January 28  Kick-off to our year-long celebration of
the 150th Anniversary of Grace Church
with guest preacher, Rev. Dr. William Lawrence.

The planning committee for our 150th Anniversary has been busily meeting to
plan events to celebrate this auspicious milestone in the life of Grace Church. All
during 2018, there will be special speakers, preachers, luncheons, mementoes, and
services. You’ll hear about a day of service, concerts, an alumni choir, home-coming,
and did I say luncheons?

Here at Grace we have so much to celebrate: the past – the blended history of
the four churches representing all of the branches of Methodism; the present – our
leadership and sharing in the lives for those in need in the City of Baltimore; and the
future – continued excellence in worship and music and increasing our involvement in
initiatives for inclusion and social justice.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28** is the first of such special days as we welcome Rev.
Dr. William Lawrence both to the pulpit and then an inspiring lecture following
luncheon. He is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church and a former member
of the Judicial Council of the UMC. His research has focused on historical theology,
American church history and homiletics.

His sermon will be entitled “A Surplus of Grace,” and will be based upon texts found in I Peter 4:7-11 and Luke
19:11-27. He is professor of American Church History at Southern Methodist University’s Perkins School of Theology.
He previously served as Dean of Perkins from 2002 to 2016.

We will host a luncheon following worship in Fellowship Hall for a suggested donation of $5. We encourage
you to make a reservation through the church office. Afterwards Dr. Lawrence will give a lecture at 1:00 p.m. titled
“Like an Ever-flowing Stream,” an apt metaphor for Methodist history and its vitality in the future. Please plan now to
welcome Dr. Lawrence and kick-off our exciting celebratory year. Watch for details as each event unfolds!
Music at Grace

Gospel Sunday

Please join us at the 10:00 a.m. worship service on February 11th to experience our annual Gospel service, led and directed by our bass soloist, Robert Cantrell. This popular service will feature Black Gospel Music of African-American heritage.

Robert invites everyone who would like to be a part of the choir that morning to come to rehearsals each Sunday at 9:30 in the choir room on the terrace level.

Hymn Festival

On Sunday, February 25th at 3:00 p.m., the Chancel Choir will lead a Lenten Hymn Festival in our sanctuary. This service will offer opportunities for congregational singing highlighting hymns appropriate for the season of Lent. If you enjoy singing and enjoy learning more about hymns with Lenten themes, we encourage you to come and sing!

This is a free event, lasting approximately one hour. All ages are welcome.

THANK YOU
to all who made gifts in honor or memory of loved ones through the Christmas memorials to the music ministry! You gifts allowed us to hear beautiful music from a string quartet and flute at our 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Your continued support and patronage toward the music ministry is greatly appreciated by the music staff and all its volunteers!

* * * *

Thank you so much to the Grace Church family for your support, prayers and expressions of sympathy following the death of my father and then Chris’s father. Each note, word and hug has been a source of comfort to us during the past month. It is a blessing to us to be surrounded by such a wonderful community of faith.

Amy and Chris, Luke and Suzanna McCullough

FEBRUARY 14th

Grace will offer three services on Ash Wednesday. Held in the sanctuary, each will include scripture, song, the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. A simple meal will be offered after all services.

Rev. Amy McCullough will preach and the Chancel Choir will sing at the evening service.

Services are at 7:15 a.m., 12:00 noon and 7:15 p.m. All are welcome.

NOTE: There will be no Wednesday Taizé service this month.

Preaching and Worship in February

February 4 - Rev. Amy McCullough
February 11 - Gospel Music Sunday
February 18 - Lent begins - Rev. Amy McCullough
February 25 - Lent II - Rev. Amy McCullough

and a small preview:

Saleem Gauhar, Executive Director of Manna House, will be our guest preacher on March 4

* * * *

Are you an Amazon shopper? If not already, you might consider becoming one and then register Grace Church as one of the charities eligible for a donation of a percentage from each of your purchases. How do you do this?

Our unique charity link for AmazonSmile is https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-0642788. Once you register, each time you place an order you will be asked if you want to support Grace United Methodist Church. We will receive a donation from Amazon of 0.5% of the price for each eligible purchase; you will still be charged the regular Amazon price.

It is giving with a smile!
Happy Birthday!

