

Grace to You

April 2012
Volume 2012, Issue 3

In this issue

Rector's message.....	1
Education and Worship.....	2-4
Pastoral Care/Prayer List.....	5
Outreach	6-7
Calendar, Birthdays & Anniversaries	8-9
Henry's Thanks/Fellowship.....	10
Message from Diocese.....	11

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And raising the dead?

This is what Christians do every Sunday, after all, when we stand around in our . . . churches, eating little wafers or pieces of bread, saying aloud that Christ is risen.

It's what we do whenever we continue in simple, literal acts: breaking bread, praying without hope of perfect outcomes, admitting our weaknesses, and loving people who don't deserve it.

It's what we do when we remember that death is not the end.

from Jesus Freak, by Sara Miles

There's something truly wonderful, yet also risky about allowing resurrection to become the norm. Resurrection is the reason we gather every Sunday. It's the reason we are who we are as a Christian people, the foundation of our faith, the guiding principle behind all of our rituals and beliefs. As Sara Miles, says, "raising the dead is what Christians do every Sunday" in our simple, familiar, literal acts. And so on one hand, one of the central goal's of our faith is actually to have resurrection become normal for us; it is the identity into which we have been invited and our living, our dying, our serving, our everything potentially becomes shaped by its promise.

But the risk of this familiarity is that we become matter of fact, even blasé about new life. The language can become *too* familiar and before we know it it's "just another Easter" rather than a proclamation from deep in our souls that cries out with "Alleluia!" for all the world to hear.

And so the challenge is to let resurrection become standard practice without losing our own recognition that we need it, rather desperately in fact, and so does the world. All around us, people hunger for signs of new life as non-resurrection types of realities dominate our ways of interacting and shaping our world. One honest internal and/or external glimpse around will confirm that our "Alleluia" is far from the norm. While there have been over two thousand Easter seasons to date, its promises are as needed as ever.

So, the truth is that while familiar to us in so many ways, Easter ways of being are far from the norm of how we function on an actual day to day basis. The good news is that we get to keep trying and God will keep giving us what we need in order to continue to allow resurrection to take hold.

May the rituals of Holy Week and all of Easter shape us into the kind of people for whom "Alleluia!" is encountered at every turn, but always held as gift, a miraculous fulfillment of the promises of God.

Peace,

Jen

Forums Sundays at 9:15am



April 1st Stay Awake and Pray
Prior to his arrest and crucifixion, Jesus asks the disciples to be present and pray with him. Using a technique called “Praying in Color” we will identify the prayers we carry as we enter into Holy Week and Easter.

April 8th Easter Sunday – No Sunday Forum

April 15th It’s So Easy Being Green
Grace parishioner, and local environmental advocate, Cheri Smith will be speaking on the recent work she’s done to get her house “off the grid”. Cheri was featured recently in a Sentinel article on the topic of smart energy use and will share some of the steps she took (and we can too!) to make home a green space.

April 22st TBA

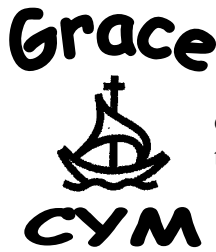
April 29th & May 6th A Class on Ancient Israel led by The Rev. Dr. Kathryn Roberts
Kathryn Roberts is the Theologian-in-Residence at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Grand Haven. She received her Ph.D. in Old Testament from Princeton Theological Seminary. A graduate of Hope College and Colgate Rochester Divinity School, she is ordained in the Reformed Church in America. Her research and writing interests include the worship and religion of ancient Israel; myth, politics, and theology. She has recently retired to the Lakeshore.

Taking Grace Green invites you to come

Picnic, Worship and Explore! at the Outdoor Discovery Center



On Wednesday, June 27th
5:30 Arrival and Picnicking (BYO supper and drinks)
6:30 Outdoor Eucharist (Bread and Wine Provided)
7:00 Hike and Explore (Trails Ready)
Visit outdoordiscovery.org for more information and details!



ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRIES:

It is hard to believe that Easter is right around the corner! We have had an amazing year so far and are looking forward to many upcoming activities for CYM. Loads of activities and events are lined up for Children and Youth this spring, with opportunities ranging from meeting new friends from local churches and serving those in need, to sharing a new perspective on Worship, to even attending General Convention.

At the end of this month, the Grace Youth Groups will be joining the Hope Church and First Presbyterian Youth Groups on Sunday, **April 29th** for lunch, fellowship, and to participate in CROP Walk. This is a great chance to get to know fellow youth from other local churches. Andrew from First Presbyterian, Ann from Hope church and I are very excited about bringing our groups together, and hope this will lead to more cooperative events in the future.

In May, we will once again be sharing the **Dutch Marketplaats Food Court** at the Civic Center with the First United Methodist Women as our one major fundraiser for Pilgrimage, Mission, and other Youth events. Please consider volunteering for this very important event for youth. Our Parish family has helped to raise over \$6,000 annually to keep costs down for our youth to participate in formation and service activities. Contact the church office or sign up in the Commons. It is a lot of fun, so bring a friend!

The Grace Youth will be hosting a **U2charist on May 18th 7-8pm** in the Sanctuary. A U2charist is exactly what it sounds like. Developed in 2003 by Sarah Breuer in the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, U2charist utilizes the music of U2 to build a service of Holy Eucharist which aims to increase awareness of the Millennium Development goals and to support work being done toward eradicating hunger and poverty. Therefore, the collection from the U2charist will go to benefit the Episcopal Relief Fund. The youth had a chance to practice with this type of worship and found it to be very interesting, meaningful, fun, and spiritually enriching experience. They are very excited to share this experience with the larger community.

Education Hour continues to move along with a variety of lesson topics and types. The Crossways Class (High School and Beyond) has moved into their final unit for the year. This class has provided a great opportunity to experience the "Big Story" in depth through a shared learning experience. The Middle School class is finishing their unit on "The Gospel According to Seuss". The group has enjoyed exploring the deeper meaning behind many Seuss stories and how we see images of Christian teachings in the books. From here, they will finish out the year with lessons focused on building community. The Elementary class has been learning the stories of Lent and will move into stories of resurrection and discipleship as they move toward the summer break. It has been a great year for all classes.

Grace Youth have been offered an opportunity to travel with other EDWM youth to the **General Convention in Indianapolis this coming July**. In addition it is time for families to sign up for Episcopal Youth Camp. Information was mailed out earlier this winter, so please call Debbie at the church office for more information!

Finally, mark your calendars.... **Vacation Bible School (VBS) is planned for July 23-26** for kids aged 4-5th Grade. With the great leadership of Robbie Schorle and Kim Shea again this year, it should be an amazing week! Thank you to the families who have committed to programming at Grace. Your children and youth are a blessing to our congregation. IT is never to late to join. There are great things happening.... **COME AND SEE!!!!**

Thanks!

Submitted by Debbie Coyle, Director of Children's and Youth Ministry

Education & Formation

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES:

Alternate Mondays, 5:30 to 6:45 pm (a men's discussion group) — The men's study group "Beer and Bibles" is looking at the book of Mark. The group meets every other Monday, 5:30 to 6:45, for conversation, reflection, and fellowship. If you have been considering looking in on this event, now might be a good time to start. B-Y-O-Both. Upcoming dates are **April 9th, April 23rd, and May 7th.**

ST. MARY'S GUILD SPEAKER

In 2009, when Holland's Sustainability Committee held a series of meetings about Holland's environmental future, first in citizen's hopes was a cleaned-up Lake Macatawa, swimmable and once again filled with healthy fish. How do we get there?

Scientists have one important part of the answer. But living in ways that support Mac's health also requires a spiritual vision of our deepest connections to the waters of our home.

Sara Leeland will lead us through a process of envisioning our relationship to Lake Macatawa in a way that can energize work to bring Mac back to health.

