

Grace Notes



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH • 7300 W DIVISION • RIVER FOREST IL 60305 • 708-366-6900 • WWW.GRACERIVERFOREST.ORG

In the Eucharist, we are changed to send a signal to the world

by Pastor Lauren Wegner

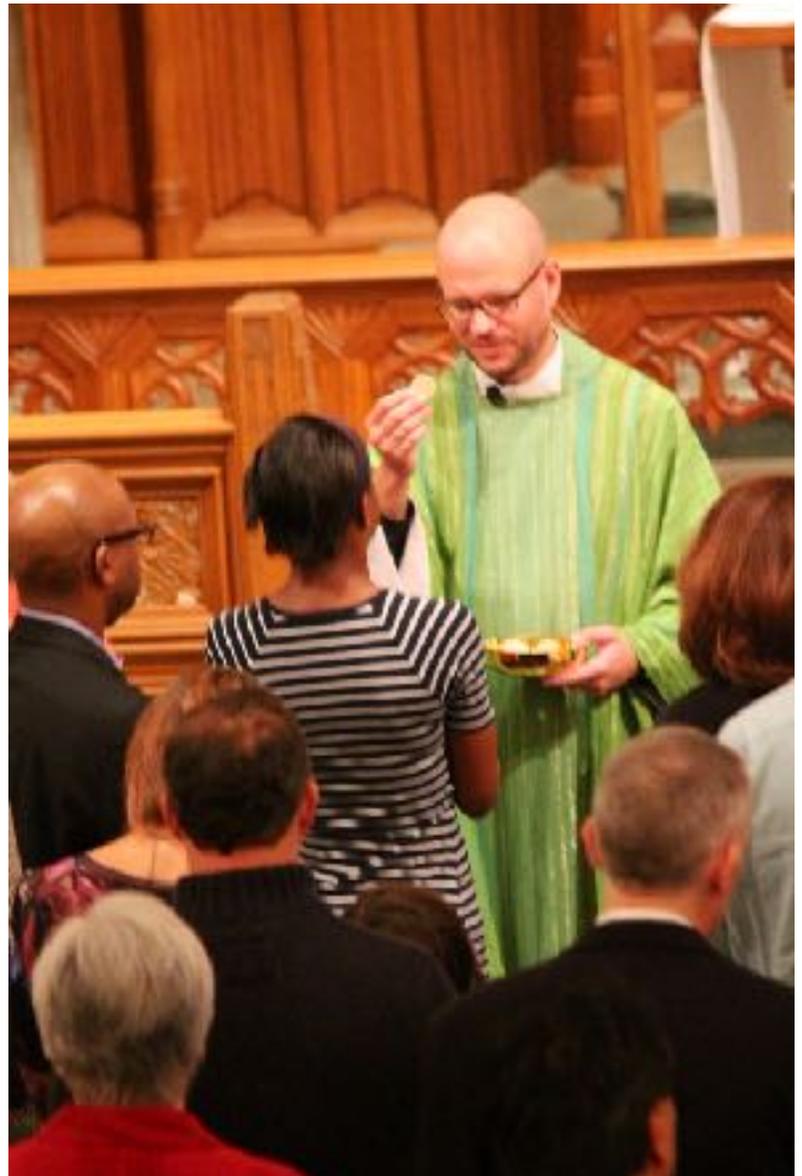
Recently during worship, our son, Owen, was expressing a new interest in the Table of Contents section of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. As I sat next to him in the pew, he held the open hymnal on his lap and pointed to each line of the Table of Contents, whispering to me at each line, “What does this say?” When his finger arrived at “Holy Communion, Setting One,” I whispered those words to him. He repeated after me, “Holy Chameleon, Setting One.”

I smiled, repeated “Holy Communion,” and he said again, “Holy Chameleon.”

And I smiled again, because in so many ways, Owen’s little mispronunciation actually pronounced a truth. A truth that is revealed in the sacrament each time we receive it. A truth that is part of being God’s children.

Chameleons are lizards that have the capacity to change their skin color. A little research on chameleons taught me that they don’t always change color for camouflage purposes; more commonly, chameleons change color for the opposite reason—to stand out and communicate a very clear signal to those around them. Whether it’s communicating that they are threatened or simply too hot or too cold, chameleons change color to send a signal to the world.

