

# Grace Notes

## Grace United Methodist Church

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



• [www.GraceUnitedMethodist.org](http://www.GraceUnitedMethodist.org)

*--To Act so that God's Love is Felt by All--*

Volume 27, No. 9

September 2019

## September preaching and worship

**SEPTEMBER 1** - Labor Day weekend - Rev. Amy McCullough  
Single service at 10:00 a.m.

**SEPTEMBER 8** - Pastor Dane Wood  
Two services resume - 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and return of Chancel Choir to worship

### **SEPTEMBER 15 - HOMECOMING SUNDAY**

All are invited! Members and families past and present, friends, visitors, neighbors, former clergy spread the word to others with a connection to Grace over the years

*Worship - Music - Fellowship*  
Rev. Amy McCullough preaching  
*followed by*



on the church's front lawn  
Please RSVP at 410-433-6650 or [admin@graceunitedmethodist.org](mailto:admin@graceunitedmethodist.org)

**SEPTEMBER 22** - Rev. Amy McCullough

**SEPTEMBER 29** - Pastor Dane Wood

+ + + + +



Monthly Taizé Services resume on  
Wednesday, September 11  
at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary



## 2019-2020 CHOIR SEASON BEGINS

If you enjoy music and singing, please consider being a member of Grace's Music Ministry by joining one of our many choirs! We are always interested in having new singers and bell ringers to support Grace's long legacy of inspiring music!

The **Chancel Choir** rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00-8:30 p.m. with rehearsals beginning on September 5<sup>th</sup>. The Chancel Choir is made up of youth and adults and serves as the principal musical leadership for the 10:00 a.m. worship at Grace. The choir also presents several concerts throughout the year for the Grace community, including a return of our annual Christmas Concert on December 15<sup>th</sup> as well as the popular Patriotic Concert scheduled for Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome to sing with the Chancel Choir and no audition is necessary. Please contact Chris Schroeder at [chris@graceunitedmethodist.org](mailto:chris@graceunitedmethodist.org) for more information.

**NEW OPPORTUNITY THIS YEAR:** Join the Chancel Choir with a short-term commitment to sing either the Christmas Concert or the Organ Re-Dedication Concert in the spring. Your time commitment will be to attend only three rehearsals prior to the concert, lasting one hour each. Chris is hoping some who have expressed interest in singing with the choir but have regular family obligations can join us for a short-term commitment!

**The Handbell Choir** is open to youth and adults and rehearses Sunday mornings after the 10:00 a.m. worship. All are welcome to join; music reading ability is necessary. Please contact Jane Benson at [jane@janeandjohn.com](mailto:jane@janeandjohn.com) if you are interested in ringing.

**The Youth Choir** rehearses on Sundays from 11:15 a.m. to 12 noon with rehearsals beginning September 22nd. The Youth Choir, for those in grades 7 through 12, is directed by Mr. Robert Cantrell. They sing once a month throughout the year and occasionally join in singing with the Chancel Choir in special services and concerts. Please contact Robert at [robert\\_cantrell@hotmail.com](mailto:robert_cantrell@hotmail.com) for more information.

**The Children's Choir** rehearses at the end of Sunday School from 10:50 to 11:25 a.m. beginning Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. All Sunday School children are part of this choir. They sing several times in worship throughout the year. The choir is directed by Miss Mairin Srygley. Please contact Mairin at [mairinsrygley@gmail.com](mailto:mairinsrygley@gmail.com) for further information.

**MUSIC AT GRACE CONCERT SERIES** - In addition to our regular annual concerts, there are several new events planned for the coming year. Please watch for the concert brochure coming out soon. We hope that you will continue to support this ministry to the community through your financial contributions as well as your attendance.

**Many thanks to our many volunteer musicians who commit their time and talent to the music ministry here at Grace Church!  
You are VERY much appreciated!**

\* \* \* \* \*

### NEW PIANO FOR FELLOWSHIP HALL

Private contributions are now being accepted for the purchase of a new grand piano for Fellowship Hall, replacing the old and "difficult to play" instrument that is currently housed there. The newer instrument will be available for use for special church events as well as the Choral Arts of Baltimore. Please contact Chris Schroeder at [chris@graceunitedmethodist.org](mailto:chris@graceunitedmethodist.org) or by calling the church office (410-433-6650) to support this special project. Thank you!



New discussion group:

## *Striving toward God's Beloved Community: Conversations about Race, Privilege and Baltimore*

In the summer of 2018, Grace held a series of "vital conversations" around race and privilege. This four-week series touched about the history and ongoing legacy of racism in the United States as well as the ways in which a faith community might begin to talk about race together and work toward the beloved community of sisters and brothers that is God's kingdom.

