

GRACE NOTES

January 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,



Do you recall the famous saying of Daniel Burnham, one of the most important planners of Chicago?

MAKE NO SMALL PLANS!

We here at Grace are in a planning mode. As you know, Grace is between regularly called pastors. When I began as your interim pastor in September, it was with a mandate to help Grace develop a plan for ministry so that we can expect Grace to sustain its ministry for many years to come. I have spent the past four months becoming acquainted with the people and customs and traditions that make Grace a very special place. I am aware that some of you look back to the “good old days” when the pews, the Sunday School classrooms and the offering plates were filled to overflowing. In contrast, it may seem that those “glory days” are long behind us.

I beg to differ.

My conclusion so far is that Grace is a strong and, yes, even thriving congregation today, not just yesterday. I believe that we have incredible strength in the number of good and faithful people who roll up their sleeves to get things done at Church. I suspect that many of you would be surprised by how much activity takes place at church during the week! Women, men and youth come here to contribute to the life and welfare of the congregation.

But the continuing vitality of Grace will not happen by accident. Nor will it happen because we continue to do the same things we’ve always done. We can’t rely on 20th century church practices and habits to create growth in the 21st century. Times have changed and we need to adapt.

That’s where our GROWING GRACE “ROUNDTABLE” comes in. The Roundtable will, I hope, help us to create an intentional plan for growth in the congregation. That means BOTH the growth of additional members and families AND the intentional growth of existing members of Grace. We will grow Grace as we grow in grace.

The Roundtable will bring together ALL the men, women and youth of the congregation who are willing to help envision a strong future for our congregation. We will evaluate what we currently do and also research “best practices” of other thriving congregations. We will look at all aspects of our life together, from worship, to Christian education, to service projects, to our communication strategy.

It is my hope that the Growing Grace Roundtable will develop a visionary Plan for Mission that will be referred to the Church Council and ultimately to a special

congregational meeting for consideration. The timeframe for the work of the Roundtable is open ended; there is no artificial end date. We will take the time we need to produce a bold plan.

If and when the Plan for Mission is adopted by the congregation, the next question will be who shall provide pastoral leadership to the congregation as it moves into this new era of mission and ministry. As you know, I am currently serving Grace under a one year “interim” covenant. At some point before that year expires in September, Grace will choose whether to extend to me a regular call to serve as your pastor or to enter the normal call process with the Metropolitan Chicago Synod to help identify the next regular pastor of Grace. **THERE ARE NO ASSUMPTIONS HERE!** I truly believe that both the congregation and I will be engaged in a process of discernment: how is God calling us to serve going forward?

I am very excited by the prospects of this process.

On Sunday, January 14, all members and friends of Grace are invited to a “kick-off” congregational luncheon and forum at which the work of the Growing Grace Roundtable will be presented. **AT THE CONCLUSION OF THAT EVENT**, everyone will have an opportunity to sign up to be a part of the Roundtable. We will also identify a monthly meeting time for the Roundtable. At the first monthly meeting—probably early in February—the Roundtable will be subdivided into numerous working groups such as Communications and PR, Property Concerns, Intentional Member Recruitment, Engagement with Grace Preschool, etc.

I expect our building and our whole membership to be a hub of activity and excitement as we envision a stronger, bolder, more gracious Grace!

We will NOT make any small plans. We have a great God to serve. And a great foundation of 59 years of ministry. **LET’S GO BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE THAT GOD IS CALLING US TO!**

In God’s Grace,
Pastor Dan Schwick

OPPORTUNITIES FOR Fellowship

Birthday Card Showers: To distinguish our members who are 90 or better we ask the congregation to shower them with birthday wishes (cards or postcards) to brighten their day. We have 2 special birthdays this month.

Loretta Horigan will celebrate her 95th birthday on January 12th. Please shower her with good wishes at: 916 Sumac Lane, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-1935

Harmon Loeb will celebrate his 91st birthday on January 31st. Please shower him with good wishes at: 2024 Wintergreen, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-4827

HAPPY BIRTHDAY LORETTA AND HARMON!

