

# GraceFull Visions

JULY 2019

## From the Deacons' Desk

July 4th, our Independence Day celebrating freedom in a country where we can voice our opinions freely and vote for the people of our choice. We proudly display our flag, the flag placed on the graves of our honored dead who fought for us to become and remain a free nation. What would you give to save your world? On D-Day alone, 2,500 + Americans gave their lives for the freedom of so many. 75 years ago, the past generation pulled together and believed in something much more important than their own lives (kind of like Jesus!!). Can we even imagine this in the world of today? Does power blind us? The more we have, the less we see of the Kingdom of God. To "see" we must walk with kids, prisoners, those

who fight for the rights of others, the homeless, those who are different, the least of these. But are we afraid? To see Jesus, we must recognize our own "blindness" in order to understand how free we are.

Throughout the Bible, God told his people not to be afraid. How can you not be afraid when terrible things happen every day? The nightly news and personal experience confirm that. Is there some secret formula for making fear disappear?

Phillippians 4:6 says, "Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers." Though our fears may never disappear completely, we can learn to control them instead of allowing them to control us. God's formula for letting go is no secret.

It is written, page after page, of the Bible, in passages as clear and direct as this one: "Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you: I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.... For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, 'Do not fear: I will help you'." (Isaiah 41:10, 13)

God is with you. He is your God. God will make you strong. God will come to your aid, grasping your right hand and keeping you standing with his own right hand. And God will tell you, directly and in no uncertain term, not to be afraid. He will help you. Jesus said to them, "It is I. Do not be afraid." (John 6:20)

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Those are more than mere words of comfort. Countless people can attest to the very real presence of God in the face of unspeakable horror as well as everyday fears.

When fear threatens to overwhelm you, pull out the most powerful weapons in your spiritual arsenal – the Bible, prayer and Jesus and fight fear head on. Jesus is a banner over us, protecting and shielding us. Freedom, "In Christ", is worth it.

- Deacons Susi and Frank

## Your Special Hymns

In July and August, you are invited to select a favorite or special hymn for us to

sing during our services. But we also ask that you share a brief explanation with the

congregation why that hymn is important and meaningful to you. These will be printed in the bulletin. A sub-

mission form will be provided in worship to make your selection.

# Mission and Ministry

## Stewardship of Faith

For two millennia our instruction manual, (the Bible), has shown how things happened. We cling to the dear stories; from Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, King David—to Jesus, the apostles, Gospel writers, Paul and the future.

With the late 20th and now 21st century explosion of information through worldwide electronics, many of these historic staples have been questioned.

Here are two harmless examples: a biblical scholar noted that the Greek word for inn is used to denote a guest room. He concluded that Jesus was not born in a stable or a cave, but on the ground floor of a middle-class home in Israel, where the owner's animals were brought inside at night to protect them from the weather. If Mary and Joseph arrived late at the home of a relative, other family would have already occupied the inn, that is, the guest room. This put Mary, giving birth to Jesus, on the ground floor among the animals.

Another scholar, of the ancient Aramaic language discovered that the Aramaic slang for a dilemma or quandary was, "in a great fish". Therefore, Jonah, who had difficulty complying with God's directive for him to go to Nineveh, was for three days, "in a great fish".

Several decades ago a group of biblical scholars convened under the title of "The Jesus Seminar". After study, discussion, and prayer, the group voted by dropping different colored beads into boxes indicating how confident they were that Jesus did or did not say the words attributed to him. They suggested that Jesus actually said only about 20% of the sayings we hold true. Their explanation stated that the other 80% was contributed by the Gospel writers, New Testament writers, attempting to complete the story. This obviously made some people upset, but the Jesus Seminar scholars were unapologetic.

SO WHAT!

Our faith in Jesus comes not from these recent "discoveries", but from the essential truths that has stated in a way no other human had done. It was a new concept that we should "love our enemy", or "treat our neighbor as ourselves". Our faith comes from the empty tomb. "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ." Romans 10:17

Entirely new ways of looking at our humanity came from this man, either from his lips or from those closest to Him who ultimately understood Jesus' intentions. As we are bombarded with new "findings" about suppressed Gospels, Jesus' secret marriage, and other suggestions with shock value, our faith need not be diminished as we stand fast in our love of the old stories which show God's truths, regardless of their literalness or liberalness.