When we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, we, too, are changed.



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Changed to send a signal to the world

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And though it may not look like it on the outside, the change within us is still noticeable to the world around us—in our actions, in our words, in how and where we spend our time and our resources. God comes to us in the sacrament to feed, strengthen, and renew our lives. The body and blood of Christ become part of our own body and blood, and we can't help but be changed by it.

This change sends a signal to the world. A signal of redemption—that life can be turned around and made new! All is not lost! A signal of peace—that we are not bound by the fears and terrors of this world! We have deep peace. A signal of life—that even though we die, we live.

How does your life look different because of what God has done in Jesus Christ? May this summer be a time of reflection on the changes God marks and makes in you. May the changes God has made in you be so obvious that no one could ever miss them.

And may we embrace the life-changing gifts of Holy Communion as a certain Holy Chameleon—God's signal of life and salvation to the world.

In Christ,
+Pastor Lauren



GRACE
STEWARDSHIP

Thank you!

Because of your generous donations Grace Church and School was able to end the 2016-17 fiscal year with a small budget surplus. More detailed information on 2016-17 finances will be available in reports to Church Council and at the congregation meeting in September.

God has blessed our congregation abundantly with gifts of time, talent, and financial resources, and calls us to use these gifts in ministry to one another and to the world.

Thank you for your generous support of Grace Lutheran Church and School and for the mission of sharing the abundant life of God in Christ!

The Stewardship Committee

Grace Notes is published monthly by Grace Lutheran Church and School, 7300 Division St., River Forest, Ill. It is mailed to Grace members, parents of students at Grace School, and friends of the congregation. The newsletter is online at www.graceriverforest.org. This issue was mailed via U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail on Friday, July 14, with the hope that it will arrive in your mailbox no later than July 21. Copies are also available at Grace.

Deadlines and submissions. The September issue of Grace Notes will be mailed on Friday, September 1. The deadline for copy is Wednesday, August 23; the issue covers events through the end of September. Send news to ggotsch@graceriverforest.org. Please limit your submissions to news relating to Grace Lutheran Church and School, its mission, ministries, and the benevolences the congregation supports. Articles should be no longer than 500 words. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and relevance.

WORSHIP

July 16

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Isaiah 55:10-13, Psalm 65:1-13, Romans 8:1-11, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 23

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Isaiah 44:6-8, Psalm 86:11-17, Romans 8:12-25, Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 30

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

1 Kings 3:5-12, Psalm 119:129-136, Romans 8:26-39, Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

August 6

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Isaiah 55:1-5, Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21, Romans 9:1-5, Matthew 14:13-21

August 13

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

1 Kings 19:9-18, Psalm 85:8-13, Romans 10:5-15, Matthew 14:22-33

August 20

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8, Psalm 67, Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32, Matthew 15:10-28

August 27

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Isaiah 51:1-6, Psalm 138, Romans 12:1-8, Matthew 16:13-20

September 3

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Jeremiah 15:15-21, Psalm 26:1-8, Romans 12:9-21, Matthew 16:21-28

Plaques in the narthex honor pastors, cantors

On either side of the wooden doors to the sanctuary two new plaques have been hung, listing the many people who have served Grace Church through the years as senior pastor, associate pastor, and music director and cantor. The plaques are a witness to God's goodness in blessing our congregation with faithful leaders. They are the gift of an anonymous donor.

The list of associate pastors begins with Leon Rosenthal, who came to Grace in 1990. He was the first person called by the congregation to serve Grace as associate pastor. From 1946 through 1990, the pastoral staff included a series of assistant pastors, most of whom served Grace for 2-3 years. The book "The Promise of Grace: The First 100 Years of Grace Lutheran Church" includes a complete list. Copies are available in the

New Assistant Cantor at Grace



Mark Waldron has been hired as Grace Church's new Assistant Cantor. Mark is a familiar figure at Grace; he has filled in as a substitute organist many times through the years, including several Sundays this summer. As Assistant Cantor, he'll accompany choir rehearsals, play

continuo in the Bach Cantata Vespers orchestra, prepare worship folders, and play the organ at various worship services.