Friendship Group: Come to church on Wednesday, January 24th, 2018 for a get-together with friends for the afternoon. We'll have popcorn and hot cocoa and watch a movie together. Arrive at 1:00pm. Please sign up on Pam Walger's office door so she knows how many marshmallows to buy. We don't have a movie picked out yet. If there is one you'd like to see let Pam know.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

The "Growing Grace Roundtable" will be convened by Pastor Schwick at a congregational forum and lunch on Sunday, January 14 following worship. Everyone interested in the work of this new "super committee" is encouraged to attend. RSVP on the sign-up sheet in the atrium. The purpose of the Growing Grace Roundtable is to develop an integrated and intentional plan to attract new members and families to Grace by building on the strong foundation of our past and present ministries.

Attention ALL Worship Assistants: Assisting Ministers, Communion Assistants, Acolytes, Ushers, Greeters, and Altar Guild Members are asked to attend an orientation/training on Saturday, January 13 from 10 to 11:30am.

Bible Study: Beginning the second week in January Pastor Schwick will be leading a Bible study on the Gospel of Mark. The Wednesday study will meet at 10am beginning January 10, 2018. The Thursday study will meet at 7:00pm beginning January 11, 2018.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Do You Like the Feel of Money? Call Jerry Sharlog at 847-253-0636 and he can tell you how you can get your hands on money every Sunday for a month!

Volunteer to be a Eucharistic Minister (Home Communion Assistant): We hope to have several new volunteers to assist with our homebound ministry. Many of our members are unable to come to church regularly and would like to have communion brought to them. Would you like to see what this ministry involves? Please speak with Pam Walger or Pastor Dan about this opportunity. Pastor Dan will meet with those who are interested for a training session on Sunday, January 4, 2018 at 11:30am.

Helping Hands Needed: The Altar Guild is looking for men and women to help set up the altar for communion on Saturday mornings and to help clean up the communion ware and altar after the service on Sunday. Betty Carlson has a sign-up sheet in the atrium. For more information, contact her at 847-803-9646.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR Outreach

Please Support La Trinidad in its efforts to serve the hungry. La Trinidad church in the Humboldt Park neighborhood serves a monthly meal to the community. Please consider donating money to help cover food expenses or donating sample sized toothpaste, shampoo and soap as well as toothbrushes. You are welcome to go along with the Social Ministry Committee and help serve the meal on January 21, 2018. Pastor Dan will be preaching at La Trinidad's 10am service that Sunday. Contact Libby Reimann for more information at 847-368-1663.

Refugee Family Update: Thanks for all your donations of items to set up the apartment for our refugee family. The family is a mother and four children, ages 12 (twins-boy and girl), 9 (boy) and 3 (boy). They are from Eritrea. They are doing well so far, but they don't like the cold weather. Someone from our Refugee Ministry Team visits them weekly to help them adjust to Chicago. Please keep them in your prayers!

Food Pantry Donations: Here a streamlined list of some of the more requested items at one of the food pantries we support: coffee, cookies, dry milk, cereal, canned chicken, hash or ham, noodle and condiments. If you don't have time to shop, please consider making a donation to purchase gift cards for the pantries. Place your donation in a pink pew envelope and mark it "Food Pantry Certificates." Thanks for your generosity.

YOUTH GATHERING 2018

The Youth Group is busy working a variety of activities to raise funds for the trip to Houston this summer.

Parent's Night Out – On the evening of December 2nd, the youth and their parents hosted a **Parent's Night Out** for the families with young children. We served hot dogs and chips along with some healthy snacks. We ran a movie, had crafts for the kids to enjoy and played some games. Another Parent's Night Out is scheduled for January 27th. Parents -- spread the word to your friends and neighbors. Everyone had a great time!

Jayne Boom Annual Cookie Walk – On December 17th the Jayne Boom Annual Cookie Walk was held. Charter Hall was filled with an amazing quantity and variety of cookies! After the cookies were selected and packed up, the Youth raised \$1,000! Thank you all for your generosity with baking the cookies and packing up your favorites!

Wireless Zone Foundation of Giving – Michael and Sandy Drelicharz' Verizon store is a franchise operating under the name of Wireless Zone. Wireless Zone franchisor has a philanthropic organization called Wireless Zone Foundation of Giving. Each year they award money to worthy charitable causes throughout the country. The organization accepted our application and awarded the Youth Group \$2,000 towards the upcoming trip.

