

GraceFull Visions

MAY 2020

From the Deacons' Desk

As of this writing, the world is still in some Twilight Zone episode, that keeps repeating, or a Dean Koontz novel, with chapters still being written.

Many of us feel alone with all the self-isolating and social distancing. Sure, we have our phones, computers, etc.; but it's not the same as seeing that someone, even that neighbor we've tried to avoid, exchanging pleasantries, a handshake, an embrace. It's one thing not to see someone for a couple of weeks, but it's lot different to not be allowed to see that someone. What about if your loved one is in an assisted living facility, a nursing home or hospital?

All will be back to a "new normal" in the near future, but what are we to do in the meantime? Perhaps a walk with Jesus would be nice, so let's do just that. Find your comfy spot, be it a favorite chair, chaise lounge, etc. Bring

along a cup of coffee, a spot of tea if you like. Sit down, relax, close your eyes. Pick out your favorite path to walk, the beach, the park, a trail through a forest, your neighborhood, and start walking. Feel Jesus' presence come alongside you – no social distancing needed here – no need to speak. Jesus already knows what is inside of you. Let Jesus' presence and love bring you peace, comfort and healing. Take comfort in knowing that no matter how alone you may feel, you are not and never will be alone. We have Jesus as our constant companion.

When we walk with Jesus, we are in step with Him, making the right turns, going in the right direction. Remember to walk with Jesus, not only in times of uncertainty and sorrow, but also in times of peace and joy.

When you finish your walk with Jesus, it would be nice to pray

the prayer Jesus taught us. I guess we all have been praying the "Our Father" a lot lately, saying the words every time we wash our hands. That's a lot in a day, not to mention in an hour. But sometimes the words can become just repetition. We say the words without hearing them. I find reading a different translation makes me hear better. To quote Max Lucado, "The New Century Version is a trustworthy translation that makes reading the Bible engaging... You don't just read the NCV, you experience it." Let us listen and pray the Lord's Prayer (NCV):

"Our Father in heaven, may your name always be kept holy. May your kingdom come, and what you want, be done, here on earth as it is in heaven. Give us the food we need for each day. Forgive us for our sins, just as we have forgiven those who sinned against us. And do not cause us

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to be tempted, but save us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, now and from this age to the next age. Amen."

Always remember how comforting it is to know that we are constantly in God's presence, even when no human companionship is available.

"So, Deacon Frankie, what are you doing tomorrow?"

"I'll think I'll take a walk. What about you, Deacon Susi?"

"Yes, me too, me too."

- Deacons Susi and Frank

Stewardship

Stewardship is how we care for what has been given us. At Grace Lutheran Church, our stewardship emphasis is that we educate, inform, support and appreciate.

As individual stewards of appreciation, we may “pick up” on information presented, and find our own unique ways to express that appreciation. This month’s stewardship illuminates events tied to the extraordinary health and economic burdens we are currently sharing.

At the end of February and the beginning of March, our pastor, Jefferson Cox, out of concern for the health and safety of our congregation, had the wisdom to cancel (or postpone) worship services and other gatherings on the church property. His idea of social distancing was revealed at least a week before the state/country began talking about social isolation as a

means to contain the corona virus.

To keep us together, spiritually if not physically, Pastor Jeff initiated on-line worship services via You Tube, some recorded in the sanctuary and others live from the Fellowship hall and the Cox family home. His employment of electronics, graphics and titles (quite beyond the computer savvy of most of us), adds further interest to these media broadcasts. “Zoom” chats prior to the services keep us further connected.

Pastor Jeff encourages us to be in touch with each other through phone calls, e-mails, etc. Deacons, card ministers and members of the congregation, some through their own inspiration and some with Pastor’s encouragement, have responded with media messages, phone calls, cards and e-mails to others in our Grace family to inquire about their

well-being and generally to offer uplifting thoughts.

1st Corinthians 12: 4-7 tells us of the many means by which we can appreciate: “Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service to God, but it is the same Lord we are serving. There are many ways in which God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work in and through all of us who are His. The Holy Spirit displays God’s power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church.” (Living Bible).

