

GRACE NOTES

VOL. 30 No. 10

OCTOBER 2021



Preaching and Worship Schedule

October 3 - *World Communion Sunday* - Pastor Levon Sutton

October 3 - 5:00 p.m. - Taizé Healing Service (see page 2)

October 10 - Rev. Amy McCullough

October 17 - Rev. Amy McCullough

October 24 - Rev. Amy McCullough

October 31 - Children and Youth Sunday

Sunday Worship continues to be held at 8:15 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. The 8:15 a.m. service includes a weekly celebration of Holy Communion. The 10:00 a.m. service is live-streamed via YouTube and Facebook. An outdoor communion service is held each month on the first Sunday of the month under the tent in the lower parking lot.

Grace's pastors, worship leaders and re-entry team continue to monitor the Covid infection rates in our state and city as we make decisions about worship. Due to the rise in infection rates in late summer, we reintroduced registration for worship and a limit on the congregation size in September. We regularly monitor the infection rates, and hope to see declining numbers such that these practices can be set aside. The most up-to-date information about Sunday worship can be found in Grace's weekly E-notes, on the website, or by calling the church office. Please know that our decisions are made prayerfully, thoughtfully, in consultation with the medical community and with the heartfelt intention of promoting everyone's safety and well-being. We recognize how difficult it is to not be able to fully worship together in the ways that we are accustomed to worshipping and from which we draw strength. Your pastors and lay minister, Jack Danz, are available to make a visit or bring Holy Communion to you. And we invite your prayers for one another, for any who are sick, grieving or providing care for those in need.

Youth - Parent Gathering

Sunday, October 17

5-7 p.m. on the Parsonage Lawn

Calling all middle and high school youth and parents.

You are invited to come greet Pastor Levon Sutton, Grace's new Associate Pastor, reconnect with Grace friends and hear about youth plans for the fall. A light supper will be served. Please RSVP to Rev. Amy.





TAIZÉ HEALING SERVICE

Sunday, October 3 at 5:00 p.m.

Grace Columbarium and Courtyard

The New Testament writer of James asks, "Are there any among you suffering? Are any sick? They should call for the elders of the church, and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord." James 5: 13-14.

God's gift of healing flows from the stream of God's love, grace and sustaining power, which are always available to those who seek God. Healing does not equate to a cure for every illness or broken piece of life, but an opportunity to be touched by God's love and life that can bring reconciliation, release, or renewed strength. In God's presence we can bring our losses, struggles, worries, and griefs and be met by the Spirit who seeks to make us whole.

A simple service of healing will be held on Sunday, October 3 at 5:00 p.m. in Grace's columbarium courtyard. Rev. Amy will be preaching. Music will be drawn from the Taizé community. A time of anointing with oil and Holy Communion will also be a part of the service. All are welcome.

IN-PERSON and ONLINE

Saturday, October 9th

Join us for this important fun- and fund-raising event on the Grace parking lot under the tent the evening of October 9th. Can't attend? There will be opportunities to view the items for auction and to bid online. Look for more details in E-notes and Sunday worship.

Proceeds will benefit Grace's Weekend Backpack ministry providing bags of non-perishable food to ensure that families in need do not go hungry over the weekend. Bid on gift cards, experiences, vacation homes, prepared meals, and other generously donated items.



Reconciling Gathering at Grace

Grace Church will be hosting a gathering of the eight Reconciling Congregations in the Baltimore area on Sunday, October 10 at 2:00 p.m. It will be a time of fellowship, sharing our ministry stories and receiving an update as to where we are as the United Methodist Church. Each congregation has been asked to bring representatives of its Reconciling Committee and Clergy.

As we have been dealing with the pandemic for the last two years now, the United Methodist General Conference has been postponed two times and is now scheduled to take place from August 29 - September 6, 2022. At that conference, a decision will be made concerning the church's position on homosexuality. Over the next year, there will be much discussion as to just what the United Methodist Church might look like after that conference.