As a next step to those important dialogues, a monthly group is beginning this September entitled "Striving toward God's Beloved Community: Conversations about Race, Privilege and Baltimore." Each month the group will read a selected book that addresses one (or more) of these topics and then gather together for discussion during one of the options for group discussion. Some of the selected books are:

- ▶ *Tears We Cannot Stop* by Michael Eric Dyson
- ▶ *The Hero's Fight: African Americans in West Baltimore and the Shadow of the State* by Maria Patricia Fernandez-Kelly
- ▶ *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- ▶ *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman
- ▶ *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead
- ▶ *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* by Austin Channing Brown
- ▶ *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo
- ▶ *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore
- ▶ *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Our hope is by reading, learning, sharing and listening, we at Grace will increase our understanding of our history, our compassion for the diverse stories that comprise our congregation and our city, and, finally, our ability to see Jesus' face in one another. A kick-off gathering for this journey will be held on Wednesday, September 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the parlor. All are welcome.

\* \* \*

Christians are like the several flowers in a garden, that have each of them the dew of heaven, which, being shaken with the wind, they let fall at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished, and become nourishers of each other.

– John Bunyan

## How you can show you care

There is a group of people at Grace who are so unhappy with what is going on at the southern border of the U.S. that they feel called to take some action. The current situation is unacceptable. Families are being separated, and children are being kept in crowded cells without proper nutrition, supervision or basic hygiene supplies. They sleep on cement floors or benches with only mylar blankets for warmth.

Men and women who are seeking asylum are being kept in similar conditions for extended periods of time without access to proper medical care, mental health care, or information about the U.S. immigration system. They come to our borders for safety, but instead face discrimination and hostility.

Our first action was to create a postcard to send to our Senators and Representatives, urging them to ensure that basic human rights are respected, even in the midst of this refugee crisis. Our elected officials have a responsibility to address the situation, by creating legislation that supports practical, fair immigration reform, and upholding this country's values in regards to what is going on at our border.

After worship services, please stop in the Narthex or Parlor during Lemonade time to sign a postcard. The cards will be stamped and posted by Grace.

At the beginning of September, we will start a new effort to collect funds and needed items for The Inn Project, an effort in Arizona that helps ICE remove children from detention. The Inn Project is an emergency response of the United Methodist Church to an increased number of families with children being released from ICE custody. They provide temporary shelter, food, and help reaching family and friends already living in the U.S.

If you would like to join this group, please talk to Pastor Dane Wood, Amanda Graham or Debbie English.

– Amanda Graham

## Within the Family at Grace

### BAPTISMS

Emily Kathleen Stephens  
daughter of Amy Dezern and Scott Stephens  
sister of Caroline, Charlott and Will  
July 21, 2019

Elliott Randolph Wise  
son of Katherine and Adam Wise  
August 11, 2019

## What does it mean?

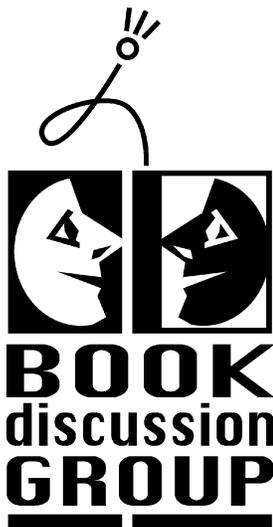
A few weeks ago, Diane, our church secretary, was talking to an African American man she had opened the door for as she was departing for the day. This gentleman had come to Grace to see a pastor. Both Rev. Amy and Dane were out for the afternoon, so Diane asked me if I could be of assistance. I asked him what he had come for. He told me that he wanted a pastor to pray with him. I informed him that our pastors were out for the day, but he was welcome to come back. He asked me if I could talk with him and offer a prayer. I told him I was not a clergy person but would be willing to talk and pray with him. He said he would appreciate that.

The two of us walked into the sanctuary and took a seat in the choir area. For the next 15 or so minutes, this man shared what was going on in his life. I sat there listening in disbelief that he was this open to a complete stranger. When he had finished talking, he asked me if we could pray. We walked down to the communion rail and knelt down. For a minute there was silence in the room. I then offered a prayer lifting up some of the concerns he shared with me during our conversation. After I said "Amen," I asked him if he had a prayer to offer. With tears running down his cheeks, he said he did. He then offered a prayer which included a thank you for our being there.

As we walked out of the sanctuary, I asked him why he had come to Grace. He told me that he changes buses in front of the church on his way to work in Towson and that he saw the rainbow flags flying on the columns in front of the church and knew he would be welcomed and safe.

