

amazing

IN YOUR LIFE | IN OUR COMMUNITY | IN THE WORLD

# Grace

A monthly publication for members and friends of Grace Presbyterian Church in Walnut Creek, California October 2019

## MY FAITH JOURNEY by Sharon Lyons



In the beginning... didn't everyone believe in God; I was sure they did being brought up in Berkeley during the last days of the recession and throughout World War II. We celebrated Christ's birth with Christmas trees everywhere, including school – that's where I learned not only carols, but hymns we still use in church today. And didn't they call it Christmas vacation and Easter Vacation? Organizations to which I belonged were involved with belief in God, including Girl Scouts, the Order of Rainbow for girls, Young Life, even my college sorority (my father was an active Mason; my mother belonged to Eastern Star.) I remember one telling incident – at a high school assembly, Handel's Hallelujah Chorus was played by a visiting orchestra and 2/3 of the student body stood up. I had no idea what was happening.

As for church, starting with the First Church of Christ Science, I started attending my father's church, but soon challenged him on "why there were doctors?" (I was 10). I ended up attending North Brae Community Church – famous for the 6 a.m. Easter Sunday Service at the local theater – always packed.

So, I was a Christian, right? As I look back I was really a one dimensional Christian. It did not seem enough, and while in college – I started attending the First Presbyterian Church in Berkeley and eventually was baptized and joined that congregation.

Highlight of that relationship was working with the Billy Graham Crusade in 1954. After becoming engaged, I was required to take lessons from the Catholic Church so I could be married! Wow! It was quite an education and certainly brought up the need for more information.

Our move to Walnut Creek in 1958 brought me into contact with Rev. Robert Williams, who invited me to become a member of a newly formed congregation called Grace. At that point, the real learning began. In looking back (now, 60 years) I came into contact with an energetic group of Christians who really lived their faith and had a joyous time doing it – one member was studying to be a clown! I was "adopted" at monthly parish potlucks (my husband worked nights) and invited to many learning situations. I was discovering that being a Christmas Card Christian was not enough. Teaching school and raising two boys, building projects and just life, often took precedence, but Grace was always there and giving me growing knowledge of God.

And then came Roger Reaber! There were regular classes and open discussions of what the Bible can mean to us. All ideas were welcome and there was a sense of awaking to the greater gifts that we had through grace. The gift God had given us to really know His Son and for Him to know us became increasingly important and apparent in our relationships with others. (My husband joined the Grace congregation in 2002; what a blessing.) There was a greater knowledge of what God was doing for us in His world and what Christ was preparing us for in eternity. I discovered C.S. Lewis, with answers and considerations that really opened the door to wider



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### SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:00 AM Sanctuary  
11:00 AM Fellowship Time  
Office Hrs. Tues - Fri 9-3

[gracepreschurchwc@gmail.com](mailto:gracepreschurchwc@gmail.com)  
[gracewc.org](http://gracewc.org)

### PASTORS AND STAFF:

Assoc. Pastor/Music Director  
Karen Hastings-Flegel  
Pastors Emeriti  
Charie Reid and Robert Williams

Parish Associate: Diana Barkley  
Office Manager: Judy Williams  
Treasurer: Linda Neyer  
Asst. Treasurer: Geri Rentz  
Financial Scty: Jennifer Wallace  
Headshot Photos: Carol King

**All Articles must be submitted  
by October 20  
to be included in the next issue.**



*A Few Words About Guest Preachers*

Grace Church is experiencing a period of refreshment when we are inviting a variety of speakers to our pulpit.

Special thanks to Geri Rentz who is booking our guests. She has recommendations from Presbytery for other outstanding speakers. This is a unique opportunity to learn more about what’s happening beyond our walls.

Let’s take advantage of both familiar and fresh voices to increase our understanding of God’s word, to broaden our perspective about worship, and to enjoy a bit of a surprise every Sunday!

**October 2019 Sunday Guest Preachers  
10:00 AM in the Sanctuary**

**Oct. 6** Joint worship service along with ATC for World Communion Sunday. The **Rev. Dr. Jefferson Lin** (leads the Relevant Theology group who meet here weekly) will preach. Combined Choirs will sing. Chinese lunch will follow in the Oak Rm, courtesy of ATC.