Birthday greetings to those of the Grace family celebrating in February

1. Grayson Gilbert, Patricia Volker
2. Emily Bruce, Brendan Millon, Marian Yanega
5. Alden Booth
6. Sarah Starkey
7. Morgan Scott
8. Bonnie Caster, Kelly Jackson, Lura Warren
11. Kelly Painter
12. Jennifer Gillis-White, Constance Mech
15. John Strahan
16. Alicia Metz
17. Laura Getschel
18. Carter Benson-Williams, Cole Benson-Williams, Elliott DeFilippis, Nicholas DeMetrick, Elinor Old, Steven Paylor
19. Allen Kessell
21. Eric Benfer, Jesse Siegel
23. Esi Yarney
24. John Honeycutt, Kendi Irwin, Barbara Jackson
25. Bob Smith, Paige Stevens
26. Karl Schillinger
27. Molly Farrugia, Bob Volker
28. Alec Rowley, Robert Schaefer
29. Jody Wiseman

Within the Family at Grace

DEATHS
John H. Workman
December 13, 2017
Patricia Skinner (Mrs. Edward)
December 15, 2017
Gwen Wayson
December 24, 2017
Fred Peed
(Father of Rev. Amy McCullough)
December 6, 2017
Charles McCullough
(Father of Chris McCullough)
December 22, 2017

Special Gifts

We acknowledge with gratitude the following special gifts

In Memory of Bill Klein by
Pat Volker
Kelly and Steve Painter
Claire and Walt Greenhouse

In Memory of John Workman by
Kitty Allen
Claire and Walt Greenhouse

In Memory of Gwen Wayson by
Claire and Walt Greenhouse

In Memory of Raymond and Iona Shephard by
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen F. Jeneks

In Memory of Fred Peed (Amy’s Dad) by
Kitty Allen
Jacquelyn Meadors
Bob and Elaine Schaefer

ENDOWMENT FUND
in Honor of
Bob and Elaine Schaefer
Lee and Wilma Starkey
Ron and Tanya Spedalare
by Ann Dahl

MUSIC FUND
in Memory of
Gwen Wayson
John Workman
Bill Klein
Kay Hollinger
by David Brock
Safe Sanctuary at Lovely Lane, or the Story of a Door

One hundred and thirty-three years ago when Lovely Lane's church and connected parsonage were built on St. Paul street, social conditions were quite different than they are today. Social behavior was more reserved and formal. Today, social behavior is more dynamic and unpredictable. It is imperative that safeguards are put in place to protect both clergy staff and parishioners. Accordingly, the United Methodist Church has issued Safe Sanctuaries policies to insure that relationships and spaces within the church are places of trust.

Specifically Safe Sanctuaries policies relate to the care of children and youth, and the adults who work with them, including things like background checks, appropriate boundaries and being sure that there are always two adults in a room with children. More broadly, Safe Sanctuaries can refer to the ways pastors maintain healthy boundaries with church members and friends. One example of such good boundary keeping is that, when a pastor and parishioner meet for a conversation, there are windows in the office space.

Lovely Lane’s Pastor's office door was originally built with four solid wood panels set within a substantial wood frame; a characteristic construction for the time. Unfortunately, the original construction is not in compliance with the Church's Safe Sanctuaries policies.

Grace's VIM (Volunteers in Mission) team was asked to help. Our assistance began with an examination and evaluation of the door's construction and how to proceed with replacing two wooden panels with two panels of tempered glass.

One important criterion was that the original integrity of the door be maintained as much as possible. The two upper wooden panels would have to be removed and replaced by the glass. That was accomplished by carefully removing the molding on the inside around the panels.

Next the panels were removed by a jig saw. Once removed, the glass was set in place.

Lastly, the original moldings were replaced to secure the glass in place.

The end result was transforming. Not only did the door conform to the new Safe Sanctuary policies, the admittance of light into the hallway was dramatic.

Jack Danz

BWC scholarship applications

Once again, the Baltimore-Washington Conference will be awarding scholarships for qualified students currently attending college, as well as high school seniors who plan to attend college in the fall of 2018. The application process opened on January 3 and will close March 7, 2018.

A variety of scholarships are offered to fit the diverse needs of our students. To be considered for a scholarship, students must complete the online application which includes uploading their current transcripts. In addition, the student must provide contact information for their pastor and one additional church reference. The pastor and reference will be contacted and asked to submit information on the student’s participation in the local church. The entire process will be done online.

For details about the individual scholarships or to apply for a scholarship, visit: www.bwcumc.org/administration/finance/local-church-resources/scholarships/

GRACE BOOK CLUB

Those who enjoy reading and then sharing their thoughts with others are cordially invited to join the Grace Book Club which meets on second Mondays at 7:00 in the church parlor. The book for February 12 is Sleeping with Mae West by Dr. Robert E. Yim. New persons are always welcome!