Yes, the rainbow flag does represent the LGBTQI community but over time its significance has taken on more meaning. It signifies a welcome and safe place for all that enter, even a straight African American man in need of prayer.

– George Kahl



## BOOK CLUB

The book the group is reading for the September 9<sup>th</sup> discussion meeting is *Code Girls* by Liza Mundy. Come to the Parlor at 7:00 p.m.

For October the book will be *Andy Warhol was a Hoarder* by Claudia Kolb.

The group welcomes new participants on second Mondays.

Dear Grace Church Members,

I know that many of you have already made plans for your final resting place, but many of you haven't. I urge you to walk down to our courtyard and see the Columbarium which we built a few years ago to serve as the "final extension of the ministry of Grace Church." What many of you DON'T know is that you can pay for your niche over time, rather than pay for these expenses at the time you need to make your final arrangements. If you are interested, please contact George Kahl for the details.

Steve Painter

Columbarium Committee Chairman

## "Connections" Sunday School Class to resume September 8

Meeting at 9:00 a.m in the Heritage Room (116), the "Connections" Class will be studying "Who is the God we worship." Come join with us as we study through scripture and group discussions three units: "God the Creator," "In God's Image," and "Objects of Worship."

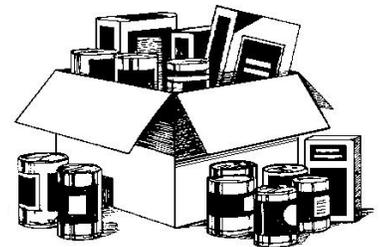
Michelle Riddle is the convener for the class but different class members will lead the discussion each week. The class is especially welcoming for all LGBTQ persons and friends.

The meetings will engage in topics of faith and discipleship while deepening connections among members of the group and between each person and the Bible. Sessions will conclude in time to attend the 10:00 a.m. service.

For more information, please speak with Michelle Riddle, George Kahl or Rev. McCullough.

## GEDCO CARES needs

Their food pantry is currently running low on  
**Canned vegetables**  
**Spaghetti sauce**  
**Cereal**



Items may be delivered to  
5502 York Road, Baltimore, MD 21212  
behind St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church



*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 Cory Farrugia, Patrick Onley
- 3 Jack Grandsire, Tyler Wellener
- 4 Kimberly Stansbury
- 5 Scott Bayne, Virginia Green, John Harris, Cath LaCosta, Bradley Reppert
- 7 Avery Paul, Ann Kaiser Stearns
- 8 Gail Roche
- 9 Devan Muhly, Kathleen Phelps, Nick Stetz, Kacey Shanon Thomas
- 10 Alverta Conyers, Stephen Frank, Jr., Ray Howington, Susan Wallace
- 15 Kendall Hayes
- 16 Nathan Ander, Howard Francis, Cyndi Greenberg, Lawrence Griffith, Paul Redline
- 17 Laura Gamble, Hawon Lee, Sharon McIntire, Ben Starkey, Tyler Wasylak
- 18 Elizabeth Bissett, Rebecca Guth
- 19 John Casey
- 20 Melayn Dorfler
- 21 Trey Heath III, Jonathan Perry
- 22 Mari Berzins, Virginia Starkey-Stephen, Gordon Stetz, Ethan Weidner
- 23 Terry Kneip
- 24 John G. Danz, Jr.
- 25 Jennifer Covington, Ilva Doggett, Butch Sharpe
- 26 Bettie Jean Howard
- 27 Sean Harris, Irene Moses, Betty Jean Tyler, Josh White
- 28 Edith Scouten
- 29 Susan Clark, Michael Madsen, Greg Wasylak
- 30 Heather Grandsire, Diane B. Topper

## SPECIAL GIFTS

We acknowledge with gratitude the following special gifts to the Altar Guild in memory of

LINDA SIGLIN by  
Anne B. Leshner  
Angela F. Vass

In memory of LINDA SIGLIN by  
Kathleen Scanlon  
Thelma Gesling  
Leigh Mires  
Doris Teti  
Dr. Joseph and Linda Napora

## *Are you a Donor?*

MONEY? GENTLY USED CLOTHES? HOUSEHOLD ITEMS? CARS? These are just a few of the items that we are asked to donate to multiple causes. Today you are being asked for yet another donation. Would you be willing to donate one vase of flowers for the altar at least once a year? The cost is only \$27.00 per vase with a slightly higher cost for special flower requests or larger arrangements.