Celebrate Lyle Mortensen's 44 years of ministry on Sunday, August 13

Celebrate Lyle Mortensen's 44 years of ministry at Grace Church and School in worship services at a luncheon following the 11 a.m. service on Sunday, August 13. Click on the link at GraceRiverForest.org to RSVP, or look for the sign-up sheet at the reception desk. If you'd like to help with the meal, contact Laurie Schubkegel or Karen Halter.



ADULT EDUCATION

Come to Adult Education sessions at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings for thought-provoking presentations and discussions that build faith and fellowship. Look for more information about classes and locations on the signs in the atrium. If you have ideas or suggestions for Adult Ed programming, please contact Ted Anton, chair of the Adult Education Committee (tanton@depaul.edu).

July 16

A Vision of Wellness and Health Ministry at Grace

Sue Ames, Parish Nurse, will talk about what Jesus had to say about wellness and how that vision is being carried forth at Grace.

July 30

Living Faithfully: Dying and Rising

Pastor Michael Costello: "It has been said that our entire lives are an offering of worship to God. If that is the case, then we have a responsibility as called and baptized Christians to offer our best in everything we do. I try to accept that call with joy; however, it can also be the cause for great stress and anxiety. Too often I fall short. What is clear, however, is that Christ has both called me by name and empowered me with gifts of the Spirit to fulfill my vocation as a Christian. Dying to myself, I am able to rise with Christ to love and serve."

There are no Adult Ed classes scheduled for August. Classes resume on Sunday, September 10.

New series in Adult Ed: "Living Faithfully"

The "Living Faithfully" sessions presented by our pastors this summer are the first in a new Sunday morning Adult Education series that will continue in the fall. Living Faithfully classes will focus on ways to live faithfully in Christ in our everyday lives. We will hear from members and speakers from the community addressing issues such as conflicts at work, diversity, care for creation, science and faith, and caring for ourselves and others. We hope you will join us for these sessions as well as for traditional Adult Ed classes in the "Learning Faithfully" track. We appreciate your comments and suggestions for this series. Please contact members of the Adult Ed committee or Pastor Dave Wegner with your suggestions!

Sunday Bible Study

Led by Bob Jandeska in the conference room, the Bible study group meets every Sunday morning at 9:45 a.m. in the Conference Room on the lower level. The group is currently studying books in the Old Testament.

Historical fiction in the Grace Church library

Historical fiction is a popular literary genre. Stories are set in the past, and authors frequently explore notable historical figures in these settings, allowing readers to understand these individuals within their environments. Here are some examples for summer reading from the Grace Church library.

Wings of Refuge, by Lynn Austin. Bethany House, 2000. Set in Israel. [FIC AUS]

The Persian Pickle Club, by Sandra Dallas. St. Martin's Press, 1996. Depression-era rural Kansas. [FIC DAL]

Gutenberg's Apprentice, by Alix Christie. Harper, 2014. Medieval Germany. [FIC CHR]

The Crusader, by Michael Alexander Eisner. Doubleday, 2001. Set in Spain in the year 1275. [FIC EIS]

Just Jane: A Novel of Jane Austen's life, by Nancy Moser. Bethany House, 2007. [FIC MOS]

The Confessions of Nat Turner, by William Styron. Vintage, 1993. Slave rebellion in the American South, 1831. Religion in Literature selection 2009. [FIC STY]

Pontius Pilate: A Novel, by Paul Maier. Doubleday, 1968. [FIC MAI]

Paul: A Novel, by Walter Wangerin. Zondervan, 2000. [FIC WAN]

Jesus: A Novel, by Walter Wangerin, Jr. Zondervan, 2005. [FIC WAN]

Show Way, by Jacqueline Woodson. Illustrated. Putnam's, 2005. Show ways (quilts) served as secret maps for freedom-seeking slaves. [E FIC WOO]

Volunteers staff the library on Sunday mornings. The library is also open for self-service during the week. All are welcome to check out books

Bringing our gifts to the altar, in many ways

The offering is an important part of our Sunday worship services. Our response to hearing God's word is to bring our gifts to the altar—the gifts of bread and wine that will be used in the communion liturgy and the gifts of money that will be used to support the work of God's kingdom. Through our offerings we participate in the work of God in the world. Bringing those offerings is a tangible, practical thing — so here's some practical information on ways to give.