- Richard Duncan, Stewardship Team

## Thank You!

Friends in Christ, All of you have been a special part of my journey. Thank you for rejoicing with me as I'm commissioned Synod Parish Deacon on May 12, 2019. God's Blessing, - Iris Saxby

## Recipe Corner

This recipe is from the Military Officers' Wives Club Cookbook – Entrée Meats. I bought this book ages ago when Nova was in the Navy and have always liked it.

Chicken Bavarian Serves 4-8  
Preheat Oven to 350°

- 1 can cream of mushroom or cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of onion or cream of celery soup
- 1/4 soup can water
- 1 Tbsp parsley flakes
- 1/8 tsp curry powder
- 3-4 skinless chicken breast halves (see Note below)
- 1 envelope of dry onion soup mix

Note: The chicken can be skinless chicken breast halves w/rib cage, skinless and bone-

less chicken breast halves, or the same amount of skinless, boneless chicken breast halves each cut lengthwise into 2 or 3 large pieces. The type of chicken used will determine how many servings.

In a medium size mixing bowl, combine the soups and water. Stir in the parsley and curry powder; pour into a well-buttered 9 x 13-inch baking pan. Place chicken pieces on top of the sauce, and sprinkle with the onion soup mix. Place foil completely over the top of the baking pan and seal the edges.

Bake uncut chicken halves at 350° for 2 hours without removing the foil. Bake the sliced chicken pieces at 350°

for 1 ½ hours. Do not open or stir while cooking.

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This dish provides a significant amount of sauce that goes well over rice or mashed potatoes.

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This recipe can be prepared up to a day ahead, but be sure to keep well refrigerated.

### Do You Have A Recipe to Share?

If you have a favorite recipe you'd like to share, send it in and we will add it in a future newsletter. Something to look forward to! Submitted by Lorraine Bickell.

## Sunday Falco's Recent Activities

- Grace Lutheran Church is now listed on The Joy FM website in the selection of churches available for those looking for a Lutheran church in this area. The listing shows information for both of our services along with a picture of our beautiful sanctuary.
- Working with our various monthly renters through a good system each week helping with tables and chairs as we have events and church service.
- Any concerns are being handled for our seven paying tenants.
- Hospitality and set-up is being provided on Sunday morning for the second service, as well as providing cookies for both services and organizing volunteers.
- Working with Cindy, our new office manager.
- Making appointments with people outside our congregation, walking them through the property, discussing prices, rules and times available.
- Managing cleaning people
- Setting up for congregation events when needed.
- Tasks specific to the Adaptive Service:
  - ◊ Talking with multiple assistant living facilities to set up regular outings to the Adaptive Service.
  - ◊ Talking with local newspapers. The Adaptive Service is in the Dunedin Beacon for the month of June!
- Assistance with getting the kids Camp started and organizing the breakfast and lunches for Kids Camp and the community. Helping the county with their staff for this event.
- Talking with other venues for wedding receptions, etc. (When Grace Lutheran needs to refer to another venue because we do not allow alcohol.).
- Sunday Falco has a list of musicians, DJs, videographer, photographers and caterers if you need a reference.
- Updating the Church Website Calendar Daily. Stay Connected!

# Regular Event Updates

## Men of Grace

This month's meeting will be at 9am at the Sunset Grille in Clearwater on Thursday, **July 11th (not July 4th)**.

## Council Meeting

The next Congregation Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, **July 9th** at 6:30 pm in the Garden Room.

## Young at Heart

We will have our next meeting in September. Hope everyone has a wonderful summer with stories to tell at our next meeting...See you then.

ALOA has put together a Caribbean Cruise, January 16-20, 2020. The ship leaves at the Port of Tampa and we will be traveling on Royal Caribbean Brilliance the Sea. The Guest speaker is Dr. Rich Bimler. I went a few years ago and found it very rewarding. I will pass on more info on this sea cruise...

- Florence B.