Our gathering is to help us become aware of how the local Reconciling Congregations might be involved in these discussions and continued ministries to the LGBTQ community.

DON'T FORGET

OCTOBER 2 from 10:00 to 1:00

Bring the family and friends for a fabulous FALL DAY with pumpkins to purchase, bake sale with home-baked goodies, face painting!



MUSIC NOTES

Welcoming our new tenor



Grace's Music Ministry is excited to announce the appointment of Michael Brevard as our new Tenor Soloist and Section Leader! His first Sunday was September 19. Michael is thrilled to be joining the choir at Grace. He sang for many years at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Prior to that he was tenor soloist at St. Mark's on the Hill in Pikesville, St. James Episcopal Church in Monkton and Govan's Presbyterian Church.

He has performed locally with the Baltimore Symphony, Baltimore Concert Opera, Lyric Opera Baltimore, and The Baltimore Opera Company. He is an elementary vocal/general music teacher in the Howard County Public School System.

NEW DATE

The Music at Grace Concert **Series Organ Recital** to be presented by Dr. Marilyn Keiser, Organ Professor Emerita at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, has been rescheduled from Friday, October 15, 2021 to Friday, March 18, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. because of continued concerns related to the Covid pandemic.

You can still watch. . .

"A Theme of Variations" Piano Concert:

A recording of the Four-Hand/Two Piano Concert presented on Friday, September 17 by pianists Kathryn Locke and Chris Schroeder is available on YouTube by following this link:

<https://youtu.be/qj4kMA24k1E>

Farewell and thank you to Mairin Srygley

We received the sad news earlier this month that Mairin Srygley will be leaving her positions at Grace Church. Mairin has been one of our soloists for seven years and has led our children's choir program for at least five of those years.

Mairin recently completed a degree in Speech-Language Pathology and was offered a highly coveted position at Good Samaritan Hospital as a Clinical Fellow: Speech-Language Pathologist starting at the end of September.



Mairin writes: "The past 7 years at Grace for me have been filled with wonderful music, community, and growth. The online Sunday School over the last year and the VBS in person was so fun with Amy and Carolyn, and I have loved seeing/hearing how the choir has grown under Chris's leadership. I will dearly miss working with you all and I do hope we can continue working together in creative ways in the future. I want to convey my deepest thanks for being my role models, colleagues, and frankly, a fantastic employer."

Mairin, you have been an invaluable musician over the last seven years! Not only have you helped to lead both the alto and soprano sections, but your wonderful and expert leadership of the Children's Choir ministry has been more than exemplary! You will be sorely missed. We will definitely miss your positive attitude and smiling face!!

We wish Mairin the very best as she begins a new chapter in her life. Best wishes, Mairin!



If you would like to make a contribution to support the Music at Grace Concert Series, please send your tax deductible contribution to Grace United Methodist Church, 5407 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21210, c/o Music at Grace Concerts. Thank you for your patronage.


 * THIS MONTH'S *
birthdays

Happy Birthday greetings to those of our Grace family celebrating in October:

- 2 Becky Shaner, Asa Shaw
- 3 Kent Grasso, Elisabeth Nix, Nancy Webb
- 4 Zachary Graf
- 5 Lynn Beachler, Joseph Dandy
- 6 Darrell Sacks, Elizabeth Shaner
- 9 Allison Ferguson, Michael Gullett
- 10 Deb Bidlack, William Fishman
- 11 Claire Greenhouse
- 12 David Beachler, Jamison Hodges, Charles Plitt III, Susannah L. Sowell
- 13 Olivia Birkel, Stephen Danz, Buzz Getschel, Josephine Gravestrong, Barbara Starkey
- 14 Luke McCullough
- 15 Jeb Cook
- 16 Donald A'Hern, Sue Houghton
- 17 Jeanette Cospers, Suzanne Stevens
- 20 John Gillan, Chloe Kick, Mandy Martin, Glenn Simmons, Ron Spedalere
- 21 Matias Calderon
- 22 Matthew Franklin, Jean Smith
- 23 John Madsen, Erin Millon
- 25 Carla Hackley
- 27 Anders Schillinger
- 28 John Crow, Mike McGuire, Lily Updike
- 29 Becca Friedel
- 30 Susan Rice, Beth Vargas
- 31 James Adams, Susie Guth, B. A. Sewell