Offering envelopes explained

If you're a member of Grace, every two months you get a packet of giving envelopes. The primary purpose of envelopes is to make it easier for the business office to give you credit for contributions made by check or cash. If you give primarily online, you can request not to receive envelopes. You will save Grace a little money!

Envelope number. At the right of your envelope, in red, is your envelope number. It uniquely identifies a giving record, which can be for an individual or a household. If you choose not to use envelopes, it is helpful if you write your envelope number on your checks. If you elect not to receive envelopes, you will still retain your unique envelope number in Grace's database.

Service date. An envelope is provided for every Sunday and holy day, simply as a reminder to contribute. If you miss several Sundays, it is okay to combine your contribution into one check and one envelope. At Grace, we do not use envelopes to track attendance.

Special envelopes. Unless designated otherwise, all contributions go into the "general fund" for day-to-day operations. Several special envelopes are provided throughout the year for contributions directed to specific funds. You can also simply write a designated fund name on your check or on a regular envelope (include a note if needed for clarity).

What happens to envelopes (and checks). Contributions are counted every Monday by one of four teams of member volunteers and the business office assistant (currently Cecelia Thornton) enters the contribution information in the Grace database.

Jane Andrew
Grace Business Office

Need assistance?

If you don't want to receive envelopes, have questions about the best way to give, want to make a specific or complex gift, or need assistance with online giving, please talk with Jim McClanahan, Director of Administration and Finance (708-771-1440).

Online and mobile giving

Many people find that online giving helps them practice intentional, faithful stewardship throughout the year. Some Grace members use their bank's online bill-payment service to make church donations; others use the Online Giving page at Grace's website. There's also a new smartphone app called Give Plus that can be used to make one-time or recurring gifts.

But what do online givers do when it's time to place a gift in the offering plate during worship? Grace's Stewardship Committee will soon be providing a pew card for e-givers to put in the offering plate in place of envelopes or cash. You'll find the cards in the hymnal racks. The text on the card reads:

I am a Grace e-giver.

This card, placed in the offering plate during worship, is a symbol of my commitment to support Grace's ministries with gifts made by electronic fund transfer.

The card is there not because we make a display of our giving during worship, but because the bringing of gifts is integral to our worship. The card helps all participate in the offering, even if, for some, the actual transfer of funds is happening in cyberspace.

The reverse side of the card has information about e-giving. Please take the card home with you if you find the information helpful.

How to make a one-time or recurring e-gift

On a smartphone:

- Go to GraceRiverForest.org and click the Online Giving button to go to Grace's mobile online giving page. Or scan the QR code at right to open this page.
- OR download the Vanco Give Plus app for iPhone or Android. Choose "Find churches near me" to locate Grace Lutheran Church and School, or search for "Grace Evan Luth."



GIVE+



On a computer:

- Click the Online Giving button at GraceRiverForest.org.

You are invited to the FEAST!

As we gather every week around the Lord's Table we are reminded of the value of this community of faith. To further that community, a team of people have been cooking up a new and exciting way for the people of Grace Church to mix things up, to know each other, build each other up in faith and life, and experience what happens when you blend hospitality, laughter, faith, and community. It becomes a feast for the soul.

What is this new opportunity? It's called FEAST: Fellowship, Education, And Spirit Together.

What does this mean? Grace members who sign up for FEAST will be assigned randomly to a group of 10-12 people (couples will be kept together unless they indicate otherwise). Groups will then meet together in any way they wish. Each

Fellowship Education And Spirit Together

Sign-up in September

FIRST FEAST

October 21, 5:30 p.m.

group will covenant together as an intentional community to love and support each other, to build each other up, to pray for each other, to have fun, to enjoy each other's company and get to know each other outside of worship. These covenants help us recall how we are bound to each other through Christ and how we are meant to be in fellowship with each other.

How will these FEASTs happen? Sharing meals in one another's homes is encouraged as this is a wonderful way to get to know people and for those with the gift of hospitality to dish up something fulfilling for all. If hospitality is not your gift, no

problem! Don't have a home to accommodate the group? Also not a problem! Think outside the box and find something that works for you, such as working with another group member to help host in their home. Or plan a gathering at another location, such as a picnic in the park. Gatherings can be whatever the group decides among them is do-able for all. The key is fellowship, food, fun and God.