**Oct. 13** Retired Grace Pastor, the **Rev. Charie Reid** will preach.



**Oct. 20** Former Grace Intern, the **Rev. Denia Segrest** will preach.



**Oct. 27** **Calvin Sodestrom** will preach on Luke 18:19-14, *The Pharisee and Tax Collector*. He is the former head of Youth and Family Ministry at First Pres. Berkeley. **Stewardship kickoff begins with play, *Edythe’s Gifts*.**



*Continued from front:*

understanding of God’s purpose for us in this world as we prepare for the next. The difference between finite and infinite is apparent, we’re in it for the long run. God loves us and there is nothing we can do about it – and Christ’s greatest commandment is to love one another. I loved what Christ told Thomas, “...even more blessed who have not seen and believe.” My belief is in the trinity of God; the Holy Spirit is with us always. I’ve come a long way, baby! The journey continues.

**Harvest Thank you Luncheon  
Sunday, October 20, 11 a.m, Oak Rm.**

It’s time again for giving thanks to you, our members and friends, for the many ways you give in time, talents and treasure.



You make the world go ‘round at Grace!

For 2019 our traditional “dinner” will be a luncheon. This is a way to bring Grace members and friends together for a “family” time of celebrating the many ways Grace finds to make things better in God’s world.

If you wish to make a donation to the Food Boxes, a container will be available. The menu will feature Lasagna and salad with dessert to be announced!

**There is no charge for the luncheon, but you must sign up and get a ticket. Tickets will be available on upcoming Sundays before and after church. Please plan on being there to enjoy good company, food and memories of a successful year of service.**

*Discipleship and Witness and Ministry*

**PNC News**

*By Geri Rentz, Moderator PNC*



The Pastor Nominating Committee has met and been in regular communication in August and September reviewing the Personal Information Forms (PIF) of ministers seeking a Call.

**PASTOR**  
Nominating Committee

**As of September 17, 2019, the Church Leadership Connection has advised us we have 162 hits to our request for a Pastor at Grace Presbyterian Church.** The PNC is reviewing the first 53 PIFs. The process involves much research, reviewing of data and prayer to arrive at a point of determining possible candidates for our Pastor. Each PNC member reads all of the PIFs. There are a number of ministers who are qualified which makes our work more difficult.

Please keep the PNC members in your prayers.

**Congregational Meeting scheduled for Sunday, October 27 at 11:00 a.m.** to elect a slate of new church officers for 2020 and to discuss the church budget.

***Mission Study in Action....  
How are we doing?***

by Reta Wilcox

**The Transition Team wants you to know:**

- There has been a warm response to our guest preachers and strong participation in after worship sermon discussions.
- Sunday Celebrations have generated much good feeling. We look forward to World Communion Sunday and Chinese lunch with ATC, on October 6 and our Harvest Lunch/ Thank You on October 20.
- The Session devoted its creative time at the September 28 meeting to discussing outreach – past, present and future.
- We are studying the proposed 2020 budget and are planning a strong Stewardship message. It is vital that we maintain financial stability.
- Our current officers have contributed extraordinary effort this year. Our Nominating Committee is now searching for committed deacons and elders for terms beginning in January.

**We are grateful for your support and prayers and look forward to seeing you at the Congregational meeting October 27.**

***Peace Pole Dedication***



Church goers gathered at the new Peace Pole in front of the church for a dedication ceremony on Sunday, September 22. The ceremony was capped off with a rendition of “Let There be Peace on Earth” sung by all. Grace’s Peace Pole says, *May Peace Prevail On Earth* in English, Mandarin, Korean, Hebrew, English Braille, Swahili, Gaelic, Spanish and Arabic. (Photos by Carol King)

***Edythe’s Gifts Play to be Performed on October 27 during Worship***

**On October 27 during worship, the Discipleship Department will kick-off the 2020 church stewardship campaign with a Readers’ Theatre play, “Edythe’s Gifts.”**



This play, written by Margaret D. McGee and edited by Grace member Liz Bradner, features a hypothetical new member of Grace Church, Edythe. As she moves deeper into parish life and grows into her own God-given generosity, with the help of her conscience, she tries to figure out how much to pledge to the church’s annual campaign. **In a pleasant, thought-provoking way, the play addresses why the church needs pledged giving, why people make pledges, and what they should consider in setting their pledge.** It will star some of our own favorite parish actors.

***Men’s Club Meeting  
Fri., October 11th, 10 am***



The October meeting of our group will feature a review of the highlights of Presbyterian history.

In September, attendees were issued a copy of a recent **JOURNAL OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY** to read and digest. For the October meeting, bring one article that grabs your interest or makes you glad to be part of the Presbyterian witness and mission. Think about how do the actions of modern day disciples agree with the teachings of Jesus, head of the Church? Plan to share your point of view and discuss with the group.

