

GRACE NOTES

December 2018



Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

through

-  Meaningful
Worship
-  Caring
Community
-  Inspirational
Learning
-  Loving
Service
-  Gracious
Invitation

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A Note FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Saints of Grace!



I was delighted to serve as your interim pastor for almost fourteen months. I am even more excited to be THE CALLED pastor of Grace. I was so pleased, as my first official act as pastor of Grace, to welcome Pastor Kathie Bender Schwich as a new member of Grace (there is a fuller introduction of Kathie, below). We are both so pleased to *officially* be members, not just guests, in the family of Grace. We look forward to growing with you as we all grow in grace.

There are a number of things that will change, now that I am your “permanent” pastor. [Of course nothing—except God’s love!—is forever. Someday, hopefully years down the road, I will retire. I hope that when that time comes—again YEARS DOWN THE ROAD!—we will celebrate a partnership between a pastor and a congregation that produced tangible GROWTH in Grace—more people worshipping, more people serving, more people teaching, more people learning, more people leading, more people reaching out as the hands of God in our part of God’s amazing creation.]

As *interim pastor* it was not my role to initiate new programs and services. My role was to provide support as needed and to assess the strength of the congregation’s leadership, processes, administrative and financial oversight. As *pastor* I share responsibility with the rest of the leadership of the congregation in advancing ideas and suggestions intended to produce growth at Grace. More than when I was interim, I will raise suggestions and proposals for consideration by our various committees and by the Church Council. My experience is that my suggestions—AS WISE AS THEY MAY BE—are always improved on when they are considered by a larger, mutually accountable group of leaders such as the Church Council or the Grace Roundtable. Let me put a plug in for YOUR participation in the monthly Growing Grace Roundtable. It is intended to be an open group of everyone who wants to help shape the future of our ministry. All initiatives that come out of the Roundtable process are passed on either to an existing committee, such as Outreach and Welcome, or to the Church Council, or to a special working group that will report back to the Roundtable. I am very encouraged by the level of participation and the commitment to carrying out tasks and projects identified each month. The Growing Grace Roundtable takes place one Sunday a month (except December) after church, usually from about noon to 1:00pm. Lunch is included. No long term commitment necessary. If you have an idea to contribute, please bring it up at the next Roundtable in January (date TBD).

Another change in my responsibilities as I become your long-term pastor is that now it is important that I have the opportunity to get to know members of the congregation not just in your “roles” within the Grace, Inc., but who you are as a person. What has your faith journey looked like? Felt like? Beginning in the New Year, I will be setting up a large number of small group opportunities for me to meet with members of the congregation to get to know you better. I am also very open to meeting individually or with couples or families at a time and place of our mutual convenience—your home, my

office, Starbucks, Denny's, etc. I am, like God himself, a lover of stories. I can't wait to hear your stories. I can't wait to hear how I can support YOUR ministry in daily life.

A third change in focus for me will be to be the in person connection between Grace and the many public, community and faith-based organizations around us. I very much welcome your suggestions of who I should meet with and also if you have any personal connection with that person. My intention is to do 1:1 meetings with as many community leaders as possible in 2019.

And, speaking of 2019! That will be our 60th anniversary year. If you would like to be a part of an anniversary planning team, please speak with Council President Greg Linwood or me. I have already asked Barb Willis to serve and she has said yes but she won't chair the group. That sounds fair!

As we begin a new Church Year in December, and as we approach our celebration of the birth of Christ, I hope that we will also be preparing ourselves to take the message of love embodied in baby, and express it, in word and deed, to the ends of the earth. Jesus IS good news for all people. We should be, too!

In Christ's love, peace and hope,
Pastor Daniel Schwick

INTRODUCING *Pastor Kathie Bender Schwick*

OK, first of all, yes, we spell our last names differently. Kathie spells it correctly (legally). She hasn't lived with this name as long as I have. Forty or fifty years ago my dad began using the Schwick spelling for business purposes because he found that almost everyone could *pronounce* it correctly if he *spelled* it incorrectly. I picked up the practice when I was in the public eye both in my long-time call in Wrigleyville and in my 18 years as Director of Government Affairs at Lutheran Social Service of Illinois (LSSI). When we got married, almost 25 years ago, I suggested that Kathie retain her maiden name (Bender) to avoid all this confusion. She chose otherwise.