Where do education and spirit come in? The FEAST leadership team, with the help of the pastors, will provide a morsel to chew on each month. Intended to help start or focus conversation, it may be games, a short devotion, or a quote or reading to discuss. Anything is possible. Spirit comes simply by the fact that two or three have gathered in Jesus' name and Jesus has promised to be in the midst of these gatherings. Spirit is also there through the conversations you have, the bonds built, and the community established through food and fellowship.

Information about signing-up for FEAST will be available in Grace newsletters at the end of the summer. We ask that you are registered by October 1 so we can begin coordinating groups. The FIRST FEAST will be held October 21 at 5:30 p.m. We will be gathering in the home of David and Connie Zyer for appetizers. From there you will progress to dinner at the home of your group's mystery host.

We look forward to FEASTing with all of you!

Julie Hinz and the FEAST team: Wendy Will, Jeff Cribbs, Erika Lyle, Barb VanHeukelem, Connie Zyer, and Beth McClanahan



Grace School openings in junior and senior kindergarten and grades 1-2

Grace School's junior and senior kindergarten programs serve children age 4 and 5 as of September 1. There are still openings in these classrooms for the 2017-18 academic year, as well as in first and second grade. More information about Early Childhood and elementary programs at Grace is available at GraceRiverForest.org. Call the school office (708-366-6900) to schedule a visit with principal Bill Koehne.

Morning at the Movies

Wednesday, August, 16, 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Church library

Watch "Under the Tuscan Sun," a 2003 romantic comedy about a recently divorced writer who buys a run-down villa in Tuscany on a whim, hoping it will lead to a change in her life. Discussion and an Italian-inspired lunch follow the movie. Free-will donation. Sign up at reception desk in the atrium, or call or email Sue Ames (708 366 6900 ext 219, sames@graceriverforest.org)

Stephen Minister training begins in September

What is a Stephen Minister?

Stephen Ministers are laypeople—Christian men and women—trained to provide one-to-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, relocation, or separation due to military deployment.

Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life. Their commonality? A passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need.

Training to become a Stephen Minister

Stephen Ministers are trained by their congregation's Stephen Leaders. The training they receive in the congregation equips them to provide high-quality care to people who are hurting.

A life-changing experience for the care receiver

Stephen Ministers have cared for over one-and-a-half million people in one-to-one caring relationships—and they have touched countless more with compassionate understanding and encouragement.

Might God be calling you?

If you sense that God might be calling you to serve as a Stephen Minister, the first step is to find out more about getting involved. Come to the "After-Party" (see box at right) and find out all you might want to know about becoming a Stephen Minister.

Stephen Minister training

Stephen Minister training is an engaging, energizing experience that includes a mixture of lecture, video, group discussion, skill practice, and spiritual growth activities.

Here's what Stephen Ministers have said that about their training:

- Stephen Minister training teaches principles and skills that equip you to provide high-quality, Christ-centered emotional and spiritual care to others.
- You gain insight into the thoughts, feelings, and actions of people who are hurting.
- You develop relational and caring skills you can apply to all aspects of your life.

The "After People"

People often ask, "What exactly is a Stephen Minister?" One way to put it is that Stephen Ministers are the **After People**.



Stephen Ministers are there:

- ... **after** the phone call you hoped you'd never get.
- ... **after** the funeral, when everyone has left and the emotions you've held at bay come crashing in on you.
- ... **after** the relationship falls apart and the bottom falls out of your life.
- ... **after** the doctor says, "I'm sorry, but there's nothing more we can do."
- ... **after** the nursing home director shakes your hand and says, "Welcome to your new home."
- ... **after** the last child honks the horn, waves, and drives away—and the house suddenly seems empty.
- ... **after** the gavel comes down, the handcuffs go on, and your loved one is led away.
- ... **after** the baby arrives, demanding more of you than you ever dreamed possible.
- ... **after** you find a pink slip with your final paycheck.
- ... **after** your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

Stephen Ministers are the After People. They are ready to come alongside you—or your friends, neighbors, coworkers, or relatives—and provide comfort and support for as long *after* as needed.

If you feel that having a Stephen Minister would be helpful to you, please talk with one of the pastors.

- You deepen your faith as the Holy Spirit fashions you into a Christ-centered caregiver.
- You feel a special bond with those in your class—experiencing real Christian community.