Optional lunch follows in nearby dining room. Questions or suggestions may be directed to Bob Williams, 925-935-7377.

### Key to Rooms

C—Conference Room  
 F—Fireside Room  
 L—Library  
 O—Oak Room  
 S—Sanctuary  
 9—Room 9

Wednesday Bible Study will learn about the Book of Daniel during the month of October.

### Tuesday, Oct. 1

7:30 SUBUD Group—F

### Wednesday, Oct. 2

10AM Bible Study—L  
 11:15 Grief Support Grp—O  
 1:30 Parkinson's Voice Class—F

### Thursday, Oct. 3

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 3PM Discipleship—C  
 6PM Bell Rehearsal—S  
 6:45 Choir Rehearsal—S  
 7:45 AA—F

### Friday, Oct. 4

4PM Chess School F, L

### Saturday, Oct. 5

7—1 carpet cleaning  
 11AM Standing Ovations—O  
 1 PM "Wise" play read-through—L

### Sunday, Oct. 6

9:00 Choir + ATC warmup—S  
 10AM Worship—S  
 11AM World Communion  
 Lunch with ATC—O  
 7:30 AA—F

### Monday, Oct. 7

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 10AM Quilters—L  
 7PM Scouts—S, F

### Tuesday, Oct. 8

10AM Esther Circle—F  
 7:30 SUBUD Group—F

### Wednesday, Oct. 9

10AM Bible Study—L  
 11:15 Grief Support Grp—O  
 12PM Business—C  
 1:30 Parkinson's Voice Class—F

### Thursday, Oct. 10

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 1PM Worship & Ed. —C  
 6PM Bell Rehearsal—S  
 7PM Choir Rehearsal—S  
 7:45 AA—F

### Friday, Oct. 11

9:30 Susanna Circle—F  
 10AM Men's Club—L  
 4PM Chess School F, L

### Saturday, Oct. 12

11AM Standing Ovations—O  
 5PM James Greening—F

### Sunday, Oct. 13

9AM Bell Choir warmup—S  
 10AM Worship—S  
 11:00AM Fellowship—F  
 11:30 Sermon Discussion—L  
 7:30 AA—F

### Monday, Oct. 14

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 10AM Needlers—L  
 7PM Scouts—S, F

### Tuesday, Oct. 15

7:30 SUBUD Group—F  
 11AM Deacons' —L

### Wednesday, Oct. 16

10AM Bible Study—L  
 11:15 Grief Support Grp—O  
 1:30 Parkinson's Voice Class—F  
 4PM Session Exec.—C

### Thursday, Oct. 17

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 6PM Bell Rehearsal—S  
 7PM Choir Rehearsal—S  
 7:45 AA—F

### Friday, Oct. 18

4PM Chess School F, L

### Saturday, Oct. 19

9-10AM Parkinson's Breakout—S, F, L  
 10AM Parkinson's Meeting—O  
 11-2 Standing Ovations  
 5PM James Greening—F

### Sunday, Oct. 20

9AM Choir warmup—S  
 10AM Worship—S  
 11AM Harvest Lunch—O  
 7:30 AA—F

### Monday, Oct. 21

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 10AM Quilters—L  
 7PM Scouts—S, F, I

### Tuesday, Oct. 22

7:30 SUBUD Group—F

### Wednesday, Oct. 23

10AM Bible Study—L  
 11:15 Grief Support Grp—O  
 1:30 Parkinson's Voice Class—F  
 7PM Session Meeting—L

### Thursday, Oct. 24

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 9:15 GITW Folding—F  
 6PM Bell Rehearsal—S  
 7PM Choir Rehearsal—S  
 7:45 AA—F

### Friday, Oct. 25

4PM Chess School—F, L

### Saturday, Oct. 26

11-2 Standing Ovations  
 5-9 James Greening—F

### Sunday, Oct. 27

9AM Choir warmup—S  
 10AM Worship—S  
 11AM Congregational Meeting—S  
 11:10 Fellowship—F  
 11:30 Sermon Discussion—L  
 7:30 AA—F

### Monday, Oct. 28

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 10AM Needlers—L  
 6:30 Scout Parents—L  
 7PM Scouts—S, F

### Tuesday, Oct. 29

7:30 SUBUD Group—F

### Wednesday, Oct. 30

10AM Bible Study—L  
 11:15 Grief Support Grp—O  
 1:30 Parkinson's Voice Class—F

### Thursday, Oct. 31

9:30 Parkinson's Exercise—O  
 No Choirs tonight  
 7:45 AA—F

### Classical Music Lovers...

Performing Arts Society (PAS) holds many free concerts at Grace Church and other locations.