SPECIAL GIFTS

We acknowledge with gratitude
 the following special gifts
 in memory of CAROL POLK by
 MaAn Barcelo and Vern Renshaw
 Quynh H. Dang
 John and Karen Barkley
 Charles Melchior

in memory of CAROL POLK to Music by
 Emora and Nancy Brannan
 Tonya Sapre

in memory of CAROL POLK - Outreach by
 Tanya and Ron Spedalere

In memory of LEE STARKEY - Outreach by
 Tanya and Ron Spedalere

Within the Family at Grace

BAPTISM

Javier James Puerto English
 born December 7, 2020
 son of Oscar Javier Puerto Duerto
 and Courtney English Doud
 Grandson of Debbie English
 September 12, 2021



OCTOBER

The flowers on the altar are given to
 the Glory of God and . . .

October 3: in loving memory of Iona and Raymond Shepherd by their daughter and son-in-law, Debby and Steve Jencks and granddaughters Sara and Melissa; and in honor of Lynn Beachler on his birthday by Diane and Don Topper and David and Annette Beachler.

October 10: in loving memory of Eleanor Key Lynn on her birthday by her sons Tom and Jim; and Sara A. H. Nichols by their daughter Sara and grandchildren Celia, Susannah and Drew.

October 17: in loving memory of Elmer Wingate on his birthday by his wife Jeaneen; and F. Carvel Payne on his birthday by his sister Claire Greenhouse.

October 24: in honor of Beth Vargas on her birthday by her parents Janet and Paul Ander; and in memory of Elizabeth Stroh Payne by Claire and Walter Greenhouse.

October 31: *If you would like to see flowers on the altar this Sunday*, please contact Claire Greenhouse at 410-337-7407.

Looking ahead to NOVEMBER:

November 7 Dick Frank; Peggy McCabe

November 14 Tonya Sapre; Pat Volker

November 21 Downing Kay Memorial

Celebration of her life - November 20 at 2 p.m.

November 28 Carol McCrory;

To underwrite the flowers for a Sunday or to make any changes, please contact Claire Greenhouse at 410-337-7407 or aschoolrn@verizon.net

Beloved Community book study

Grace's "Beloved Community" study group has read several books together to learn more about the sin of racism and how it manifested itself in our country in hopes of making more positive steps toward building God's beloved community. The group has several different forms, and each one has felt like a sacred space. We've read together *Just Mercy*, *The Other Wes Moore*, *I'm Still Here*, *White Fragility*, *The Fire Inside*, and *How to Be An Antiracist*.

The group is reconvening this fall to read and discuss together. Our fall book will be *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson.

We will meet on alternate Wednesday evenings beginning October 5 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. The fall dates are October 5, 10/19, 11/2 and 11/16.

We'll also be exploring how we can be bridges to racial reconciliation and justice. All are welcome to join us. For more information, contact Rev. Amy.



Charge Conference

Church Conference

Saturday, November 20 - 9:00 a.m.

Mark your calendar for our annual meeting to celebrate ministries, affirm newly nominated leaders and do important business in the church's life.

Details about the meeting including whether in person or online, will be forthcoming.

JOIN US ON SATURDAY, OCT. 23 for a MORNING WALK

Join the Grace Community for a walk through the neighborhood! Catch up with old friends and make new ones. The group meets at 8:30 a.m. on the Grace parking lot and completes a 2-3 mile route in the nearby neighborhood. No RSVP needed.