FINANCIAL Update

Financial Report ending November 30, 2017

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$253,297	\$240,894	(\$ 12,403)
Special Income	29,370	36,857	+ 7,487
Prepaid Income	10,975	10,975	0
Total Income	\$293,642	\$288,726	(\$ 4,916)
Expenses thru November	304,234	271,363	
Surplus or (Deficit)		\$+17,363	

We continue in a positive position for this calendar year still blessed by continuing expenses under budget even with some extraordinary expenses in November. We approach the budget preparation for 2018 on a positive basis. We ask those who have not made their financial commitment for 2018 to please do so to enable us to properly set the budget for 2018. Some have been confused with presenting their pledge for 2018 due to the “soft sell” approach this year. Please do not hesitate to simply place them in the offering plate. Be assured they will be received with great appreciation.

The job is done and the bulk of the cost has been paid. It's the parking lot renovation being referred to. We have paid \$108,000 of the cost but still need \$2,400 to cover the balance. The balance of the total cost should be paid this month or in January which involves about \$7,300 for the handicap ramp and railing on the west side. We need approximately \$10,000 additional to cover the balance of a \$115,500 project. If you have contributed, we thank you. If you have waited to get a better handle on the total cost, the time is now. Any and all contributions to the parking lot fund will be greatly appreciated to clear off this balance.

Are you tired of writing checks weekly or monthly for your contributions to your Church? Or gathering the cash? Do you know that Grace has available a service for making your contributions by electronic transfer? No more checks to be written or trips to the bank to get cash. Grace subscribes through Vanco Services for automatic withdrawal of your contributions to Grace. If you want more information or wish to sign up, please contact Jerry Sharlog at 847-253-0636 or call the Church office.

A CHRISTMAS LETTER *from teh Munker Pastors*

December 15, 2017

Dear People of God,

Greetings in the name of Jesus, the Son of God. We hope this finds you and yours well as we celebrate the birth of our Savior and Lord. It's hard to believe how quickly the months have gone by since we followed God's call to new churches, ministries and

home. While new relationships and tasks demand our attention we still think of you and miss you

After beginning our service in the Central Illinois Synod on June 1, we got busy finishing the sale of our home, teaching Vacation Bible Schools, baptisms and weddings, and getting to know new surroundings, their people and customs. It is a bit warmer here and still is in December, stores are fewer and far between, but we also quickly discovered advantages of slower pace of life and small town relationships

Community support was helpful when Cindy broke an ankle. Living in the country makes it easy to get out for exercise. And we have found there's plenty of places to visit and events to attend. Among our new experiences have been Lincoln sights, frozen custard in St. Louis, town parades, corn harvest, and church anniversaries, one of them a 185th. We are still in a rental home and are hoping to soon find our own

We continue to keep Grace and Redeemers in our prayers, and ask for you to remember us and your sisters and brothers at St. Paul's, Mount Zion and Trinity. May the Spirit given to us in baptism guide us like the star of Epiphany so that we will let the light of joy and hope and love shine in the New Year.

Yours rejoicing in the good news that God has come to us with grace to redeem the world,

Stefan and Cynthia Munker

Notes of **THANKS**

An enormous "thank you" to Judith Bataille, Betty Benson, Betty Carlson, Eileen Clark, Linda Courtice, Eloise DeCarlo, Karen Gretz, Jules Kastens, Mary Jo Menelle, Barb Nagle, Jerry Sakover, the Stutheit family, Christopher, Carolyn, Emmanuel and Samuel Vasanth, Pam Walger, and Margit Willis for helping to deliver the WELCA Christmas gifts to our homebound members. May God bless all of you.

Grace WELCA

Dear Grace Lutheran Church, Thank you so much for the Halloween care package! It is always such a fun treat, and my roommates and I are still enjoying all of the snacks! I really appreciate the continuous support from Grace. Thanks again!

Sincerely, Joanna Josten

Dear Grace Lutheran Church, Thank you for your recent gifts given to your synod, received by ELCA World Hunger.

With these gifts you are providing education and advocacy, water and sanitation, livestock and agriculture, health care and microloans. With your gifts you are making possible ministry and projects that are transformative, holistic and integrated. With your gifts you are working here and in 62 countries around the world. With your gifts you are

walking with communities to address hunger and poverty in a way that barriers are broken down, inequality is decreased, and relationships are whole and flourishing.

Thank you, Grace, for rising to help us meet Metro Chicago's one million dollar challenge! Many blessings on your ministry.