Through all the changes brought about by COVID-19, an abundance of new stewardship possibilities emerges, as we appreciate and care for one another.

Your Stewardship Team

Daily Devotionals

The church has received our supply of ‘Christ in Our Home’ devotionals for April, May, June 2020 as well as ‘Our Daily Bread’ for June,

July, August 2020. If you would like to receive one of these, please contact Cindy in the church office and she will be glad to send it to you.

Card Ministry

Volunteers are needed for the Card Ministry Committee. This includes sending greeting cards for birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, etc. Stamps will be provided by

the office. If you are interested, let Phyllis Dumdie know. During this time of social distancing, the Card Ministry is especially important.

April Income

A. Total Offering and other income	\$13929.00
B. Total Dedicated	
Fund Giving	\$2440.00
C. Total Adaptive	
Service Offering	\$5075.00
D. Total Online	
Other Giving:	<u>\$1723.75</u>
Total	\$23,167.75
Diff. vs. Budgeted Expenses:	(-\$7,373.40)
Diff. vs. Budgeted Income:	(-\$137.65)

Faith Community Nursing

Many things have been canceled due to COVID-19, but chronic health conditions remain with us. Many in our communities have a history of heart disease or stroke, or are at risk for these health conditions.

Coronavirus: What heart and stroke patients need to know is a 10-minute YouTube video from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association that answers questions about the impact of COVID-19 and the increased risks among heart disease and stroke survivors.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Zeb2o8ySWk> ; Published on March 24, 2020)

Please include our Faith Community Nurse Karen Crabbe in prayers. She was deployed until the end of April for help with the Covid-19 crisis.

Masks Update

Yvonne Hauschild continues to make masks for general use. If you would like two, (to help make sure you have a

clean one at all times), please contact Cindy at the Church Office to coordinate delivery. Yvonne is also very thankful

for all of the donations of materials and funds that has kept her busy.

Phyllis Clark / George Clark Address Correction

Last month, Phyllis Clark died after a long battle with a series of ailments (not COVID-19). Obviously, the options for a service are very limited right now, but George indicated that when conditions allow, Pastor Pam Smith

will hold a service for Phyllis at her current church Grace Lutheran Church in Lakeland. In the meantime, if you would like to send George a card or other encouragement, here is the correct address (the address sent out last month was

missing the apartment number):

George Clark
11772 8th Way N. Apt 3
St. Petersburg FL 33716

Giving to Grace Online

We now support online giving through a company called VANCO. Through them you can give directly to Grace using your checking account (an electronic check, which has no fees attached) or with a debit card or credit card (we are charged fees for each of these transactions). If you do choose to use a credit/debit

card, please consider including the offset option, which adds a small amount to help cover the transaction fee. To make the online donation, go to our website at Grace-CLW.com and click on the "Give Here!" button in the upper right corner.

ALSO - Thrivent members, don't forget to designate your Choice Dollars!

ALSO ALSO - Perhaps consider donating part of your stimulus funds to Grace, if you receive them.

Regular Event Updates

Groups on Hiatus

Young @ Heart
Elizabeth Circle
Book Club
Grace Choir
Handbell Choir
Men of Grace
12 Steps Tranquil Mind
Movie Time
Confirmation
Adult Sunday School
Sones de Mexico
Ballet Folklorico
Suncoast Symphony Orchestra
Confirmation
Prayer Chapel
Piano Lab
Deutsche Kirche

Groups Still Meeting:

The next **Congregation Council** meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 12** at 6:30 pm. It may be a video conference call, or a standard conference call.

Gophers are still meeting as they can qualify as “outdoor recreation” as long as participants practice physical distancing of at least 6’ from each other at all time and stay outside.

Community Breakfast & Lydia’s Closet

There will not be a Community Breakfast or Lydia’s Closet for May. However, each month that shows reduced spread of COVID-19 increases the possibility of resuming the Breakfasts at least in the same way we did in March. But access to food and maintaining social distancing will be the biggest challenges.