Kathie is an ordained ELCA pastor, currently serving as Chief Spiritual Officer at Advocate Aurora Healthcare, one of the largest healthcare systems in the US, serving in Illinois and Wisconsin. Prior to her current position, Kathie was Vice President for Spiritual Care at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge. Prior to entering health care ministry, Kathie served as an assistant to ELCA Presiding Bishop, Mark Hanson, and was the administrator for the ELCA conference of 65 synod bishops from across the church. Before being called to serve in the Presiding Bishop's office, Kathie served as a recruiter and trainer for pastors who hope to start new congregations. Before going to the ELCA Churchwide Office, Kathie served as Associate Pastor of St. Luke Lutheran Church in Park Ridge. One of her predecessors was Pastor Peter Hellstedt! Kathie began her ministry in the Chicago area as Bishop's Associate in our Metropolitan Chicago Synod with then-bishop Sherman Hicks. Prior to her work for the synod, Kathie served as national trainer for Stephen Ministry. It's even possible that over the years some of Grace's Stephen Ministers were trained by Kathie. Kathie

began her ordained ministry as an associate pastor at a church in Traverse City, Michigan.

Kathie is a graduate of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. She also has degrees from several other institutions. Prior to seminary, Kathie had a career as a dental hygienist. She was born and raised in Saginaw, Michigan, the second of two daughters of a GI just returned from WW II and his teenage bride. Both of Kathie's parents are deceased. Her sister and her husband live in Holland, Michigan.

Kathie and I have one son together, Jerome, who returned from college at Ohio State and is now working on a Master's Degree in Sports Management at Northwestern University. Kathie is also the step-mother of my two sons from my first marriage, Peter and Andy. Kathie is also the loving dog-mother of Pau and Dexter, our precious rescue pups.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING *Results*

On Sunday, October 28, 2018, the congregation here at Grace met to discuss the subject of extending a call to Daniel J. Schwick to be the full-time pastor at Grace. At the conclusion of our service, Pastor Schwick excused himself and the special meeting began.

We conducted the meeting along the guidelines provided in Bishop Wayne Miller's October 2nd letter to Greg Linwood, the Congregation Council President. Mike Pirron offered an opening devotion, Greg read the notice of the meeting and the provisions of the Grace constitution describing who was a voting member, and Greg appointed Betty Dietrich and Libby Reimann as tellers. The tellers confirmed we had a quorum (10% of our confirmed members is 43), as 95 members were present. Bill Grimpe, the Council Secretary, read the resolution to extend the call to Pastor Schwick on which we were to vote.

Rich Rogers, the chair of our Call Committee reported on Pastor Schwick, and the committee's process in researching and interviewing him. There were no comments from the assembled congregants, either pro or con.

In the subsequent vote, 90 voting members voted YES and 5 voting members voted NO to extend the call to Pastor Schwick, satisfying the 2/3 requirement.

Subsequent to the meeting, Greg contacted Pastor Schwick to inform him of the outcome of the meeting. Greg and Bill prepared a summary of the meeting, signed the appropriate synod paperwork, and sent all the information to Bishop Wayne Miller at the office of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. Bishop Miller signed the Letter of Call, on November 1st, and sent the appropriate paperwork to Pastor Schwick for his acceptance of our offer. Pastor Schwick officially signed his acceptance of our offer on November 6th, 2018.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Sunday School Christmas Program: Join us on December 9th at the 10:00am worship service when the children, confirmands, young adults and members of Petra Church will present their program. Come to church and show your support for our children.

Advent Sunday Worship to Focus on Care Giving

During the four Sundays of Advent, we will focus on our caring ministries at Grace.

December 2: Caring for One Another (Stephen Ministers)

December 9: Caring for our Tradition (Children's Christmas Program)

December 16: Caring for our Church (Grace LC, synod, ELCA)

December 23: Caring for the World (Social Ministry at home and abroad)

December 30: Caring for Our Young People ("Homecoming" Sunday)

Christmas Eve Worship

Monday, December 24

4:30pm Family Worship with Children's Message

10:30pm Christmas Carols

11:00pm Candlelight Service with Holy Communion

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Birthday Card Shower: To distinguish our members who are 90 or better we ask the congregation to shower them with birthday wishes (cards & postcards) to brighten their special day. On December 15th we will celebrate Harvey Willis's 90th birthday. Harvey is a charter member of Grace. Please shower him with birthday wishes at 411 North Pine Street, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-2054. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Harv!

