

# GRACE NOTES

VOL. 29 No. 3

MARCH 2020

## Worship and Preaching

- March 1 Rev. Amy McCullough  
All church worship day. Children join us in worship and Third Graders receive their Bibles
- March 8 Rev. Amy McCullough
- March 15 Jack Danz, CLM at Grace
- March 22 Rev. Rachel Cornwell, guest preacher  
Rev. Cornwell is an ordained elder in the Baltimore Washington Conference and formerly served as the Lead Pastor at Silver Spring United Methodist Church. She currently works with local congregations in the areas of strategic planning and financial stewardship as a Program Director with the James Company.
- March 29 Rev. Amy McCullough



**Lent begins with ASH WEDNESDAY  
on February 26<sup>th</sup> with two services, one at 12  
noon and one at 7:00 p.m.**

## *Please pray for our confirmands*

Four young adults at Grace are on a confirmation journey throughout February and March: Riley Schmidt, Connor Franklin, John Madsen and Cianna Ferrante. Confirmation is an important moment in one's faith journey, in which one explores the Christian beliefs and practices, and takes upon themselves the declaration of vows and vows of membership in Christ's body. We support our confirmands and surround them with our love and prayers.



## SACRED STORYTELLING CLASS

The gospel lessons throughout Lent present Jesus's encounters with persons in need, including the woman at the well, a man born blind, Lazarus buried in a tomb. God does meet us in the stuff of our lives, offering healing, grace, an identity and life. Using these scriptures as a point of departure, this four-week class will invite participants to reflect on how their life story intersects with God's story of life, through reflection, strategies for writing, and sharing together. If you have ever wanted to reflect on your spiritual journey, or ever wondered how a minister crafts a sermon, this class will offer insights into connecting head and heart, faith and life.

The same class will be offered at two different times:

Sundays, from 4 - 5:50 p.m. and

Thursdays, from 9 - 10:30 a.m.

The series begins the week of March 8 and runs through the week of March 29/April 2.





## Sunday, March 1

Bible Dedication for all students who are in the Third Grade - during morning worship

## “Kids in Action”

Beginning March 20 and every third Friday of the month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., we will have a fun-filled night for the children in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, giving parents an opportunity for some free time, a night out. A light meal will be served. Come join us! Registration is required. Contact Carolyn Young, Director of Children's Ministry at [carolyn@graceunitedmethodist.org](mailto:carolyn@graceunitedmethodist.org)

## See what's happening!

Each week check out the Children's Ministry Bulletin Board to find out what the children's lessons were, who or what the ministry is praying for, the new weekly memory Bible verse and much more.



## March is Women's History Month

Each Sunday during March, the children will celebrate a woman featured in the Bible.



### SATURDAY MORNING WALK/RUN GROUP

This Lenten small group is a great way to combine faith, friends and exercise. We gather on Saturday mornings at 7:30 a.m. and incorporate a brief reading or reflection in our walk/run. All ages and abilities are welcome! Meet in the church parking lot for a 1 to 2 mile route. More questions? See Burt English, [bellenglish@verizon.net](mailto:bellenglish@verizon.net).

## Church Council Update

The Grace Church Council met for its first meeting of 2020 on Wednesday, January 29. In addition to spending some time building relationships as a new Council, those present officially affirmed the 2020 Operating Budget, learned more about the recently released Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation for the United Methodist Church, and shared ministry updates with one another.

Its next meeting is Wednesday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m. The Church Council is an open meeting and any member of the Grace Church community is welcome to attend.

## Families at Grace Dinner

Sunday, March 1  
5:00-7:00 p.m.

Designed particularly for young or younger families at Grace.

Kids welcome

Potluck Dinner: Rev. Amy will provide the main dish and drinks. Bring an appetizer, side dish or salad, or dessert

At the Parsonage -

5405 N. Charles Street - right across the parking lot.

Please RSVP: Church office - 410-433-6650



## Family Night Supper



## SAVE THE DATE

### Good Friday

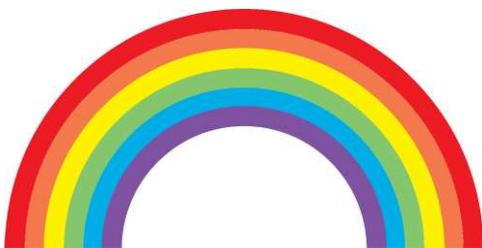
### April 10<sup>th</sup> - 5:00 p.m.

Note the new time! The Chancel Choir will lead a *Service of Tenebrae* in a service similar to our Lessons and Carols at Christmas time, but with a focus on Jesus' final days leading to his death. The service will include readings from the Gospel of John with each reading followed by a congregational hymn or a choral anthem. We hope that your schedule will allow you to attend this moving worship experience.