Just come!

A Celebration of Life service
for **Downing Jett Kay** will be held
Saturday, November 20 at 2:00 p.m. in the
sanctuary.

Thank you!

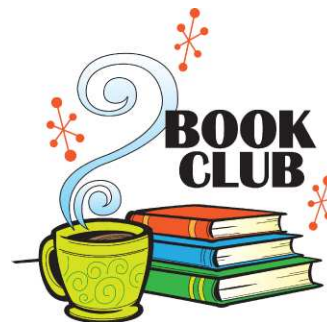
to those who donated school supplies
or funding this fall.

We were able to collate 84 school kits to
equip many students in need at Roland Park
Elementary and Middle School and Hampden-
Woodberry-Remington for the academic
year.



A woman was asked by a coworker, "What is it like to be a Christian?" The coworker replied, "It is like being a pumpkin. God picks you from the patch, brings you in and washes all of the dirt off you.

Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate and greed. Then He carves you a smiling new face and puts His light inside of you for all the world to see."



BOOK CLUB

The Grace Book Club will meet again on Monday, October 11th at 7:00 to talk about *Still Life*, by Louise Penny. This is the first book in the Chief Inspector Gamache series and two

"Penny specialists" and book club members said that we have to start with the first book. ENJOY!

FROM THE ZIMMERMAN FAMILY

Kathmandu, June 2021

Dear friends,

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." Lam.3.22-26

I arrive to work, lock my bicycle in a quiet spot outside the hospital kitchen and am immediately met with a round of enthusiastic 'namastes' from the cooks and assistants inside. Amar, the newly-hired Nepali dietitian, is there before me and already checking the orders for dietary supplements for 'normal' patients. I greet Soori, the kitchen manager, and our conversation immediately turns to the pressure of the ongoing demand to cater for 200 coronavirus patients plus all the ward staff needed to look after them. Looking into the steamy kitchen, I eye up the lines of staff packing individual meals for delivery as part of an endless run of food, drinking water, and medical supplies hauled by hand to the coronavirus wards. It's a fine balance, the number of meals required versus the number of kitchen staff available to prepare them; as cases rise, so do the number of staff who test positive, fall ill or need leave to look after family members. The stress on those who remain increases as they work for weeks without their usual day off.

As we discuss the staffing of the different shifts for the day and the sufficiency of stock during an increasingly tight lockdown, I reflect back to Surya some of Mark's debriefing over dinner the night before. The tragic stories of younger patients with fewer complicating conditions, becoming increasingly breathless, yet remaining lucid and relatively well while their lungs deteriorate. The emotional negotiations with them and their family about the steps towards intubation and artificial ventilation, from which far too few return. The hopes raised by a donation of seventy five oxygen concentrators which were cleared through airport customs in record time and distributed to less serious patients in order to free up more oxygen for the critically ill. The terrible tension of the subsequent weekend when the hospital's main oxygen supplier closed for two hours for urgent maintenance, a disruption that subsequently extended to six hours and left hospital administrators working through the night to beg and borrow cylinders from other hospitals and oxygen plants across the city to cover the gap.

Outside the kitchen, the main corridor leading to the wards has been closed for the last year as it hosts the only elevator for the coronavirus section of the hospital. Squeezing past hand-pushed delivery trolleys that are bumping over the rough ground, I take the now-familiar detour through an internal courtyard and am met by the loud clanging of yet another delivery of oxygen cylinders. A team of thirty five staff and daily labourers continue to work around the clock, loading and unloading dusty cylinders by hand off the back of a series of battered trucks. Under blazing sunshine and through heavy downpours, with immense and persistent effort, they have kept the breaks in oxygen supply to patients to a minimum.