Friendship Group Christmas Party: is December 19th at 11:30am. Lunch will be prepared by Pastor Schwick. More details to follow in the coming weeks. A sign-up sheet is on Pam Walger's office door. If you are able to help serve and clean up on that day please let Pam know when you sign up. All are welcome

Mail Holiday Wishes: Share CHRISTMAS blessings by sending a card to those on our list of homebound members and "Just Because Friends" who will be cheered when receiving your greetings. An updated list of their names and addresses can be found on the poster with the tree on it in the atrium.

Deliver a Christmas Package to one of our special homebound members. On December 9th after the service look for Eileen Clark in the atrium and she'll have packages for you to pick up and deliver. You'll surely enjoy the fellowship and conversation with one of our special friends.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

Mission Partner: Grace is supporting The Rev. Carrie Ballenger Smith who is serving in Palestine. Carrie serves as pastor of the English-speaking congregation of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem's Old City. She also serves as special assistant to the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). When Carrie was in Chicago this summer, she was able to come to Grace to preach. After the service, some members joined Carrie for lunch at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Mt. Prospect. Carrie posts a blog online and there is also a site with more information about her family and her ministry. Here are the links to her sites:

Bio: http://trinityaa.org/files/8414/5813/8547/Meet_Our_Missionary.pdf

Blog: knitpurlpraypreach.blogspot.com

When you have a chance, check them out. You'll be amazed at how our mission dollars are helping her in ministry.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Hanging of the Greens: Please join us on Saturday, December 1st at 9:00am to hang the Christmas decorations. Many hands are needed to help prepare for Advent.

Jayne Boom Cookie Walk: Attention all bakers! Our 11th Annual Jayne Book Cookie Walk is Sunday, December 16th after the service. We look forward to enjoying your homemade cookies so please plan to bake and bring them to church with you by 10:00 am on that date. Proceeds will go to youth activities.

Poinsettia Garden: Please help set up the Poinsettia Christmas Garden on Saturday, December 22nd at 9:00am. Contact Betty Carlson at 847-803-9646 with any questions.

Luminaria for Christmas Eve: Margit Willis would like several people to help her set up the Luminaria around the church parking lot on Christmas Eve at 4:00pm. If you are willing to help with this beautiful Christmas ministry please let Pam Walger or Margit Willis know. A volunteer is also needed to re-light the candles prior to the 10:30pm service. Let us know!

Altar Guild: The Altar Guild is in need of some helping hands especially for December and January. Please speak with Betty Carlson at 847/803-9646. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Offering Counters: We need a few new volunteers to become offering counters. Please consider being a part of a counter team. If you would like to volunteer or receive more information on the process please contact Jerry Sharlog at 847-253-0636.

Unhanging of the Greens: Join us on Saturday, January 5, 2019 at 9:00am to help take down all the Christmas decorations. Many hands make light work!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR Outreach

Special Request: At the last community dinner with La Trinidad, Jennifer de Leon (our liaison) asked if Grace could help fill a need for the guests who come to the monthly dinners. Jennifer would like to be able to hand out kits as gifts containing hand wipes, lip balm, hand sanitizer, facial tissues, toothbrush, toothpaste and hand warmers (the little packets that can be put in gloves or shoes). Watch for the washtub to place the items in and for the poster in the atrium. It would be great if we could bring some of these kits with to the next community dinner.

La Trinidad Community Dinner: On Sunday, December 23 members of the Social Ministry Committee will be going to La Trinidad in the Humboldt Park area of Chicago for the monthly community dinner. Our members help cook, serve and clean up. We have been bringing rotisserie chickens, salads, bread sticks and desserts. If you would like to join us, donate a dessert or funds to offset the costs of the other items, please speak to Libby Reimann, Greg Linwood, Nancy Greaves or Sue Buerger.

The Giving Tree: A Grace tradition of collecting Christmas gifts for children in need begins on Thanksgiving Eve. Gift tags with the gender and age of the child in either School District 21 or School District 26 will be available. New, wrapped gifts of approximately \$15 should be brought to church by Sunday, December 16th and placed under the tree in the East entryway. Toys or games are especially welcomed. All other necessary details can be found on the tags.

On Sunday, December 2nd any tags not picked up on Thanksgiving Eve along with tags for La Trinidad will be available on the tree in the East entryway. La Trinidad is asking for hats, scarves and gloves. The unwrapped gifts for La Trinidad should be placed under the tree by Sunday, December 16th.

Thanks for your continuing support of this special holiday Social Ministry Committee project.