## Community Breakfast & Lydia's Closet

The Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet will be held on Saturday, **July 13th** at 9 am. The Breakfast will remain on the 2nd Sunday of the month indefinitely. We are in need of small hygiene items to put in packages that will be given to our guests at the Community Breakfast/Lydia's Closet. These items are mostly found during hotel visits, such as mini bottles of shampoo, conditioner, hand cream, small combs and mini bars of soap. We can also use toothpaste and toothbrushes, perhaps like the ones you can get at your dentist's office at times. s you travel this summer and stay at hotels, please remember this ministry and bring any unused items to Lydia's Closet. Phyllis Dumdie

## July and August Book Clubs

We will be discussing A Land Remembered by Patrick D. Smith on Wednesday, July 10. A very wonderful story about Florida history. At that time, we will also be distributing the book Inspired by Rachel Held Evans. This will

be integrated into our Book Club discussions one chapter each month starting in August until finished and will be in addition to our monthly reads.

In August our book for Wednesday, August 7, will be

The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah. Hannah tells a great story of Alaska and P.T.S.D. sufferers. Please email any questions to veis49@yahoo.com.

## Grace Gallery Update

A note received from Maria Costa, a local artist whose art is still on display on our Art Gallery Wall: "Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to share my art with your congregation and with your visitors. I hope that my

work has brought joy to those who have seen it."

We invite everyone to take a stroll through the art gallery. If you are interested in purchasing any of the art on display, please inquire with the particular artist. Anyone

with a gift of art, whether it is painting or photography, etc., is encouraged to display their work. Please contact Phyllis Dumdie or Connie Puls, if you are interested. - Phyllis Dumdie

## July Birthdays

7/02	Karen Gray	7/19	Paul Taylor
7/04	Lluvia Martinez	7/22	Maureen Bjorgo
7/10	George Clark	7/28	Greg Nichols
7/13	Jill Grote		
7/14	Joseph Valentin Torre Murray		

## July Anniversaries

7/02	Charles & Shirley Saitta
7/03	Anne & Jay Cousins
7/12	Greg & Michele Nichols
7/14	Frank & Florence Benciverga

# Prayer Corner

## Tuesday Prayer Chapel

The Prayer Group meets at 11am on Tuesdays in the Prayer Chapel. Submit prayer requests through the Communion Record Sheets.

## Prayer List

**Prayers** are requested for: Linda Almond, Stephanie Adamitis, Pastor Lou & Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Kathleen Wacker, Karen Bates, Pam Long, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Kathy Falco, Pat Hudson, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Ralph Burson, Jean Schlegel, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George & Phyllis Clark, Jill Grote, Pastor Bruce Edwards, Tom Stanziano, Larry Timmons, Kelly Sullivan, & those suffering from natural disasters, violence, and terror (including those unjustly or unnecessarily separated from their parents or children).

## Please Pray for Military Personnel w/Grace connections...

-Marine Lance Corporal Heather Burson, granddaughter of Anne and Ralph Burson  
-Seaman Third Class Kyle Wassen, grandson of Connie Puls,  
-Marc Calhoun, nephew of Wayne and Yvonne Hauschild is in the Air Force

-Aldo Granados, son of Pastor Lydia and member of Grace, is in the US Army Reserves locally.  
-Maj. Christopher Conklin, a chaplain with the USAF, is Lorraine Rheinhart's grandson. He had been redeployed to the Middle East.

-Gabrielle Falco, Pat and Tony's granddaughter, was commissioned as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army and accepted at the exceptional Walter Reed Hospital as a medical student.

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Rev. Jefferson Cox, Pastor

## **Sandy Lane Elementary Outreach Project**

Bridge Builders will be collecting school supplies and uniforms for the coming school year at Sandy Lane Elementary beginning Sunday July 14 thru August 11. We will provide a supply list and containers to place your donations. If you would prefer to give a monetary donation we can do the shopping for you. On August 11 we will have our annual Blessing of the Students, Teachers, and Staff. We will take the supplies to the school August 12. For questions contact Iris Saxby 727 462-5219 or Yvonne Hauschild 727-734-7282