Each Sunday our altar is graced with flowers that are given first and always to the glory of God and then in memory or a loved one or in honor of a special person or significant occasion. Through the years we have been fortunate to have faithful donors but with the passing of time, our donor list has decreased. This is now your opportunity to be an altar flower donor.

One of my volunteer jobs at Grace is to see that flowers are ordered on a monthly basis and I am always looking forward to the next month. In recent times I have had to look for donors or, on some Sundays when no one offered, the church has paid for the flowers. This is not a line item in our budget. Therefore, each time the church pays, another program or need within the church is affected. Some donors have specified "standing" orders while others give regularly on specified Sundays. Unless I am told that it is a "standing" order, I always contact the donors to ask permission.

Starting with this *Grace Notes*, I will be listing known flower donors for the next two months. Donors who have specified "standing" orders will have an \* by their name. Subsequently, names will be posted on a monthly basis. If there is an opening or if you have a special request for any given Sunday, please contact me and I will try to fill the request. Please know that you may always change your flower order. As we look ahead, there are openings for Christmas, Easter and our Paschal candle.

I can be reached in the church office every Friday or you may phone me, CLAIRE GREENHOUSE, at 410-337-7407 or email me at [aschoolrn@verizon.net](mailto:aschoolrn@verizon.net). Thank you for caring and sharing!

- |               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| September 1:  | 2 openings                         |
| September 8:  | Tish Swam<br>Lynn Beachler         |
| September 15: | *Kitty Allen and Barbara Bond      |
| September 22: | Glenn Simmons<br>*Francette Boling |
| September 29: | Downing Kay (1 vase)               |
| October 6:    | *Debby Jencks (1 vase)             |
| October 13:   | *Thomas Lynn<br>Sara Nichols       |
| October 20:   | Claire Greenhouse (1 vase)         |
| October 27:   | Janet Ander<br>Claire Greenhouse   |

## *A letter from the Zimmermans in Nepal*

Dear Friends,

27 May 2019

On a night in 1990 I admitted a man to the medical ward with gastrointestinal bleeding. When I asked his family to either donate blood or find donors they claimed to be too poor and frail, but to me they seemed fully capable so I told them arranging blood was their responsibility. I came by his room an hour later and was surprised to learn the Nursing Supervisor, Ram Shova, had taken it upon herself to bring two cross-matched units from our blood bank and the first was already being infused into the patient.

I marched off and when I finally met Ram Shova on the surgical ward, I asked, "Why did you let that family off the hook?! You know it's their responsibility and that our blood bank has a limited supply. Are you related to them in some way?" She just turned and walked away. The patient's bleeding stopped that night and he recovered.

The next day, our Nursing Director, Ruth Judd from Australia, called me into her office and motioned to take a seat in front of her wide, wooden desk. In a soft, almost off-hand tone she said, "Mark, I wonder how long you're planning to work in this hospital."

"I'm not sure, Ruth. Maybe for some years, I hope. Why?"

"Because you won't make it through the year if you keep treating our nurses like you did Ram Shova last night. She realized that patient was critically ill and couldn't wait for his family's dithering. Someone had to do something. Do you know she's one of our best nurses?"

It wasn't my nature to gracefully accept a dressing-down, but I was new to the mission so I apologized to Ram Shova the next day. 'It was nothing,' she replied, an ironic start to an enduring friendship.

Ram Shova was raised in a well-to-do Kathmandu family, her brother owned a large resort hotel, and she graduated in the fifth batch of the mission's pioneering nursing campus. She'd spent her whole career working in Patan and its predecessor mission hospital Shanta Bhawan and by the time I'd joined, she was a fleshy middle-aged woman with a round, ruddy nose, a melodic voice, and a steely resolve.

When we established the country's first hospital infection control committee, she was the natural choice for lead nurse. In Patan Hospital, where rats occasionally roamed the hallways and relatives camped under their patients' beds, infection control was potentially daunting, but a group of us, with Ram Shova at its cutting edge, began taking down low-hanging fruit. She had the moral standing to shepherd doctors, nurses, and everyone else into handwashing, appropriate waste disposal, and other changes of practice without producing much resentment or even grumbling. If she said it, it must be the right thing.

In the late 1990s, the hospital Board appointed Ram Shova as its Nursing Director and me as its Medical Director. Our adjacent offices opened onto a leafy courtyard over which loomed the four-story tower of inpatient wards, a reflection of the personal burden we felt as we walked out into the hospital. Of the four hospital officers, Ram Shova was the only non-Christian, but she'd sometimes be the one to remind us to begin our meetings in prayer.