Mallternative: Soon the Christmas season will be upon us, which means it is time for Mallternative once again. Please consider buying a gift in honor of a friend or relative. This year you can purchase the ever popular farm animals or provide health services for people in need.

Don't worry. After you buy one of these gifts, your friend won't have to worry about taking care of a pig or repairing electrical grids! Instead, the gift will go to someone in need in an underdeveloped country or here, and your friend will receive a card saying that you gave a gift in his or her honor. It is a wonderful way to share the bounty of our lives with those who are less fortunate. What better way to celebrate the birth of Jesus?

Order forms will be in the Church bulletins after Thanksgiving. Orders will be accepted December 2nd, 9th, and 16th.

Looking Ahead: Community Outreach: The Outreach and Welcome Committee is taking the lead in implementing an aggressive agenda of community outreach in 2019. Guided in part by our monthly Growing Grace Roundtable, we have identified four annual events that we would like to use to attract more visitors to Grace. Those events are:

A spring event, tentatively scheduled for the weekend of May 18 and 19 with a care of creation theme. We are investigating the possibility of establishing a community garden as well as a children's garden.

A larger presence in the mid-summer Mount Prospect Block Party.

A fall event focusing on harvest and thanksgiving

An enhanced Christmas celebration marking our 60th anniversary as a congregation.

If you would like to help plan any or all of these events, please plan to attend the Growing Grace Roundtable in January (date TBD) or sign up to be a part of our Outreach and Welcome Committee.

Shop with **SCRIP**

Giftng that gives back: Find gifts for everyone on your list while raising funds for our church with the holiday gift guide. Shop gift cards from over 750 top brands, including Best Buy, Amazon, Nordstrom, The Home Depot and more. Whether you buy the gift cards to give as presents to family and friends, or to use them to buy your gifts—our church earns with every gift card purchased. It's simple, it's thoughtful and it's truly the gift that keeps on giving.

Shop with Scrip is just another way to pay for everyday purchases using gift cards in place of checks, cash or credit cards. For each gift card you purchase, the church gets an automatic rebate (2-10% depending on the vendor). It's time to put your shopping dollars to work.

The church has an account at www.shopwithscrip.com. Our Family Enrollment Code is D7CLAF5A6L882. Once you've entered the enrollment code click register and follow the prompts. You will be able to order physical gift cards or eCards with several different options. We ask that you set up a PrestoPay account that does an electronic debit from your checking or savings account. Shop with Scrip does not take credit cards to avoid the service fees that would eat into the rebates that are offered. You can write a check payable to church and your order will not be processed until the check clears and our site coordinator submits your order. If you do not use the internet, members of the Social Ministry Committee are available to help you. Funds received will be used to purchase the food taken to La Trinidad for the community dinners and to help with shipping costs for our other projects.

Notes of **THANKS**

Dear Friends in Christ, Cindy and I thank you on behalf of our family for your many cards of sympathy and for your sustaining prayers following my brother's death. We thank God for your faithful and caring support
Pastor Stefan Munker

Dear People of Grace, Thank you for the snacks and for making sure I hit the freshman 15 (lbs. gained).
Alex Nickl

Thanks from Vivian Becker for the altar flowers she received this week. She said it lifted her up to be remembered by her friends from Grace and it made her day.

Dear Grace Lutheran Church: Thank you so much for the Halloween Care Package! It is always a nice surprise when it comes in the mail. I hope you all had a happy Halloween. Thanks again for thinking of me!
Joanna Josten

It's been almost a year since Tom died. I want to thank the people of Grace for all the caring notes, prayers, hugs and visits before and after Tom passed away. It's very comforting. Tom will live in my heart forever. Thank you.
Viola Wiebe

Pastor Schwick and Grace Lutheran Staff & Congregation: Lutheran Church of the Cross Food Pantry is so very appreciative of the food donation from Grace Lutheran in late September! We could not continue our pantry operation on Tuesdays when we service approximately 100 food insecure folks from the area if it were not for the generosity of churches and organizations like you in the community who help us out year round!

Again thank you, thank you and may God bless your church and all of its members!