For more information and for this season's schedule of concerts and events, please visit PAS on the web at [ccpas.org](http://ccpas.org).

*As we enter stewardship season, consider that there are many ways to contribute our time, talent and resources to Grace*

**Gifts of Stock**

Giving a gift of stock can have benefits to the giver and to the church. Since the height of the recession in 2007, stocks have almost doubled in value. If you're fortunate enough to own stock that has gone up in value since you purchased it, giving some or all of the stock to the church can provide you with a double tax benefit.

First, you may be able to claim a charitable contribution deduction in the amount of the current market value of the donated stock. That is, you can deduct not only the original cost you paid for the donated shares but also the value of any increase in the value of those shares. Second, you will not pay taxes on the appreciated value of the donated stock. The greater the amount of appreciation, the more the capital gains tax you would have if the stock is sold. But this tax can be avoided if you donate the stock to the church. And remember, the church pays no capital gains tax when it sells the stock, so the entire amount of the gift furthers the church's mission.



*Linda Neyer,  
Treasurer*

**In order to contribute stock to Grace, there are three easy steps:**

1. Contact your broker to arrange the transfer. Be sure to indicate that you want to transfer shares, and not to sell and give cash. Shares should be transferred to the church's Charles Schwab account. Call or email the church office or Treasurer for account details.
2. Call or email the Treasurer to notify her that the stock has been transferred and who the stock is coming from.
3. Please consult with your tax professional regarding your particular situation and potential limitations.

**Gifts from IRAs**

**Giving a gift directly from an IRA after age 70 ½ can have benefits to the giver and to the church.**

A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian, payable to the church. Making a QCD as opposed to a normal charitable gift has two main advantages. First, a QCD counts toward satisfying your required minimum distribution for that year, as long as certain rules are met. Second, a QCD excludes the amount donated from taxable income, which is unlike regular withdrawals from an IRA.

In order to make a QCD to Grace, contact the custodian of your IRA for their QCD instructions and form. Please consult with your tax professional regarding your particular situation and potential

***Chromatica Choral Group to Return to Grace Church***

Chromatica, the Danville chorus that performed at Grace last spring will focus on the choral music of Northern European composers. **They will perform at Grace on November 2 at 7 pm.**

The Northern Lights concerts include music from composers like Edvard Grieg to Jaakko Mantyjärvi. His Four Shakespearean songs are drawn from Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Macbeth and The Tempest. Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo has several pieces in the concerts including Dark Night of the Soul, Luminous Night of the Soul and The Rose.

Chromatica was founded in 2011 and now includes 32 men and women singers. Led by David P. Huff, an outstanding director and operatic tenor who has sung both in New York and San Francisco. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for students, and children 10 and under are admitted free. For concert tickets and to find out more about Chromatica, visit our website at [www.chromaticachorale.org](http://www.chromaticachorale.org). Tickets for all concerts are also available at the door.



**Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition October Update**

Christ promised us good news; here is CCIC’s good news – The 5 teenage brothers got their dressers last month! All we had to do was ask. That’s not all – a family with 7 children got housing and the 7 beds they needed and 16 kids from all over our county received beds they needed. Your donations of household goods make a big difference because each of these beds gets a mattress pad and two sets of sheets and blankets – that’s tall order, but CCIC meets it. Some of these items have to be purchased at garage sales or commercially; money is always needed to support this ministry. Many churches, including Grace, financially support CCIC, but individuals are always welcome to donate and as a donation it is tax friendly! If you are interested in doing so, please contact me. We work with 29 agencies throughout the county whose workers are always in close contact with us in seeking aid for their clients. CCIC is good news for many.

—Sharon Lyons, CCIC representative



**Food Bank News**

Pumpkins and gourds are starting to pop up everywhere. The sun is beginning to cast a softer glow, the days are getting shorter and it is beginning to feel like fall. Nature has its own sacred liturgy. As we transition to this new season think about gifting the food barrel with some foods that are popular this time of year such as hearty cans of soup, cans of pumpkin, yams, sweet potatoes or a box of oatmeal. The usual staples listed here are always welcome as well such as pasta, spaghetti sauce, egg noodles, tuna/meat, saltines, graham crackers, peanut butter, jelly, macaroni/cheese cans of pork/beans, ramen soup, dried milk and canned fruit. Whatever you can donate will be appreciated.