For further information, please contact Maureen Danz, maur.danz@verizon.net.
Dear Friends,

Rama’s daughter and son were admitted to Patan Hospital on the same day in April. It’s usually a hot, dusty time in the Kathmandu valley, but this spring’s persistent rains prompted us to wonder if the monsoon had arrived early. Radha came to the hospital because of a miscarriage and went home the next day. Madhav had acute pancreatitis and stayed.

Pancreatitis is usually caused by too much alcohol or by gallstones – either of which can damage this hand-sized organ located behind the stomach. Its digestive juices then leach into the surrounding tissues, causing severe abdominal pain and vomiting. Most cases of acute pancreatitis respond to two days of intravenous fluids, analgesics and a naso-gastric tube, but Madhav’s condition was complicated. Fluid had accumulated around his left lung and a blood clot formed in his chest, so he was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit.

After three days, the doctors in the ICU transferred the 28-year-old out to the care of my medical ward team. Though lingering inflammation had wrecked his appetite, at that point Madhav still had a muscular body sporting a variety of tattoos. The Hindu god Shiva, dreadlocks streaming, strode across his chest. An elegantly-drawn Buddha reposed on his left forearm, while that arm’s flip side bore rough, hand-made letters honoring the rapper ‘Fifty Cent.’ On Madhav’s right arm, a knife stabbed into a wound under the banner ‘Death before Living.’

Rama was a heavy-set, no-nonsense woman of about 50. From the start she made it clear to us that she didn’t have money to burn. Her husband had walked out on her ten years earlier, leaving her with four kids, ages 2 to 18. She’d worked as a cleaner in a hospital but had to leave that job due to bad knee pain. Here in Patan Hospital, anticipating a shortfall of funds, she’d insisted Madhav be taken out of the ICU earlier than that doctor advised. She was a constant presence at Madhav’s bedside and in a raspy voice snapped out accurate updates about his condition whenever we came on rounds.

One afternoon about ten days into his time with us, I circled back to see Madhav. He looked sick – anxious, sweaty, and breathing hard. His blood pressure had dropped and he had a high fever, so probably he had septicemia. I took Rama outside the room.

“Madhav has gotten very sick. He may have a collection of infected fluid near his pancreas. I know you’re short of money, but we have to put him into the ICU. He may not make it if we leave him out on the ward. I’ll talk to Social Services about charity support.” I was surprised when she readily agreed and Madhav went into the surgical ICU.

After a patient is transferred from our ward to another specialty team (like surgery), I usually stop seeing them. There are more than enough internal medicine patients to occupy my time. This past summer was particularly busy on the medical ward as we took care of a spate of patients with assorted fevers, some caused by scrub typhus or swine flu.

But something drew me back to Madhav and his mother. From a young age he was living a wild life. He was a driver who’d spent his weekends binge drinking and he’d already been in and out of rehab. He had the look of a rough character, except that towards us he was always polite, almost timid, seemingly embarrassed by the situation into which he’d fallen.

Rama spent every night in the hospital, sleeping on a piece of thin carpet padding – either beside Madhav’s bed or in the hallway outside the ICU. She confided to me about her ongoing efforts, sometimes with strategic tears, to raise funds – from neighbors, from Madhav’s former employer and from the hospital administration – but she never asked me directly to contribute.

It seemed that whenever there was a glimmer of hope – Madhav’s starting to eat, having less pain, his fever gone – it would soon be dashed by another complication. I came into the ICU one morning expecting to see progress and instead Rama’s face was a beacon of distress: “Look: now’s he’s bleeding!” as she pointed disconsolately to the bright red column coursing down his gastric tube.

His inflamed pancreas had eaten into the adjacent intestine, causing an ulcer with a spurting artery that the surgeon had to sew over to stop the bleeding. Ten days later, as Madhav recovered from this major operation, the same thing occurred. As they again wheeled him into the operating room, the senior surgeon muttered to me, “I don’t think he’s going to make it this time.” But he did.

By July, the real monsoon had taken hold, unleashing its daily downpours ending in sun-spangled clouds and crisp air. Madhav grew emaciated. The periods of gastric drainage or fasting after two operations had cut deeply into his body’s nutritional reserves. It was hard enough for Rama to pay for antibiotics; the cost of IV nutrition packets would have been exorbitant.

Two more weeks went by. He finally left the surgical ICU and began to eat a normal diet. These feedings were followed by fresh attacks of abdominal pain. The ultrasound showed that he’d developed gallstones which had reignited his pancreatitis. One day I found him curled up in pain and breathing hard. This time Rama motioned for me to follow her outside. We walked out onto a ramp, where the air in the space between two buildings was misty from the morning’s rain.