Sincerely,

*Lori Becker, Julie Malin, Debbie Paddack, Co-Directors
Lutheran Church of the Cross Food Pantry*

SPECIAL *Events*

- ***Hanging of the Greens:*** Saturday, December 1 at 9:00am
- ***Sunday School Christmas Program:*** Sunday, December 9 at the 10:00am service
- ***Jayne Boom Cookie Walk:*** Sunday, December 16 after the service
- ***Friendship Group:*** Wednesday, December 19, 11:30am lunch
- ***Poinsettia Garden Set Up:*** Saturday, December 22 at 9:00am
- ***La Trinidad Community Dinner:*** Sunday, December 23, leaving church at 9:00am
- ***Christmas Eve Worship Services:*** Monday, December 24 at 4:30 & 10:30pm
- ***Unhanging of the Greens:*** Saturday, January 5 at 9:00am

WELCOME *New Members*

On Sunday, November 4, 2018 we welcomed into membership Kathy Bender Schwich and Pastor Daniel Schwick. They are transferring their membership from Redeemer, Park Ridge.



Birthday LIST

December

2	Allison Gharagozlou	15	Harvey Willis
4	Nick Lovdjieff Linda Pettingill Joanne Schultz	19	Sheila FencI Mark Loeb Joseph Torres
6	Colton Kochanski	21	Ardell Mueller
8	Barb Carlson Lynda Weiss Dan Garza	22	Carol Victor
10	Teddy Reimann	23	Sandy Johnson Mike Pirron
13	Amy Pracko	26	Holly Schirmer
14	Kari Nickl Abigail Shaffer Jennifer Roth Luis Rosando, Jr.	28	Payton Chantry
		29	Veronica Grimpe James Shaffer ...

CELEBRATIONS OF *Life*

Baptisms

Receiving Christ's gifts of grace with water and word, we are welcomed into God's family of the church.

Conner Reed Ellertson, infant son of Derek and Cheryl and grandson of Dennis and Jeannine Ellertson, was baptized on November 4, 2018. His sponsors are Kristin and Russell Vilt.

Funerals and Memorials

We support one another in our grief through mutual support and the assurance of our faith in Christ's promise of everlasting life.

We extend our sympathy to the family of long-time member Florence Browder who died on November 10, 2018. A private graveside service was held on November 17.



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

1624 E. Euclid Ave.
Mount Prospect, IL 60056

Phone 847-824-7408
www.gracemtprospect.org
www.facebook.com/gracemtprospect



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OUR *Mission AND Vision*

Our mission is to tell the good news of Jesus and touch people with his love.

Our vision is to joyfully praise and serve God, committed to being a church of friendship, openness and diversity.

Staff **DIRECTORY**

Pastor: Daniel Schwick
d.schwick@gracemtprospect.org

Church Secretary: Barbara Willis
b.willis@gracemtprospect.org

Director of Lay Ministry: Pam Walger
p.walger@gracemtprospect.org

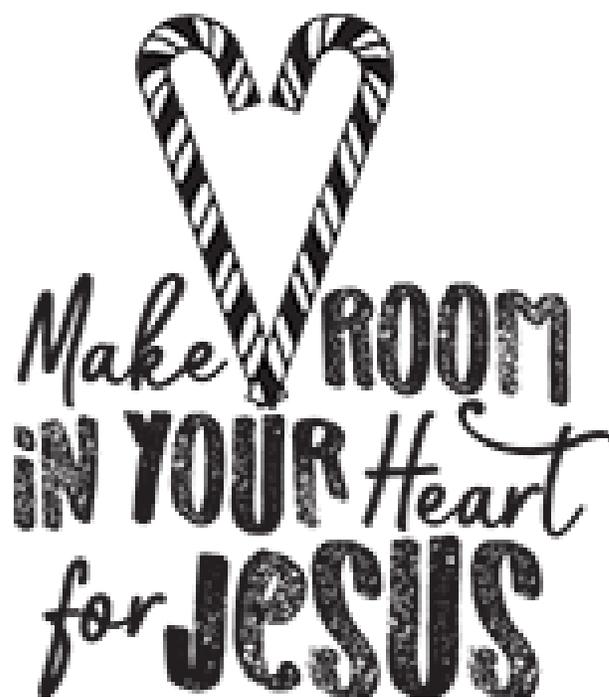
Director of Music: Susan Nelson
sopranosusannelson@gmail.com

Organist: Jeremy Zimmer
jeremyzimmer@gmail.com

Pre-school Director:
preschool@gracemtprospect.org

Mission Partner: Rev. Carrie Smith
carrie.smith@elca.org

Grace Notes Editor: Debbie Bodett
bodettdeb@sbcglobal.net



ARTICLE *Deadline:* December 16