Looking after 600 often-fractious employees, we learned to 'test fly' any emerging ideas on the others in the leadership team. I could count on Ram Shova to give me straight feedback and later to back it with her support, even if my plan proved unpopular among the rank and file. Even more than with my fellow expatriates, who often seemed caught up in complaining about Nepal or bickering among themselves, with Ram Shova I shared a sense of mission.

When I left Patan Hospital in 2005, she was one of just a few Patan Hospital colleagues who remained in touch. She and her husband Puroshottam began to regularly invite our family for meals and we reciprocated, though sometimes were caught off guard by their progressively restrictive Hindu diets. At Christmas, they'd show up at our front door with presents for each of us, which was mildly embarrassing since we only gave gifts to our family members.

They had two children, a daughter Jyoti and a son Ashish, who both studied in Asia to become physicians. Like many Nepali doctors, upon graduating they immediately began preparing for the qualifying examinations to enter specialty residency in the U.S. Jyoti went first, became an internist, and later found a job as a hospitalist in Kansas. Ashish became a pediatric oncologist and began working in a remote area of Missouri, his first step to U.S. citizenship. Their parents avidly supported their decisions to 'find better careers' in America.

In 2012, Ram Shova retired. In 2016, after ten years in NSI, I was invited back to work fulltime in Patan Hospital. One hot afternoon that first summer, I noticed Ram Shova and her husband edging through our crowded clinic to see my colleague Dr. Ramesh. Afterwards they came to my desk and showed me her CT scan. There was a small nodule in the base of her right lung. She later phoned to say they'd gone to the new Nepal Cancer Hospital where doctors found adenocarcinoma cells in the fluid around her lung. A lifelong Kathmandu resident but never a smoker, she had incurable lung cancer.

Every month or two, I'd visit Ram Shova, either in an immaculate room of the cancer hospital or at her home. Chemotherapy slowed her deterioration, extending her life expectancy from months to years. It seemed a sad irony that at this stage, facing a deadly illness, her medically-trained children were settled on the other side of the world. Though they often flew home to visit their mom, mostly they were far away. But then, how many decades have I spent apart from my own mom? And years before, when my dad suffered a torn thoracic aorta, it took me days to arrange a plane ticket, by which time he'd already died.

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Grace United Methodist Church  
5407 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21210-2024

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This issue mailed August 26th  
DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE RUSH

The Staff Parish Relations Committee is pleased to welcome DIANE LESMAN as Grace's Communications Coordinator. Diane has been working in this capacity on an interim basis and has now transitioned into the role on a permanent basis. The Communications Coordinator is a part-time position, overseeing Grace's strategies of sharing our story and mission with the wide-world, with a specific concentration on our electronic communication platforms.

Even when unwell, Ram Shova would say, "I'm so glad they're in the U.S. They have their own lives to lead and I won't let my illness disrupt their careers and their happiness. Anyway, I don't need them back here at this stage; I have friends like you and Deirdre and the boys."

I've forgotten how it started, whether at my suggestion or Ram Shova's, but from my first visits, we began to pray together. When we invited her and Purushottam to our church for a healing service, they readily accepted and at the end of the program asked us for a Nepali Bible. Medically, she soldiered on with intermittent chemo, daily walks and a healthy diet.

One evening last October I visited them at home and after about an hour of chat, with darkness deepening outside, I got up to go. "What about our prayer, Dr. Mark?" she reminded me, so I sat back down. At that moment, she began to turn her head rhythmically far to the right. I thought she was looking across the room for her Bible, but when the movement repeated itself eight or ten times, I realized something sinister was up. I suggested they go to the hospital that night and she later phoned to say they'd found metastases on the CT scan of her brain.

"I'm just so glad you were around when it happened. Without you here, my husband would never have figured out it was a seizure." She always seemed grateful for whatever life handed her.

We would read in the Bible about Jesus and pray to Him. She sometimes talked of putting herself 'in the Lord's hands' and of eventually going to meet Him. Others might have spoken differently, but I never urged her to clarify who her Lord was or where she was going. Over the last two months she moved from fatigued to bedridden to stuporous, in the end only able to smile at our arrival beside her bed. Jyoti and Ashish made it home for the final days before she passed away in her room two weeks ago and they performed the Hindu death rites according to Ram Shova's previous instructions.

Children's careers take a high priority the world over and so it is that we're splitting our usual 4-month home assignment into two blocks to accommodate Zachary and Benjamin's exam-centered schooling.... [They visited Grace in July] In July, we'll be 'home' for my mom's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday and she'll be surprised to find her grandsons, now six-foot-five and six-foot-one, towering over her.

Love, Mark, Deirdre, Zachary, and Benjamin