Leeland holds a PhD in philosophy from Fordham University and led the cross-disciplinary environmental studies program at Maryland's state honors campus, located on the waters of the St. Mary's River. She has spoken and written about water issues and is now at work on a book with the title of this talk.

Come join the St. Mary's Guild in this open meeting to be held on **Monday, April 9, 2012** at 7:15pm in the Forum Room.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER FOR YOUTH CAMP!

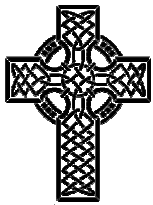
Don't miss out on this great opportunity to participate in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan's Youth Camp this summer. Senior Camp (grades 9-12) will run June 12-23; Middle School Camp (grades 6-8) will run August 5-11, 2012; Junior Camp (grades 3-5) will run August 12-18. Cost is \$375 for camp, with an "early bird special" price of \$325 if you register by April 9th. Also Grace has some scholarships available. Visit the EDWM website to register <http://edwm.org/EYC/2012> or contact Debbie at the Church office for details.

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP AT GRACE:

If you are living with Parkinson's disease (or know someone who is) consider the newly founded Grace Parkinson's Support Group as a place to find companionship, encouragement and support on the journey. The group's next meetings will be held on **Wednesday, April 18th** and **Wednesday, May 16th** both at 7pm in the Commons.

Contact the Church Office, Rev. Jen Adams or Tom or Tammy Kelly if you are interested in joining.

Pastor Remenschneider will have regular hours for those seeking pastoral visits with him in his Grace Church office. Hours are Thursdays, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 2:00. You may schedule visits by calling the church office, 396-7459 (Gail will have his calendar available) or by emailing Pastor Dennis directly at cdremen@att.net



Prayer List as of March 25, 2012

PRAYER REQUESTED FOR: Jeff & Lauren, David Klooster & family, Chris St. John, Gerald, Devin, Bill & Jack, Rob Elhart, the Binder family, the Sult family, Robert McConkey, Colin DeVries, Bethany, Bette Comport, Carolyn Lowry, Judy, Chris, Adel Habashy, Zach & family, John & Donna Molendyk, Danielle Woldring & family, Carol Homan & family, Karin, the Heeren family, the Danzler family, Debbie (sister of Mary Matrosic), Bill Ford, Celaine, Tom, for the people of Northern Africa, the Middle East and other places of war and unrest; for the unemployed or under-employed, for the women and men of the Armed Forces, especially Pierre Warner, Chuck, and other loved ones of our parish family, for all victims of disasters worldwide, natural and manmade; for those in our time who face persecution for their faith and for their persecutors; and continue to pray for Dan Heiberg, Megan Kiser & family, Eric Heiberg, Ray Ybarra, Jim & Jane, Sarah, Chris, Carly, Caroline Bates, Tom, Caroline, John, Andrew, Bob Hampson, Ralph Suchor, Ken Swart, Irene Bartlett, Steve, Jenny, Gail Malkiewicz, the Young-Tait family, Dale Labbe Sr., Mark & Christen Broersma and family, Ray Viele, Allie Verburg & family, Ben Broersma, Michael Borst, Arpod Jazko, the Drew family, Dolores & Earl Barkel, Jodi, Sandy, Donna, Amy, Diane, Adam, Bernice Viher (grandmother of Alex Foster), Shannon, Gail Davison, Stafford, Katherine McNamar, Tom Boyd, Nancy Lathem, Aaron Schillaci, Alex, Tim and Jordyn and family, Bruce Browning (brother of Jean Adams), George Julius, Gilmore Lawrence, Dave Masselink, Barb & Gordon, Aaron Miller, Betty Sova, Gloria Stegenga, Betty & Jerry, Mary Rieckmann, John Keegin, Jackie Van Duren, Lisa Leland, Ben Roper, Jim Roper, and William Morgan (Stepfather of Char Berry).

Outreach

Mentors Needed

As most of you know, we participate in a ministry of a housing partnership with community agencies. In addition to supplying two houses and their care, we provide a mentoring team for each family. Two of the Grace volunteers befriend one family for their approximate 18-month stay.