“I can’t take any more of this, doctor! I can’t! I can’t stand to see him suffer this way! He neither gets better nor dies! – just hangs there somewhere in between. When does this pain end!??”

“You’re right, Rama. He’s very sick again.”

“Enough of it! If this is his time to go to salvation, then so be it! It’s salvation time.”

My well of encouragement was nearly dry. Maybe she was right. Maybe we had kept Madhav alive for our own sakes. But, then, it wasn’t like there was a simple way to end her son’s medical care.

I looked at her for a moment. “Madhav has pulled through before. He doesn’t have a terminal illness, something impossible to...
cure. I know it’s hard, but let’s hope once more.’

So Madhav went in for his third operation, removal of his gall bladder, and then his deep abdominal pain finally began to subside. By August, my updates on his condition were a regular item over our family’s dinner table. We prayed for him and also asked friends to contribute their prayers. I started looking in on Madhav first thing each day, searching for Rama’s faded orange kurta dress among the crowd of patients’ relatives. I suppose that in past years, when I was hospital director or chief of medicine, I would have considered myself too busy to get so involved with a patient like Madhav, but this summer I made the time.

One Saturday, my son Benjamin and I dropped by and found the two of them locked in an argument. Madhav looked dour. He’d begun to disengage from all the medical talk, withdrawing into an internal sanctuary where morphine injections provided respite from the terrible world of the hospital.

She turned to me. “Doctor, this is the rudest person you can imagine! He won’t even look at me, addresses me in low form, and generally treats me as his servant. Aren’t I the one who’s been caring for him? Right now I’m ready to take him home and let him die. I’m sick of this hospital and of his disrespect!” Two people standing beside the adjacent bed murmured in agreement.

We went outside to sit and talk. “Rama, in all these years, I can’t remember a patient who suffered as much as Madhav, nor a mother who looked after her son so faithfully. Can’t you take a break, get someone, maybe Radha, to come and watch him one or two nights?”

I often prayed with the two of them, but wondered how these were being answered. He just dragged on in his skeletal condition, the next calamity waiting around the corner. Finally I asked them if someone from our church could come and pray, ‘a prayer specialist’ I said, perhaps to break the impasse. They readily agreed. Arun came with his wife Indira and they prayed with them at the bedside.

Who knows how illnesses take their course? But a week or so after this, Madhav’s appetite steadied. His surgical wound began to close. He was able to walk to the hospital canteen. I came by one afternoon and found him sitting alone on the edge of his bed, a hunched-over, reed-like figure. As I walked around beside him, there was a steaming plate of chow mein. He barely gave me a nod, focused as he was on the business of carefully spreading spicy chutney sauce over the fried noodles before beginning to devour them.

Three weeks ago, after the hospital wrote off most of his bill as charity, Madhav and Rama finally went home. Last week I was in the clinic seeing patients when my cell phone rang: it was Rama. She had my number, but hardly ever called it. I braced myself. When they came around I was relieved to see that Madhav’s face was filling out. Rama said that he’d gained 5 kilograms as she pulled up his shirt. Madhav even briefly smiled at me, saying he was thinking about looking for work, ‘kaam saam,’ he called it.

That day after work, I cycled home through the light afternoon air. The heat of a long monsoon had finally given way to autumn. Cumulus clouds were heaped high at the edges of the valley and kites floated in the cobalt sky.

Love,

Mark, Deirdre, Zachary & Benjamin

[* All personal names have been changed.*]
The Staff of
Grace United Methodist Church

Lead Pastor
Amy P. McCullough

Associate Pastor
James McSavaney

Director of Children & Youth Ministries
Trisha Wetzelder

Minister of Music/Organist
Chris Schroeder

Associate Organist
David C. Brock

Director, Children’s Choirs
Mairin Srygley

Director, Youth Choir
Robert Cantrell

Director, Handbell Choir
Kathie Metz

Soloists/Section Leaders
Teri Bickham, soprano; Mairin Srygley, mezzo soprano; Patricia Hengen, contralto; Antonio Chase, tenor; Robert Cantrell, bass

Administrative Assistant
Christina Rushing

Business Secretary
George Kahl

General Treasurer
Lynn Beachler

Newsletter Editor
Kitty Allen

Preschool Director
Barbara Blair

Custodial Staff
Tim Gause, Robert Ashby, Carolyn Sandler

5407 North Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21210
410-433-6650 www.graceunitedmethodist.org