2017 Stephen Ministry training at Grace

starts September 18 and will wrap up at the end of January. Our training sessions will be every Monday night and a couple of Saturday mornings, all at Grace.

Stephen Minister "After-Party"

Learn more about Stephen Ministry

Thursday, August 17, 6:30–8 p.m.

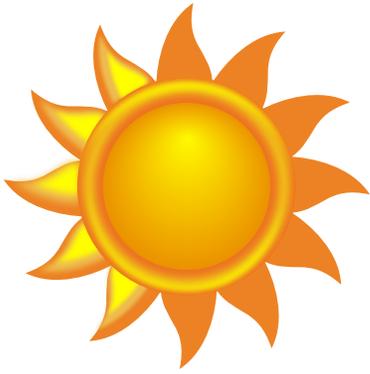
at the Jandeska home

606 Thatcher, River Forest

Drinks and appetizers will be served.

RSVP to Bob Jandeska, Linda Bernard or Judie McDonnell

Training materials are provided by the church.



Vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin

by Sue Ames, Parish Nurse

I love the summertime, don't you? It's time for being outdoors in the sun and fresh air! Did you know that when you're catching up on summer rays, you are also catching up on your vitamin D, "the sunshine vitamin"?

Vitamin D deficiency is common here in the United States. This may be due to the amount of time we spend indoors at work or play. Also, the sunscreen that many of us wear to protect against skin cancer blocks the UV rays that trigger our skin to make Vitamin D.

What is vitamin D?

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin, stored in body fat. It has several forms. The two forms most important to human health are D2, which is made by plants, and D3, which is made by human skin when exposed to sunlight. Natural sources of vitamin D include:

- Sunlight exposure (as little as 10 minutes for fair-skinned people)
- Fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, tuna)
- Fish oil
- Fortified milk and other foods
- Egg yolks
- Beef liver.

The role of vitamin D

Vitamin D is essential to maintain blood levels of calcium and phosphorous, which helps with absorption of calcium to form and maintain strong bones. Together with calcium, vitamin D improves bone health and decreases fractures. Vitamin D may also protect against osteoporosis, high blood pressure, cancer and other diseases.

Vitamin D deficiency

In children, vitamin D deficiency causes rickets, which is a softening or weakening of the bones. In adults, vitamin D deficiency can lead to osteomalacia, which causes weak bones and muscles. Deficiency in vitamin D has also been linked with heart disease, certain cancers, mental health problems, obesity and immune dysfunction.

Some causes of vitamin D deficiency include:

- Limited exposure to the sun because of being homebound, living in northern latitudes, wearing clothing that covers most of skin, using sunscreen of 8 SPF or higher).

- Not consuming the recommended levels of vitamin over time (example, because of a strict vegan diet or milk allergies).
- Age. Vitamin D deficiency is more common in older people as kidneys become less able to convert vitamin D to its active form..
- Obesity. People with a BMI (body mass index) greater than 30 are more likely to have vitamin D deficiency.
- Dark skin. High levels of melanin reduce skin's ability to make vitamin D.
- Conditions that affect the absorption of vitamin D from the digestive tract (for example, Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis and celiac disease).

Treating vitamin D deficiency

If you're concerned about whether you're getting enough vitamin D, talk to your doctor about your diet and whether a vitamin supplement might benefit you. Your doctor may order a blood test and can advise you about increasing your vitamin D levels through diet, sun exposure, and supplements.

References:

Mayoclinic.org, Vitamin D
WebMD, Vitamin D deficiency
The American Geriatric Society Workgroup for Older Adults 2013; Evaluation, treatment and prevention of Vitamin D deficiency: an Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline, 2011.

Summer walking program: Paul's journey to Rome Through August 19

The Health Cabinet's Summer Walking Program has been on a virtual trip to Rome this summer, accompanying the Apostle Paul on his final missionary journey. Participants track their daily steps and collectively they hope to cover the miles in Paul's journey to Rome.

As of July 9, 49 participants have walked a total of 2,738 miles, with 9,018 miles left to go. Parish Nurse Sue Ames says, "Keep recording your miles, don't give up, we can do it!"

It's not too late to join the program. Contact Sue for more information (sames@graceriverforest.org). You'll receive a weekly email with a link to report your steps online. You can also access the report form through the link at GraceRiverForest.org. Or simply leave a note for Sue at the reception desk.