Would you like to be a mentor? Please contact Diane Morgan at 269-857-3496 or at dr.dmorgan@yahoo.com for more information, or join us the third Monday of the month at 1:00 pm to learn more.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Every weekday and on Sundays too, the Community Kitchen serves lunch to about 200 hungry people out of the commons area at Western Seminary.

Grace Church is committed to providing **three or four helpers each Wednesday**. **Volunteers** are needed to help serve and clean up from **11:15am to 1:30pm** every Wednesday. Please sign up in the Commons and let us know if you are available to be “on-call”.

FEEDING AMERICA

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Feeding America dates: **April 12th, May 10th, and June 14th**. We need folks to arrive between 4:30 and 5:00 to help with set-up and to welcome our guests. Also, remember the ongoing need for *laundry detergent (see special request) and toilet paper!* You can bring these items at any time and deposit them in the labeled drawers in the Commons. With a little corporate help we have managed to regularly distribute these items to each family. Good job Grace!



Special request: We appreciate the many laundry detergent donations we receive, but if possible, please keep the bottles under 70oz. for ease in distribution.

Submitted by Sue Cloutier

MISSION TRIPS 2012

Consider taking part in one of the Diocesan Mission trips this year. In taking part you will gain as much as you give!

We will be returning to Pine Ridge, SD, - the Oglala Sioux Lakota Nation Indian Reservation. Rev. David Brower and Gerry Cawthra, will be the leaders for this mission trip. A few Grace parishioners have shown an interest, and we would like to have others join us. The dates are August 11 to August 17 – leaving the 10th and returning home the 18th. It can get very hot at this time of year, but others have done it and so can we!

The other trips will be to the Appalachian Mountain area of Kentucky in the fall, and probably to New Orleans and/or the Gulf Coast area. As soon as I know the dates for these trips, I will publish them.

It is not necessary to have any certain skills – jobs can be found for everyone. Please think about it.

The full list of 2012 missions are listed below. Contact Terry Dorcy to register or with questions about a mission at tjdorcy@aol.com or 269-349-3625

Joplin, Missouri	April 25 to May 5
Pine Ridge Indian Reservation	August 11 to 17
Irvine, Kentucky	
Reading Camp	June 22 to 30
Rebuild	Sept 15 to 22 and 23 to 29
New Orleans	November 10 to 17

Submitted by Gerry Cawthra

FRIENDS AND FAMILY SERVING IN THE MILITARY

The youth of our Diocese are collecting **names and addresses for anyone** related to members of our diocese (aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews... you get the idea) who are **servicing in the military**. This is part of a project started at last year's Youth Camp. Please get them to Debbie at the church office and she will forward them on.

View up-to-date
events on our
Google calendar.

- 1 Cherie De Cook
Emily Kelley
Gillian Klug
Tim Methric
- 3 Lori Interbitzen
Guy Packard
- 4 Joan Austin
Judy Linn
- 5 Paul Hansen
- 6 Vincent Barlow
Margaret Hawley-Lowry
Ken Swart
- 7 Sandy Wright
- 8 Jenny Shea
Robert Stauffer
- 9 Ron Interbitzen
Michelle Essenburg
Cherie Schmidt
- 10 Andrea Paterson
- 11 Dianne Hoyt
- 12 Julie De Cook
Kevin Wennersten
- 13 Donna Borgman
- 14 Bette Comport
Lynne Frey
Pam Steele
- 15 Bruce Fries

- 16 Bill Mendenhall
- 17 Jacob Guyer
George Moeke
- 18 Graeme Richmond
Jim Van Ark
- 19 Molly Coyle
Melinda Heiberg
Lynne Watling
- 20 Ava Balisi
Ashley Klamt
Martha Rocker
- 21 Harley Brown
Hanan Lomax
- 22 Jonathon Fries
Ralph Schroeder
- 23 Krista Packard
- 24 Aaron De Cook
Dr. Drew
- 28 Nancy Chamness
Judy Voss
- 29 Samuel Smalldon
Pamela Veenhoven
- 30 Hugh Ervine



