



# GRACE NOTES

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 46 WOODLAND STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06105 860-527-7792

## NOTICE:

### Annual Meeting for Program - November 6

In accordance with our constitution, the regularly scheduled Annual Congregational Meeting for Program will be held the first Sunday in November, November 6, 2011, at 11 a.m.

#### AGENDA

- Committee Reports
- Nominating Committee Report
- Election of Council Members for a three-year term beginning the First Sunday in Advent, 2011.
- Review and discussion of draft

strategic financial plan prepared by the Congregation Council.

(Copies of the draft are available on the table in the Narthex or by mail upon request.)

## Grace Stewardship - Believe in Tomorrow

*"I am with you always"*  
- Matthew 28:20  
**Our 2012 Journey of Faith**

It is that time of year again! Time to look into your heart and ponder about the wonderful ministries emerging and growing at Grace and how you can be part of the energy. This year's annual meeting of programs should be a great sharing!

"Believe" is this year's theme and it is hard to do some days, and for some people it is hard to believe most days. As I see it Grace is blessed and we are a blessing for others in our community.

My heart leaps for joy as I read the notes shared by the Friday Evening Supper Gatherers on October 7th. Notes of gratitude for sharing food and fellowship with our neighbors and finding common stories and letting go of our worries for a couple of hours, as we pray for each other, ask God for healing and praise God for all the good he has given us. A reason to open their eyes each day and come share.

I read the stewardship materials that you will soon be receiving

and as I see it, all we need to do is believe. Open our eyes and see and feel that Grace is the Place. Feel the healing energy that is being shared.

During my lifetime I have come to understand Stewardship in many different ways than just as dollars. I see stewardship as serving God by inviting our neighbors. Tell the story of why you come to Grace and what fills your soul and share it with your friends, and you might find more than just a couple people

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## November

Volume 2011

Issue 11

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*Note from Pastor*

## For you, from the foundation of the world

*Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'* <sup>1 Matthew 25:34</sup>

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

How will it all end? Matthew 25 and the rest of the texts leading up to the First Sunday in Advent on November 27 have us thinking about things I don't often choose to think about, namely, the 'end times.' The theme will keep going in Advent, too.

It seems to me we have plenty to worry about in this world without spending a lot of energy wondering what the end times will be like. One thing is sure, though. They will come. My own end time will come. So will yours. And we will all be called to account. In fact we are called to account every week when we begin our worship with an order of confession and forgiveness. We do this in order to be cleansed and prepared for the feast to come.

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church will be called to account. We will be reminded of this on the 13<sup>th</sup> when we read the parable about the servants who increased the talents entrusted to them and those who buried them. It's right there. (Jesus talks about money all the time.) On the 20<sup>th</sup> we will consider what it means to feed the hungry and

clothe the poor. We will be called to account.

Right now it feels like our 'talents' are dwindling, and yet in my conversations with you nobody is saying we should bury the talents that remain. It's just not clear how we should use them.

Here are a couple of ways for us to think about this. First, try out this honest question someone asked me: what would it mean to Hartford and to Asylum Hill if Grace were to disappear, if we weren't there? Would it make a difference?

Or here's another question, looking at it from the opposite direction. What if Grace had all the money we ever needed? What would we do with it?

I don't have ready answers to these questions, but they are worth thinking about. As my daughter said when she was moving into her first house and mentioned it might be time for us to start downsizing: "I'm just saying..."

At our Annual Meeting on November 6 we will start talking about proposals from

the Council toward balancing our budget, and I hope we will keep talking about them in the weeks leading up to our Annual Meeting for the Budget in February. But we need to start by asking ourselves questions like the ones above. Meantime, we can take heart in the theme of our stewardship campaign this month, "Believe." We need to remind one another that God is with us always, in good times and the most difficult times. We believe that feeding the hungry and caring for the poor and sharing the Good News is what we do as heirs of the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

We believe that God will bless us with success - maybe in our terms, maybe not - but surely in God's terms. We believe we are called to take risks. We know that doing nothing is not an option. After all, as Wayne Gretzky said, "You miss 100% of the shots you never take!"

The God of peace be with you always.

*Pastor Steege*

## Grace Stewardship - Believe in Tomorrow

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that are yearning for God's Love.