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## BRAVO!

On Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> nearly 100 individuals attended the Four Hand Piano Concert performed by Kathryn Locke and Chris Schroeder, joined by many others watching via live stream on Facebook. As one listener commented, "What a glorious afternoon of music! Two souls, four hands, in sync!" Thanks to all who came and a special thanks to Kathryn and Chris for their hard work and beautiful playing!



## The Beauty of the Rainbow

The rainbow flag has been a symbol of inclusion and support for the LGBTQ+ community for more than 40 years. Over time, the flag has also become the symbol of advocacy for social equality and acceptance of personal individuality.

When people see that flag flying, they know the place it represents is one of welcome and safety for all.

Traditionally, we display the flag at Grace in May to celebrate our anniversary as a Reconciling Congregation and in June to celebrate Pride. The flag has been flown for the past year to demonstrate publicly our position of LGBTQ+ support during the current painful division over such affirmation within the United Methodist Church. As in the society at large, it appears that lines are being drawn and opposing sides taken. With pride, our congregation seeks to "draw the circle wide" to include rather than draw lines to exclude.

At its most recent meeting, the Reconciling Committee of Grace voted to display the rainbow flag on church grounds through May 2020 when the General Conference meets and makes decisions about inclusion and the future of our denomination. We wave the flag as an outward sign of our unwavering love for all. If you have questions or would like further discussion, please contact any member of the Reconciling Committee.

- Michelle Riddle



Heartiest birthday greetings to the following of our Church family celebrating in March:

- 2 Nancy Brannan
- 3 Liam Harris, Susan Hodges
- 4 Elizabeth Ottinger
- 5 Douglas Schmidt
- 6 Phoebe Schillinger
- 7 Abbi Wicklein-Bayne
- 8 Kimberly Barnes
- 9 Reinhard Nottrodt
- 10 Norma Faby
- 12 Stephen Achuff, Teri Bickham, Joanie Stetz
- 14 Peggy Ruppensberger, Shannon Schmidt
- 15 John Tydings
- 16 Thom Rinker
- 17 Jim Hackley, Meghan Mullan, W. A. Niermann, Jr., Rachel Rhoad, Mason Wilhide
- 20 Lynn Reichhelm, M. Edward Skinner, III
- 21 Frances Northington
- 22 Linda Cameron
- 23 Rebecca Madsen
- 25 Jeremy Hickey, McCabe Millon
- 26 Jenna Marie Roth
- 27 Abigail Benfer, Christopher Covington, Walter Stuart, Jeffrey S. Underland
- 28 Larry Brown, Bruce Eicher, Marcia Gleckler, Thomas Hicks, Kathie Metz
- 29 Cory Schreier Mian
- 30 Alexis Melin
- 31 Valerie Adams, Peggy Rogers, Karen Schaefer  
*Because of computer access problems,  
this list was not confirmed by press time.*

## Within the Family at Grace

### DEATH

Bettie Jean Howard (Mrs. Stanley)  
February 2, 2020

### GRACE BOOK CLUB

For the March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting the members have been reading *The Silent Patient* by Alex Michaelides. If you enjoy reading and wish to participate in the discussion, come to the Parlor at 7:00 p.m. and join them.

### THE INN

Members of Grace have been generous in supporting our ministry to The Inn project, a place of respite for asylum-seeking families in Tucson, Arizona. The Inn is a ministry of the Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church which legally shelters migrant families.

Members of Grace have donated many boxes of children's clothes which have been shipped to the shelter and have donated over \$2,400 which has been forwarded to The Inn. Money continues to be accepted for this project and checks can be made out to Grace Methodist Church for The Inn. The Outreach and Social Justice committees at Grace also have donated funds.

The Rev. Efrain Zavala, chairman of The Inn Advisory Board, thanked Grace and noted, "Your generous gift of \$2433.10 has brought much hope and encouragement to our ministry at The Inn. Our Board is extremely grateful, as are the families we serve."

### QUALITY OF LIFE RETREATS

To Grace United Methodist Church:

Thank you for your \$1,500 gift in December to our Quality of Life Retreats for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Your gift went toward our expenses for our December retreat at the Washington Retreat House in D.C. Gifts like yours insure that the retreat program continue. As stated in your letter, while we do not hear about HIV/AIDS as we once did, it is still with us and is still work to be done.

Grace has supported us from the very beginning. Our first retreat was in September 1987 at West River Retreat Center. A group from Grace came and provided a cookout for the participants. Over the years you have continued to provide personnel, resources and finances. THANK YOU.

