, in the hope that they would bring a smile and comfort to his family.



Anna Mae and Edward Frederick celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary by hosting the lemonade fellowship on August 7 following worship. The basket on the table was a gift from the Chancel Choir.

Grace Church



RETREAT

October 7, 8 and 9
Camp Manidokan

Fun for everyone: families, couples, singles, youth, children, of all ages.

Children 18 and under attend free with paying adult and if registered in Grace Church School.

For details and registration form, look for retreat brochures around the church.

HELP IS NEEDED!

UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, is coordinating relief efforts to address the dire hunger crisis, due to severe drought, that is affecting millions in Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and other countries. 100% of your gift goes directly to this great need. Please make your check payable to Grace Church and designate it for UMCOR hunger crisis. Thank you for your prayers as well.



Emora and Nancy Brannan with their passports! They departed for Ireland on August 6 on a "dream of a life time" trip given them by members and friends as a retirement gift.
Photo: Walt Greenhouse

Grace United Methodist Church
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Baltimore, MD 21210-2024

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This issue mailed August 22nd
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The Editor's Eye

It's a two-way street

This "day of new beginnings" seemed a propitious time to convene a meeting of the Communications Committee, to share with Rev. Amy the ways we try to keep our church family informed and how we attempt to "tell the story" to the world beyond our doors. We reviewed what we have been doing – the monthly *Grace Notes*, Grace Notices in the Sunday bulletin, our website, the weekly E-Notes, our in-house visitors brochure, newspaper ads at holiday season, ads in Baltimore Out Loud, and most recently in the Baltimore Visitors Guide. Concurrently, we began to explore ideas for new ways to attract more visitors and increase membership and participation.

In the coming weeks as activities rev up for another year, we hope you will begin to notice some fresh approaches and new looks as we work on streamlining the service bulletin, revamp the visitor-friendly website, improve the weekly E-Notes, perhaps try a holiday schedule direct mail thrust, design a pew folder detailing opportunities for participation and involvement for those attending worship, members and visitors alike.

You can help! How?

Your suggestions and feedback are always welcome. We have much to "crow about" and we want everyone to know, to be enthused and eager to be a part of those things which interest you.

1. Do we have your e-mail address so that you are receiving E-Notes to keep current on events of the coming week? If not, please indicate it on the Ritual of Friendship form, sign up on the website, or contact the Church Office.
2. Submit news of interest from your committee, group, family to Christina for the church bulletin (by noon Wednesdays – graceumadmin@verizon.net), to Patrick for the website (patrick.brannan@verizon.net), and to Kitty for *Grace Notes* and E-Notes (kitty.allen@verizon.net).
3. Take and share photos for the website and publications
4. Plan ahead to get the widest possible promotion (6 weeks often to make *Grace Notes*). Stay alert to receiving information on church happenings from various sources – you might see it only one time from a single source. You won't want to miss out!
5. Communication is a two-way process. We would love to hear from you.