Come be part of the energy and share God's Love.

### ***Inspiration Sunday / Reformation Sunday -***

October 30, 2011

We will introduce the program and receive an information card.

### ***Gratitude Sunday -***

November 6, 2011

Members will be greeted and given their faith card package.

### ***Consecration Sunday -***

November 13, 2011

Faith Cards will be collected at Worship.

### ***Celebration Sunday -***

November 20, 2011

Come share a potluck meal, hear some music, and celebrate!

*Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.*

*Joshua 3:5*

***Jody Wynn Rodiger -  
Stewardship Chair 2011***

## **"Cool" potluck was really Cool**

Thanks to all who participated and brought such delicious and "cool" foods. Remember a "cool" food is one that adds to our carbon footprint the least. We were treated with homegrown greens, Israel salad, collards, whole wheat crust apple pie with locally grown apples, other vegetable dishes, organic and whole grains and fruits. What a

wonderful spread! Anna-Marie will follow up and get the recipes so that they can be printed and shared.

Grace members are also working on lowering their carbon footprint at home. Many reported changes such as lowering the thermostat, less toilet flushing, buying more local and organic foods, using cloth towels instead of paper. Some have started

speaking up at work and other places where they see a way to have an impact on making changes to benefit the earth.

We all need to work together and support one another as we continue to seek ways both at Grace and at home to care for God's Creation.

***Nancy Urban***



**Grace Lutheran Church**  
HARTFORD, CT

Who is our 2011  
**Angel of Grace?**  
November 27

## Calumet at Christmas

### CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS WEEKEND, Dec. 2-4, 2011

Join us the first weekend in December for a weekend filled with your favorite Christmas traditions. Come up to Calumet to re-connect with old friends and make new ones while doing all the traditional things that get you into that holiday spirit!

#### CHRISTMAS VACATION WEEK

**December 27-January 1, 2012**

The presents are unwrapped, the Christmas dinner is done, and the relatives have come and gone, but Christmas vacation is just beginning. There's no better way to get

away and spend some good, wholesome time than by coming up to Calumet to enjoy our annual Christmas Vacation Week. It's an opportunity to enjoy all that Calumet has to offer in the wintertime.

Find out more at <http://www.calumet.org>.

## Council Corner

Highlights from the 10/8/11 Congregation Council meeting:

The Council discussed and approved the Long-Range Financial Plan that will be presented for discussion at the November Congregational Meeting.

Pastor Steege reported that Pastor Ted Asta, Assistant to the Bishop, spoke at last month's Conference clergy luncheon about the ELCA providing resources for establishing ministries to

Spanish-speaking people. Grace could potentially partner with other congregations in the Greater Hartford Conference to provide such a ministry in Hartford.

Artist-in-Residence Louisa Barton-Duguay announced that she is in the process of applying for a grant from the city of Hartford to hire Hartford residents to begin a theater arts program here at Grace.

Jody Wynn Rodiger will lead this year's Stewardship Campaign based on the theme of "Believe". Information cards will be distributed 10/30/11 and the campaign will end on 11/20/11 with a Celebration Sunday meal with musical performances following worship.

The Council voted to provide paid childcare during worship. The Property Committee is investigating a sound system for the nursery room.



Famine continues in the Horn of Africa. This photo of a child in a refugee camp in Chad was taken by **Lauren Stroschin**. Lauren, who is in our prayers every Sunday, is a niece of Cindy and Mark Jones and flies for Doctors Without Borders. Remember that contributions are always needed. You may send your check to Grace and mark it clearly for "ELCA World Hunger, Horn of Africa."

## New England Synod - You're Invited to Be...

**Doing What Matters**

The "Doing What Matters" Facilitateam invites members of Grace to explore what we have heard during the New England Synod's first year of listening and discernment. Last June, at Synod Assembly, we revealed the fruits of Phase 1 of the "Doing What Matters" process. This November we'll take a closer look at the purpose statement and guiding principles, asking ourselves what it means *to go where LOVE leads and to serve where LOVE calls* and how *praying always, giving of ourselves, standing with others, embracing change and diversity, and making room for joy* will guide us as we pursue God's purpose for the New England Synod. We will

also begin Phase 2 of the process; discovering assets, wows(!), and needs in both our congregations and in our communities. As we have found, and are still finding, God is up to something in every corner of New England! Where is LOVE leading and calling?