Palestine: Unlimited

Photography
exhibition in Grace's
atrium, sponsored by
Bright Stars of
Bethlehem

Wine and cheese reception

Friday, September 8
7-9 p.m.

Photos by ten finalists from the Karimeh Abboud Award Competition are part of a traveling exhibition sponsored by Bright Stars of Bethlehem that will be in Grace's atrium from September 1-30.

The exhibit originated at Dar al Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem, one of the outreach ministries supported by Bright Stars of Bethlehem. The mission of Bright Stars is to grow hope and encourage the health, educational, cultural and spiritual development of people of all ages in Palestine. The contest is named for a pioneering 20th century Palestinian female photographer.

The photos from these young Palestinian artists will help viewers break through stereotypes about Palestine. In the words of photographer Ala'a Abu Salem:

These portraits aim at representing the Palestinian away from any ties, connections or expectations with themes and specific subjects.

In short, it is an attempt to break the stereotypes and overused image of the Palestinian person.

By sharing stories, images, interpretations and explanations, the exhibition will build a clearer picture of Palestine and make a positive contribution to the future of the country and its people.

Birds, Bees & Butterflies: A Native Garden Tour, Sunday, August 6

The Interfaith Green Network (in which Grace participates), Green Community Connections and West Cook Wild Ones are collaborating on "Birds, Bees & Butterflies: A Native Garden Tour" in Oak Park and River Forest on Sunday, August 6, 1-4 p.m. Learn more about native plants and how to grow them in shade, sun, rain gardens, clay soil and other applications. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/yagpbv7r> to register. Adult tickets are \$10, kids 18 and younger are free. The tour begins at the Cook County Forest Preserve at the northwest corner of Lake and Harlem. Contact judy.klem@gmail.com to learn more.

Join Harmony Church at the Chicago Hunger Walk in September

Join Grace's Social Ministry Committee, other Grace members and members of Harmony Community Church in North Lawndale at the annual Greater Chicago Food Depository Hunger Walk on Saturday, September 16, at Jackson Park. For every participating walker Harmony's food pantry will receive a \$12 credit to shop at the Food Depository. It would be wonderful if Grace could send 30 walkers! Mark your calendar now and plan to join us on September 16.

GRACE NEWS

SANDWICH-MAKING AT FRATERNITÉ. Grace members will be packing lunches at Fraternité Notre Dame, 502 N. Central, on Monday, July 17, and August 21, at 7 p.m. These lunches are given to people in need in the Austin community. Children and teens are welcome with their parents. Contact Kate Hogenson (hogenson@msn.com; 708-445-9687) to arrange a ride.

KNITTING/CROCHETING GROUP will meet on Tuesday, July 18, and August 15 at 1 p.m. in the church library. For more information, contact Margaret Burke (mrburke42@gmail.com).

LECTIO DIVINA meets on Monday, July 24, and August 28, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the church library. Contact MaryBeth Buschmann (312-802-5493; marybeth1942@sbcglobal.net).

RETIRED LEADERS AND OTHERS meet on Tuesday, August 8, 10 a.m., in the church library for a presentation from Philip Gehring on "Luther the Musician." Guests are welcome.

GRACE NOTES MAILING CREW. A lively crew of volunteers led by Marlene Hallman gathers monthly in the church library to prepare Grace Notes for mailing. They will be at work on the September newsletter on Thursday, August 31, at 9:30 a.m. They welcome more helpers!

CORNERSTONES BIBLE STUDY. Older adults gather weekly during the school year for fellowship and Bible study. Come for a summer movie and lunch session on Wednesday, August 16, at 10 a.m. (See p. 6 for details.)

FINDING HOPE, the chronic illness support group, meets at Grace at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, August 1, at 7:15 p.m.

RELIGION IN LITERATURE. The book discussion group is reading George Orwell's "1984" over the summer, in preparation for a discussion on Friday, September 15.

Ongoing Grace building repairs

Grace's Property Manager Dan Muriello supervises the maintenance and repair of the Grace building. Here's his report.

Roof and masonry repairs have been completed, including tuck-pointing on the parapet above the music office and the wall over the Division Street door. Interior plaster will be repaired soon.