I am available to come to Grace and share the current status of our ministry. Congregations like Grace have allowed us to continue the retreats for those 33 years. Thank you again for your support and generosity.

In gratitude,

Rev. Terri Rae Chattin

Treasurer, Quality of Life Retreat Board of Directors

# Greetings from the Zimmermans, Missionaries in Nepal

... to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior...  
Luke 2:11

Dear Friends,

29 December 2019

On Tuesday of the week before Christmas, towards the end of medical rounds, we came to the bed of a sturdily-built young woman lying still and straight on her back. The resident presented her case to me as a 36-year old who'd come in from the eastern district of Sindhuli because of several days of abdominal pain and vomiting; on examination he'd found her abdomen soft but tender; an elevated blood lipase pointed to acute pancreatitis as the cause. But there's always more to a story than its dry clinical particulars, and so it was with Asha's. [Most names here have been changed.]

Around each of the other five beds in the ward, one or more family members stood waiting, lounged on bedrolls, or sat chatting among themselves, and their five bedside tables were cluttered with cracker packages, half bowls of soup, thermos bottles, and pieces of fruit. Asha was alone and her table was empty.

*The gray sky silhouettes a spider's nest of electrical wires overhead as we file along the crumbling shoulder of a two-lane road and form an elongated circle to begin Christmas caroling. Shop fronts run continuously on both sides of the road, some with shutters down for the night, others still open to pedestrians and selling sewing machines, jewelry, assorted foods, paint, clothing. We've stopped under a barely-legible sign reading 'Jesus Enterprises,' the hardware store owned by Ram, a member of our church.*

*With a shout audible up and down the street, Saran declaims in Nepali the words of the angel: "Fear not, for I bring you news of a great joy..." and with that thirty of us launch into a Nepali Christmas carol. Steady streams of motorbikes, trucks, and taxis in both directions kick up dust and spew exhaust and from the windows of a bus stopped in traffic students gaze curiously on our group.*

"Where are your people?" I asked her.

"There's no one," she replied.

"What do you mean 'there's no one'? You mean they've all gone downstairs to eat? Someone should stay here with you."

"They died in the earthquake. It was only my daughter and I left and I had no choice but to send her to an orphanage. So, I'm alone."

On that sunny afternoon in April 2015, Asha had taken her 3-year old daughter to pick flowers in the fields at the edge of their farm. When the ground stopped lurching, she ran back to the house and found it collapsed on her parents, brother, sister-in-law, and husband.

"All died," she said, holding up her index finger with jagged scar. "I cut myself trying to dig them out."

*We walk through the alleys of old Patan City, threading down a long lane to stop in a cold, four-story ravine lit by two bare light bulbs. As we sing, three of the more accomplished dancers bob into our circle, and an occasional motorbike parts the pulsating crowd. Beyond one end of the lane several local people huddle around a garbage fire they've lit on the road.*

*From the adjoining courtyard, four young children peer between the bars of an iron fence and in a pause between songs, one asks the others "So, this is Christmas?" After five or six carols, the woman from our church who owns this house brings out trays laden with circular fried bread and cups of soup. When we try to pass a plate through the fence to the kids, they're startled and run back to their house empty-handed.*

Most patients suffering from acute pancreatitis have a day or two of severe abdominal pain and go home recovered on the third day. Asha kept vomiting and her pain continued to require regular morphine. We gave her large volumes of IV fluid to counteract the loss into the tissues around her inflamed pancreas and, because she was alone, we put a catheter in her bladder to collect and measure her urine.

When I came to see her Wednesday evening, she still winced at the touch of her abdomen. We couldn't feed her because of the vomiting. I leaned over her bed, resting my hands on her blanket so I could speak with her softly and asked how she'd come to Patan Hospital.

"I didn't plan to come here. I was in Kathmandu for another reason and just got sick. If you can arrange for this medical care, I'll go home and bring money to pay you back." She began to tear up.

“Don’t worry. Something can be worked out through charity.” We talked some more and then I asked if I could pray for her. She agreed, though maybe she felt she hadn’t much choice in the matter.

*Our growing troupe enters an open square lit by yellow street lamps. It’s bordered by a Buddhist shrine with prayer wheels, piles of bricks, and a processing plant for mineral water. Stars peak between clouds in the black sky. Years before on this Pillache street corner a group of tough young men hung out to drink, gamble and brawl – which was all before one heard the Good News from a shopkeeper and brought part of his gang to form a vibrant nucleus of our church.*

*The chorus of fifty practiced voices, two guitars, two 'madal' drums and a tambourine resounds off the faces of the row houses. Our family are the only foreigners in the church. Zach bounces at the edge of the singing circle, holding Shyam and Lydia’s two-year old boy ‘Bless’ in his arms. Just days before he received an early Christmas present, his acceptance letter to Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania.*

On Friday, with her decreased urine flow and raised creatinine, we realized Asha had gone into kidney failure, an ominous complication which increases the mortality of pancreatitis. Because her gut had stopped working, we placed a nasogastric tube which immediately drained brown, foul-smelling intestinal contents.