Further along I pass an open area with white tenting stretched over it and the sound of splashing from within. Draped in full PPE, and wearing heavy rubber boots, a team of housekeeping staff are moving equipment and plastic clothing out to dry after disinfection in a converted section of the maternity ward, a process that allows the hospital to re-use much of its supply of PPE. Just ahead is my destination, the central stores, but today the tiled walkway presents me with a new sight: a line of fifty gleaming stainless steel canisters, each 6 feet high and 2 feet in diameter. Walking between them, a slight 'hiss' from their pressure gauges is discernible, like someone letting out a sigh of awe. Mohan, the tireless manager of the maintenance department, appears beside me. "Liquid oxygen, sent by the Chinese government from Tibet", he announces with a grin. Each canister contains oxygen equivalent to 35 cylinders, and can be connected to the manifold whenever there are gaps in the supply. It might well have been liquid gold.

The dichotomy of 'life during coronavirus' can be difficult to hold together: The intensity of the coronavirus wards compared to the empty rooms and hallways of the outpatient clinics. The peace on the vacant streets of lockdown, while cases of alcohol poisoning and suicide attempts fill up the 'normal' ICU. The beauty of evening birdsong in our quiet neighbourhood interrupted by the WhatsApp updates on corona-stricken friends and acquaintances. Quickly finishing my work with patients in the main hospital block, I head back to the kitchen to see where they could use an extra pair of hands. In the midst of packing foil cartons of steaming rice on one of the food lines, my mind wanders to life 'beyond'.

Earlier this month, Zachary travelled to London to spend the summer working while living in the home of Gareth, a family friend from Nepal. I remember how I myself spent a "London summer" in similar fashion thirty years ago after my own first year in college. Despite the corona virus restrictions on campus life, Zachary has had a great 'freshman year', stretching his wings of independence, grappling with college academics, and making a set of close friends with whom to enjoy the journey. The path for Benjamin has been less straightforward, as he struggled head-on with the challenges of being a "third-culture kid", missing his life in Nepal deeply while working hard to find his feet (and his basketball shot) in his new American boarding school. He is now staying with more friends from

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PLEASE RUSH

ZIMMERMAN, contd.

Nepal, Fred & Cyndi, working a summer job in a hardware store while considering his options for next year. Throughout the spring, Mark also has had to struggle with loyalties across continents as he has tried to support his mother from afar through recent health difficulties. We have become experts at the rapid calculations required for the correct timing of phone calls morning and evening to stay connected with the ups and downs of each day on the other side of the world! We are grateful that we, as health workers, and our extended family across the US, Ireland and the UK have all now received coronavirus vaccinations.

As the current surge in Nepal starts to ebb, our minds are beginning to think 'forward' again. Nepal's central government is in a state of disarray, and has simultaneously extended the current lockdown into its seventh week while calling for elections to be held in the autumn. Neither decision seems appropriate to addressing the critical state of the economy nor the concerns for a third coronavirus wave (with just 3% of the population fully vaccinated). For ourselves, autumn brings the prospect of needing to renew our visas to remain in Nepal, a process which is never straight forward. Our invitation to continue working in Nepal remains, not least with the fledgling dietary department at the hospital, but uncertainty about the best way for Benjamin to complete high school, and continued concern for Mark's Mum, leave us considering our options to support them in the months ahead. Once more we ask for prayer to find the way ahead.

It is the end of the fourth week since we last wrote, urgently asking for prayer in the face of the oxygen crisis. I wander out again to the hospital maintenance area to review the scene at the oxygen manifest. The Chinese canisters remained standing around the edges, alert and ready for action. But now in their midst is gathered a small army of extra Nepali cylinders, seventy in all, lined up in tight rows, awaiting their turn in the supply chain. Within a week, equipment should arrive to start installation of Patan Hospital's new oxygen plant. For this answer to prayer we quite literally breathe a sigh of relief...and immense gratitude.

With thanks for your faithful support,
Deirdre and Mark (with Zachary – London, and Benjamin – New York)