Summer repairs and maintenance. The annual re-coating of the gym floor has been completed. Painting and other minor repairs in classrooms continue. Where necessary, carpets are being cleaned and tile floors refinished, and 40 cubic feet of wood chips will be spread under the playground equipment.

Conserving water. The lawn-sprinkling system at Grace is equipped with rain sensors. If the ground is not dry, the sprinklers don't run.

LED lighting. An energy assessment from the ComEd Energy Efficiency Program has been completed. It describes significant opportunity for savings in our use of electricity, particularly with the use of LED lighting. If you'd like to read the report, contact the business office.

PRAYERS

WE PRAY for those who mourn the death of Grace member Mary Olson.

PRAYER LIST. The weekly Prayer List can be found in the worship bulletin on Sunday. Contact Karen Christopher (kchristopher@gracriverforest.org; 708-366-6900 ext 207) to be included on the published prayer list.

PRAYER CHAIN. Contact Kathy Lucht (kathy.lucht@gmail.com) or Kathy Garness (708-366-7584; KMGfinearts@comcast.net) with confidential prayer chain requests.

CELEBRATION

WE CELEBRATE with Makai Alexander Washington, son of Danyale Worsham and Michael Washington, who was baptized on July 2, and with Rowan Kyle Ellis, daughter of Megan and Brian Ellis, granddaughter of Judie and Mike McDonnell, baptized on July 16.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sign up at the reception desk to donate flowers to remember a loved one or commemorate a special birthday or anniversary.

PASTORAL CARE

Call 708-689-3032 for emergency pastoral care on weekends, or when the Grace building is closed. Please include a return phone number if you leave a message or send a text.

SUMMER BUILDING HOURS

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Tuesday evenings, 6–9 p.m., for scheduled meetings
Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. – Noon

Children learn about God's love at VBS—in River Forest and in Slovakia



Attendance at this year's Vacation Bible School at Grace, June 12–16, was up by 20 percent over last year. Approximately 60 kids age 3 through fifth grade enjoyed mornings full of songs, games, crafts, and skits (left), as well as visits with the Apostle Paul in his "jail cell."

From July 10 through 14, Grace volunteers (below) led a similar VBS program for 200 students at the Center for Christian Education in Martin, Slovakia. Read Pastor Lyle's blog post about Day Two in Martin below.



God's love changes us: Day two of VBS in Martin, Slovakia

Parachute games. Holy cow, parachute games!

It was a rainy day in Martin for our second day of Vacation Bible School, but that didn't get us down. If anything, it helped us to get down. Exhibit A? Games, led by Pastor Dave Wegner, Peter Modrich, and their Slovak helpers. Confined to the gym, they were forced to be creative. What to do? Parachute games!

I saw a group of children and leaders transformed. While others would have responded to the cramped quarters with chagrin, these folks responded with creativity and joy. The sheer exhilaration on the faces of everyone, from Pastor Dave W. on down, was a joy to behold.

No surprise here, however. After all, as we learned today, God's love changes us. God's love, freely gifted to us through Jesus Christ, transforms us from the inside out. It helps to see – and to grab hold of – the joy that God intends for us regardless of circumstance. So, parachute games!

To be with the good people of the CCE is to witness lives transformed by the gospel. They have staked their lives and livelihoods on the gospel of Jesus Christ, trusting that God will not only provide for them, but that God will do good, new work in this place.

What would it look like if we followed their lead, more boldly and faithfully? What would it look like if we forgot worldly acclamation and sought only to be faithful to God, no matter what anyone else thought?

Well, I have a feeling it might just be pretty amazing. It might look like the Kingdom of God. It might look like parachute games.

Sign me up. I'm ready to be transformed.

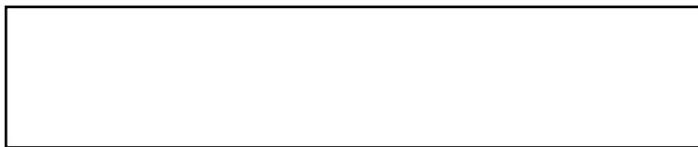
From coastallutheran.wordpress.com





**Volunteers needed!
Go to GraceRiverForest.org
to sign up to help**

**Church-School Picnic
Sunday, August 27
Lunch, games, fellowship, fun**



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