Zoom Video Conference Meetings and Gatherings

Besides connecting as a video conference call on Zoom, you can now also join in our Zoom gatherings using your regular telephone. The number to call is 301-715-8592 for any of our meetings. However, each meeting then has its own code. To make it work, call 301-715-8592 and then it will ask you to enter

the Meeting ID. Depending on which meeting you’re trying to join, use its specific code:

9:45am Service Pre-Gathering Meeting (Now starting at 9:15am)

Code: 258-749-478## (Yes, hit the “pound” key # twice.)

11:15am Service Pre-Gathering Meeting (Now starting at 10:45am)

Code: 413-743-908## (Yes, hit the “pound” key # twice.)

Prayer Chapel (Starting at 11:00 am every Tuesday)

Code: 408-431-583## (Yes, hit the “pound” key # twice.)

Event Coordinator’s Recent Activities

- Booked our 60th Anniversary and Christmas luncheon location and finalized menu.
- Working with Pastor Earnest from City of Praise; with any issues that may and have arisen during this sensitive time. Continue to work with the two Cleaning Services and

- Shopping for much needed supplies.
- Filing forms with the County’s Free School Lunch Program for the Summer Camp and Community.
- Working with Grace Lutheran Church’s nine fulltime renters, scheduling, concerns

and any other matters that may arise.

- Staying in touch with new renters that have already made deposits, while waiting until the facility may be used.

May Birthdays

5/03 Jan Alberg
5/04 Duke Tieman
5/12 Michele Nichols
5/16 Ellen DuPaul
5/17 Bob Wheeler

5/18 Alan Wong
5/19 Daryl Cooperrider
5/22 Nate Hauschild
5/28 Lindsay Haushild
5/31 Joseph Cox

May Anniversaries

5/6 Lloyd & Jeri Sorenson
5/16 George & Rosemarie Smith
5/19 Alexander & Julie Stevenson
5/29 Pastor Jefferson & Jennifer Cox

Tuesday Prayer Chapel

Prayer Corner

The Prayer Group meets at 11am on Tuesdays as a Zoom meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/408431583> or
Call 301-715-8592 and then enter code 408-431-583## (Yes, hit the
“pound” key # twice.) There’s also a link on the homepage of our
website www.graceclw.com.
Submit prayer requests online at:
www.graceclw.com/prayer-request---congregation.html

Prayer List

Prayers are requested for: Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Bid-
dle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William,
Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis,
Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby
Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia and fami-
ly, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Da-
vis, Rose Corbett, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vici Kennedy, the family and friends of Phyllis
Clark, and those suffering from natural disasters, violence, and terror (especially those in harm’s way
while serving in the military and in the COVID-19 pandemic, including Karen Crabbe).

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

-Marine Lance Corporal Heather Burson, granddaughter of Anne and Ralph Burson, is stationed in San Diego. She is a mechanic in charge of maintaining aircraft.

-Marc Calhoun, nephew of Wayne and Yvonne Hauschild is in the Air Force. And has been deployed to one of the difficult locations. He is married with four children, and would appreciate your prayer.

-Aldo Granados, son of Pastor Lydia and member of Grace, is in the US Army Reserves locally. He works at Bayfront Health Hospital and attending college. No longer living at home.

-Maj. Christopher Conklin, a chaplain with the USAF, is Lorraine Rheinhart’s grand-son. He is back in the States.

-Gabrielle Falco, Pat and Tony’s granddaughter, was com-

missioned as a lieutenant. in the U.S. Army and accepted at the exceptional Walter Reed Hospital as a medical student.

-USCG Seaman Brennan Wells, Houston TX, nephew of Sunday Falco.

-USCG Seaman Samuel Steward, Grand Isle, LA, nephew of Sunday Falco

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Rev. Jefferson Cox, Pastor

From Luther's Small Catechism:

THE MORNING BLESSING

In the morning, as soon as you get out of bed, you are to make the sign of the holy cross and say:

“God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit watch over me. Amen.”

Then, kneeling or standing, say the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you wish, you may in addition recite this little prayer as well: “I give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected me through the night from all harm and danger. I ask that you would also protect me today from sin and all evil, so that my life and actions may please you. Into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angel be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.”