That afternoon when I asked more about her trip to Kathmandu she told me she’d come in for a Christmas-related church meeting. It was only then I learned she was a Christian (who comprise about 3% of Nepal’s population). After the church meeting, she made her usual 6-monthly trip to the orphanage to see her daughter, now eight years old, and while there she became too sick to return home to the farm. The next morning, she lay quietly with the blankets pulled up to her face, a tube in her bladder for urine, a catheter in her neck to deliver IV fluids, and the NG tube taped to her nose. I tugged her blanket back and leaned over to speak with her.

“I thought you said you were coming back to pray last night,” she said.

“No. I meant this morning.”

She reached up a hand, brushed my chest, and held up a long hair she’d plucked from my dark sweater. As I was leaving the ward, a man came up and requested I pray for his mother with cancer. He said Asha had advised him to ask me.

*The last of seven houses on our caroling tour sits in what looks like a war zone. An incandescent construction light floods the enclave, once packed tightly with row houses and now containing earthquake rubble shoulder-to-shoulder with new building. Plants grow out of a fallen heap of ancient bricks. Rotting boards are strewn over mounds of sand. Across the way, at the edge of the lamp’s glow, a white owl glides into the concrete canyon and lands on the beam of a new house. Four stories up a remnant shard of collapsed housing, from a tin-roofed veranda, a family observes our congregation.*

*We reach for a rousing grand finale of songs and as the second number begins, Prem makes his move. He is 45, squat and muscular with a slight paunch, hair cut stylishly short on the sides, dark eye brows and glistening cheeks. Ten years ago a friend picked him up drunk off the street and brought him to our church; tonight he steps out as if the moment belongs to him. The lyrics of watching the sky for a star inhabit him as his dance moves in graceful segments, halting in freeze-frame, bouncing up from a squat, radiating the gladness of the Magi’s quest into the cool air of this ageless courtyard.*

On Christmas morning, Asha lay bundled under a quilt by the open window. She said she’d managed a few sips of soup which she couldn’t keep down, but still summoned a measure of cheerfulness to ask what I’d eaten for breakfast and wasn’t I going to a church service. The next day we considered admitting her to the ICU, then sent her for the first of three days of dialysis. With that, her nausea lessened and her kidneys began to produce a healthy volume of urine.

When I walked into her ward room today, she was sitting up in bed for the first time. I asked my daily question about food intake, to which she smiled, showing a gap between two front teeth, and began to giggle, then pointed with her chin towards the bed across the ward. “They gave me a bowl of ‘dedo’ cornmeal mash. It was so delicious.” Asha’s agonizing twelve days of Christmas were finally coming to an end. With her hand, she beckoned me closer and in a whisper asked, “And do you think I could have some meat, maybe even some mo-mos (meat dumplings)?”

May you too sing and dance, eat and drink deeply of His Joy throughout the coming year,  
Love, Mark, Deirdre, Zachary, and Benjamin

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This issue mailed February 24, 2020  
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PLEASE RUSH

THANK YOU to Rev. Amy for her visits, and to my friends on the staff for their visits, errands run, rides, and to the many who have sent cards and offered prayers during my convalescence. Your support and caring have been meaningful and very helpful to me. Bruce Eicher

## ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORS



Altar Flowers

March 1	Lee Gough (1 or 2) and _____
March 8	_____ and _____
March 15	Tom Lynn (1) and _____
March 22	Carolyn Benfer (1) and _____
March 29	Tom Gordon (1 or 2)
April 5 -	Palm Sunday Maureen Danz and Pat Volker
	Palms Thom and Sue Rinker
April 12 -	Easter Tom Moore (1 or 2) and _____
	Hydrangeas Tom Moore
	Palms Kitty Allen, Barbara Bond, Margot Wittich
	Urns Lee Starkey (1) and _____
	Paschal Candle Alan and Nancy Seitz
April 19	_____ and _____
April 26	Lynn Beachler (1) and Jeanette Cosper (1)

Please contact Claire Greenhouse if you are interested in remembering someone by sponsoring an altar flower arrangement: 410-337-7407 or [aschoolrn@verizon.net](mailto:aschoolrn@verizon.net)