The Rev. Daniel Rift, Director, ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal
Robin Brown, Metro Chicago Synod

Thanks to the following who helped put up the Christmas decorations on December 2nd: Rich Buerger, Curt Carlson, Tom Carlson, Mike, Sandy, and Amy Drelicharz, Gordon Greaves, Bill Grimpe, Sharyl & Steve Hanna, Mark Kraegel, Joanne & Ray McCollim, Ardell Mueller, Cory Olson, Marcia & Christine Rovani, Pastor Dan, Lynn Sivertsen, Chris, Caroline, Emmanuel & Samuel Vasanth, Pam Walger, Barb Willis, Margit Willis. We apologize if we missed anyone.

Thank You to everyone who donated Christmas gifts for the children and families in School Districts 21 and 26 and to everyone for all the hats and gloves for our friends at La Trinidad. Your generosity never fails to amaze us.

The Social Ministry Committee

A big thank you to all of the elves who baked, decorated, and put together this year's cookie walk. Your hard work and creativity helped make it a big success--and a whole lot of fun. Also, THANK YOU to everyone who donated cookies, gave so generously and made the walk so enjoyable.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: We did it! Together we have raised approximately \$1,060,000 for ELCA World Hunger! We will share the final numbers soon, but wanted to start spreading the good news now.

Thanks be to God for the generous people of our synod who caught the vision of resolution 03-16 *To Support ELCA World Hunger* that passed at our 2016 synod assembly where we voted unanimously "that the congregations in the Metropolitan Chicago Synod accept the challenge to raise one million dollars for ELCA World Hunger between June 1, 2016 and October 31, 2017.

Know that your faithful generous response to the gospel through ELCA World Hunger is a making a difference all the way around the globe, spreading joy and hope near and far, creatively and courageously working toward a world of justice where all are fed.

In Christ, Wayne N. Miller, Bishop

SPECIAL Events

- **Unhanging of the Greens:** Saturday, January 6 at 9:00am
- **Eucharist Minister Training:** Sunday, January 7 at 11:30am
- **Bible Study:** Wednesdays beginning January 10 at 10:00am
- **Bible Study:** Thursdays beginning January 11 at 7:00pm
- **Orientation/Training for ALL Worship Assistants:** Saturday, January 13 at 10:00am
- **Growing Grace Roundtable:** Sunday, January 14 after the service
- **La Trinidad Community Meal:** Sunday, January 21, leaving church at 9:00am
- **Friendship Group:** Wednesday, January 24 at 1:00pm
- **Parents' Night Out:** Saturday, January 27
- **Annual Congregational Meeting:** Sunday, February 4 after the service



Birthday LIST

January

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 3 | Don Linder | 19 | Jeanne Weidner
Joan Budruweit
Bernadette Dalton\
Molly Mejia |
| 4 | Greg Linwood
Janet Bouris | 21 | Paul Kjeldbjerg
Marilyn Behnke |
| 5 | Rebecca Trsar | 22 | Michael Harty |
| 10 | Ryoko Howell
Presley Grimbe | 24 | Julie Walger
Elise Kjeldbjerg |
| 11 | Heather Polfuss | 25 | Judith Bataille |
| 12 | Loretta Horigan
Anita Taylor
Sally Riordan | 26 | Lori Drozd |
| 13 | Eric Adams | 28 | Virginia Mock
Alec Garza |
| 15 | Stephen Carlson | 31 | Harmon Loeb
Judy Peltekian |
| 16 | Robert Holzer | | |
| 18 | Barb Nagle
Matt Menelle
Oliver Mejia | | |





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A congregation of the
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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**

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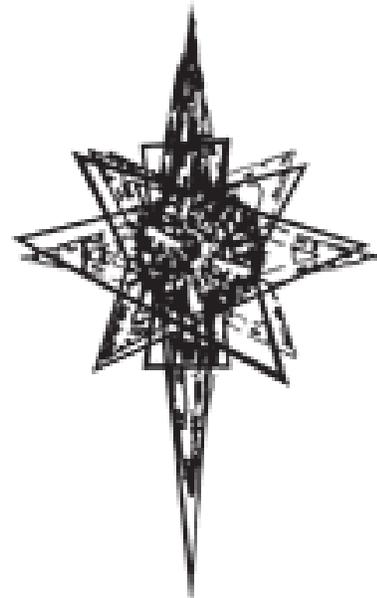
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EPIPHANY

ARTICLE *Deadline:* January 14