**One Day... One event...**

**Three locations**

**Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

**9:30am - 3:00pm**

**Concordia Lutheran Church-  
Manchester, CT**

**Messiah Lutheran Church-  
Amherst, NH**

**St. Paul Lutheran Church-  
Arlington, MA**

*Early registration fee, before October 28<sup>th</sup>, \$10/person  
Late registration fee \$20/person  
{See Pastor Steege for registration form, schedule and location information and let her know if you need assistance with the fee. Carpools will be arranged.}*

☞

**10:00am - 10:30am – Special Presentation by Ad Hoc Committee for the Election of a New Bishop**  
Members of the committee will be reviewing the process which begins in November at the congregational level and culminates with the election of a new Bishop at the June 8-10 Synod Assembly in Springfield, MA.

## Are you a Thrivent member? Have you designated your Choice Dollars yet?

If you answered: YES and then NO, please do the following:

Step 1: Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say, "Thrivent Choice."

Step 2: When prompted, say, "Choice Dollars."

Step 3: Say or enter your Social Security number.

Step 4: Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars.

Step 5: A representative will then work with you. Please direct your Choice Dollars to Grace Lutheran Church, Hartford.

In the past eleven months Grace has received over \$1,200 in Thrivent Choice Dollars designated by Thrivent members. Thank you!



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## Friday Evenings at Grace

The Friday Evening Gatherings at Grace now include a free supper (made possible by our partnership with Food Share), music, good conversation, occasionally a special guest, a look at the Gospel lesson for the week, prayer, and Holy Communion. Between 40 and 50 people come each week.

On October 7, everyone was invited to write a note answering three questions: Why do you come here? What would you add or do differently? What are some suggestions for Halloween?

There weren't too many suggestions about Halloween, as it turned out, but here is a sampling of some of the things people wrote. (Thanks to Jody Wynn Rodiger for typing them up.)

\*\*\*

The people and friendships extended to me. Programs pastor has for guests. Can't deny great food. Helping other people. Have a good evening.

Food Friends, meet new friends and greet old friends.

I like coming here for the good food and good people. I would like a different range of music and a (Halloween Costume Party Punch Bowl Bobbing for Apples, Dance line, candy, haunted house on stage) I'll hand out flyers if you do the party like that.

Please have some kind of hamburger helper type meal. I come here for the friendship and the great food.

Reason for coming is that the people that serve us are a blessing to the people that come here.

I love the people's kindness, food, a time to rest the mind, etc.

Food. The people are very nice, I feel very relaxed. I don't have God in my life like I should, but coming here makes me feel close to God. I don't have anything to say about Halloween. I just hope I open my eyes that day.

Food and Fellowship.

I like coming here, for the fellowship amongst the people in the community. I appreciate the compassion the members take time out of their lives, to minister and help aide others. I pray that the Holy Spirit blesses you all many fold, in your love and in his word. Thank you for your ministry.

I love this place of many reasons: Food, spirituality, lifting up, socializing. The unconditional love, help, etc. Equality, We are one. PS I'm in need of a sofa bed or couch etc. Also things my food stamps can't buy ex hygiene, detergent, etc.

Peace - agree to disagree.

Should cook the same meal on Fridays but with seasonings and non seasonings for health reasons. Peace

I come to dinner because I want to support Grace Church in what I think is an important project. I would like to see milk and juice offered as beverages. Put resources into food not Halloween stuff.

**Please remember, worship begins at 9:30am each and every Sunday. The psalmist says, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'" Join us for worship each Sunday.**

## Outreach Committee

As chair of the Outreach Committee, I feel compelled to write, especially since the October Grace Notes deadline passed before I could collect my thoughts. Yet, the Friday Gatherings are reported on by Darrell Urban, Louisa Barton-Duguay reports on her activities, and with gratitude to Chet and Glenna Brodnicki, food deliveries are ongoing at West Middle Elementary School. Instead of a committee report, I am writing to share my personal thoughts.