*Birthdays
& Anniversaries
in April*

- 5 Gladys & Jim Woodward
- 7 Ione & Paul Trap
- 17 Lorie Shier & Cel Meerman
- 25 Sarah & Ken Swart
- 27 Barb & Scott Anderson

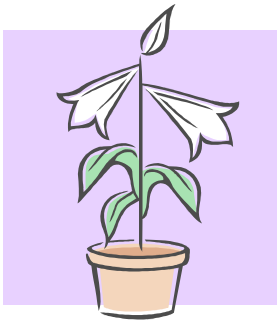
Fellowship

THANKS FOR THE GREAT SENDOFF

I want to thank Jen, the staff, and the entire church for the wonderful Sunday morning, beginning with the early birds at 8:15 and ending with wonderful gifts, pizza, and cake after the second service. The music, thank yous, and the love and support were heartwarming. I had a dream last night (or nightmare!) that God said to me you will return to the ministry in 2013. I hope that was God's sense of humor, but you never know.....

Submitted by Henry Idema

FELLOWSHIP



Everyone is invited to the celebratory dessert feast that will follow the Easter Vigil in the undercroft. There is a little something for everyone: from cakes, pies, & cookies to fruit, wine, & cheese.

Fellowship Commission is in need of help with set-up, food prep & clean-up on **Saturday, April 7** and on Easter Sunday, a coffee hour host. There is a Volunteer sign-up sheet posted in the Commons. Please consider this opportunity; remember the old saying... "Many hands make light work." Thank you & enjoy!

Our next meeting is **Monday April 2, 7:00** pm in the undercroft.

From Sue Cloutier, Fellowship Commission

SEARCH AND TRANSITION TEAM FOR THE ELECTION OF OUR NEXT BISHOP

From: President of the Standing Committee of the Diocese

The Standing Committee of the Diocese is seeking nominees for the **Search & Transition Teams for the election of the 9th bishop of our diocese** to be held in May, 2013. Requirements include prayerful attendance & participation at all meetings, beginning from the May 10-11 retreat through next Spring; maintain confidentiality; have a collegial, respectful attitude with open communication, supportive of consensus building and able to listen for the Spirit putting aside personal agendas; and exercise conscientious decision making with overall accountability to the Holy Spirit and the people of our diocese.

Candidates should be communicants in good standing, comfortable working in a team context and available to offer the time required to complete tasks in a timely fashion. Look for nomination form on www.edwm.org and email/mail to Canon Robert Schiesler at Roberts@stmarksgr.org/ 134 N Division Ave., Grand Rapids, 49503. Nominations are due by April 10.

GRACE CHURCH VESTRY & OFFICERS

Bruce Fries–393-0153–Fellowship
Tom Kelly–915-6188–Pastoral Care
David Masselink–546-2662–Buildings and Grounds
Ann Mayers–269-857-3495–Outreach
Carol Myers–396-1002–Worship
Robbie Schorle–269-543-4400–Outreach
David Stubbs–546-8845–Christian Education & Formation
Paul Trap–396-6492 –Evangelism & Communication
Diane Wiersma–403-0051–Church Family
Doug Zylstra–773-551-8166–Stewardship

Chuck Murray–335-3690–Senior Warden
Mary Remenschneider–403-0442–Junior Warden
Jay Bylsma–399-5721–Treasurer
Colleen Macy–994-0016–Clerk
Jerry Roper, Treasurer Emeritus

STAFF

Robert R. Gepert, Bishop
Jennifer Adams, Rector
Dennis Remenschneider, Pastoral Support
Steve Jenkins, Director of Music
Jennifer Wolfe, Children's Choir Director
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Our Mission Statement:

Grace is a dynamic community of faith grounded in Episcopal tradition, welcoming all, and serving Christ through worship, spiritual growth, and compassionate care for one another, the community and God's world.