The Outreach Committee was formed to provide guidance about how programs and organizations using our facility fulfill our mission for worship, fellowship, and stewardship. In many organizations these days, "Community Engagement" is the term used to express similar ideals. "Engagement" is the key word. It implies something transformative. When an organization engages with others, both are changed. This is what we envisioned when Holy Listening began and we soul-searched about "outreach" to the community. We weren't

seeking just a charitable project. We were striving for ways to build connections with the community that would nourish us spiritually and help us grow in faith.

Nine months into the Friday Night Gatherings, transformation is taking hold. For months now, we have seen a core group of repeat visitors who tell us, "This is not just a feed program. There is community here. People care about each other." Prayer has always been a component of Friday nights and now the Eucharist is served weekly. Out of this community, new members have joined the congregation.

I think about how this transformation will evolve. It might be like the dogwood tree that once stood in my front yard, where a white dogwood branch was grafted onto a pink tree and they both flourished, fed by one trunk, but still separate. Or like the grapefruit, a hybrid of the Asian pomelo and the Jamaican orange that resulted in something similar yet distinctly new. Likely, other scenarios are possible, too.

We've learned from Friday suppers how important a personal invitation is. When we ask people why they come, they point to someone else and say that he or she invited them. I know this letter isn't as good as a face-to-face invitation. Still, I am personally inviting you to supper on Friday night. And I am certain that Jesus is personally inviting you to Friday supper, too. In all ways, keep outreach and community engagement in your prayers.

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them."*

Revelation 21: 1-3

*Faithfully,  
Sue Carey*

*By the grace of God, we are a Lutheran congregation,  
diverse in worship, Christ-centered in fellowship,  
committed to prayer, deepening of faith,  
and the stewardship of the gospel and God's world.*

## People of Grace

### Welcome New Members

On Sunday, November 23, Grace welcomed into its fellowship with great joy two new members. Please add their contact information to your directories.

#### Randall de Rosa

379 Ridgewood Road  
West Hartford CT 06107  
860-948-0392  
idacordie4@yahoo.com  
Sponsor, Louisa Barton-Duguay

#### Walter Scott

157 Babcock St  
Hartford, CT 06106  
860-478-2985  
Sponsor, Allen Redding

### Address Changes

**Inger Morgan's** new address is  
Village Gate at Farmington  
88 Scott Swamp Road - Apt. 329  
Farmington, CT 06032  
Phone: 860-676-4810

**Maribel Santana and son EJ** also have a new address:  
24 Park Place Apt 4F  
Hartford CT 06106  
Cell Phone: 860-461-4129

### Thank you!

A fine time was had by all at the Cool Harvest potluck and video showing on October 16<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks to the Creation Care Team for putting on a fine and informative event: **Nancy Urban, Marty Holmeen, Anna-Marie Potter, and Jody Wynn Rodiger.**

***The 14th Annual Greater Hartford Multi-Faith Prayer Breakfast  
Thursday, November 10, 2011***

***To be held at:***

***The Artists Collective***

1200 Albany Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut

Come join us in our Prayer for Peace for Hartford and for the World!  
Bring a friend, colleague, spouse, political or religious leader and join us at the 2011 Greater Hartford Multifaith Prayer Breakfast!

Thursday, Nov. 10, 2011  
7:15 AM Light breakfast  
7:30-8:45 AM Program

**Keynote Speaker:** Pamela Morrison-Wolf, President of the Board of Directors, Spiritual Life Center, West Hartford, CT

**Special Guests:** Spectrum in Motion, "a dance theater ensemble dedicated to People of Color and the American Experience"

Rabbi Donna Berman, Director, Charter Oak Cultural Center

Dan Campolietta and Marcus Ruff, Musicians, Asylum Hill Congregational Church

Artwork by Hartford Area students

Sign Interpreter for the hearing impaired

*There is no charge for the breakfast and there is ample free parking at the Artists Collective. Free will contributions help defray the cost of the event.*



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Non-Profit Organization  
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our home.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

*The submission deadline for the December 2011 edition of Grace Notes is November 15th. Please forward information to Sally Nolen ([sallynolen@live.com](mailto:sallynolen@live.com)) by this date. Thank you.*

[www.graceistheplace.org](http://www.graceistheplace.org)