Thanks for your support.  
Pat Devine, Deacon

**Leaving a Legacy**

by Reta Wilcox

The word legacy has two definitions: Money or an article left to someone in a will, or something handed down by a predecessor, such as a legacy of goodwill, or a legacy of community involvement.



Grace Church has received both kinds of legacies from our late, great, friend, organist, pianist, and treasurer Richard Carll:

A very generous gift of \$160,000 from his estate,  
and

An ethical example of trust, dependability, and care.

The Endowment, Bequests and Investment Committee (EBIC) and the Session are deliberating the best use of the funds. All of us who serve the church can strive to follow Dick’s example of devotion.



Dick Carll

**You, too, can leave a legacy.** You are probably already contributing time and talent and faithfully pledging to our church. If you’d like to add more “treasure” by remembering Grace Church in your will, please notify us of your intention. We would love to welcome you to our Legacy Society and list your name in the Annual Report. **Your commitment to our church’s future would be gratefully appreciated.**

**Facilities Campaign Update**

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the 2019 summer facilities campaign.

**The drive to raise \$10,000 to replace the preschool building heating system is very near its goal at \$9,561.** The new system has been installed.



**Scout Christmas Greens for sale in October**



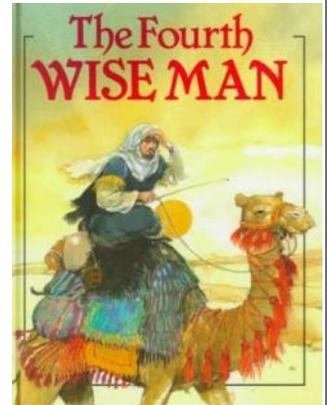
Support our local scout troops by purchasing greenery for your holiday decor this year. Carol Parker will show you the different items for sale. Items will be delivered to the church or your home when they come in.

You can contact Carol at 925-286-6313 or talk to her at church. The items will be on sale until the end of October. Thank you for supporting Troop 302.

**Calling all Actors and Actresses Readers' Theatre Play, Sunday, Jan. 12 The Fourth Wise Man**

*by Karen Hastings-Flegel*

Readers' Theatre of Grace is planning an elaborate play for Epiphany Sunday, January 12 during worship. The play, "**The Fourth Wise Man**" involves 17 actors (5 men, 3 women, 9 either, and 4 or more children) + 6 or more Choir singers. There will be costumes, scenery, and props.



**If you like to act, please come to our read-through on October 5 at 1:00 in the Library.** (You need not be a church member to participate.) Rehearsals will take place about once per month, with a dress rehearsal on January 11.

This grand and touching play is based on a story by Henry Van Dyke, adapted by Joy Chaitlin, Sarah Stevens, and Marilyn D. Anderson. **Questions? Talk with Director Geri Rentz or call her at church, 935-2100.**



*Director Geri Rentz*

**Needling News**

*by Marsha Stark*



In August our Needlers sent 160 knitted and crocheted scarves to *Operation Gratitude* where they will be added to care packages for our deployed military, our Veterans and first responders. This has been one of the missions of the Needlers for the past nine years. I received three different "thank you's" from our last shipment. What we do is important! Join us in the Fellowship Hall the 2nd and 4th Mondays year round.



**Grace Preschool Serving Two New Families from Development Across the Street**

If you are at church on a weekday, you may hear the sounds of busy children. That lets you know Grace Preschool is back in session.

This year we are serving 28 families who live in Alamo, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Piedmont, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek. **Two of our families are among those living in the new homes across the street from the church.**

Pictured at right, a group of children, parents, and alums represented the preschool recently at the Walnut Festival Parade. They brought smiles to many as they rode scooters, marched, or rode in strollers or wagons.

*by Marlene Hall*



Grace Presbyterian Church  
2100 Tice Valley Boulevard  
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Sunday Worship at 10 AM  
[www.gracewc.org](http://www.gracewc.org)  
October 2019

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Walnut Creek, CA

## WELCOME STATEMENT

*We welcome and  
celebrate all who join us*

—the young and the old,  
the rich and the poor,  
the gay and the straight,  
the strong and the weak,  
the meek and the brave—  
and though we are  
different one from  
another, we are united  
in loving and praising God  
and in loving each other.

*10 a.m. Worship on Sunday, October 20  
with former pastor intern,  
the Rev. Denia Segrest*

*Harvest Thank you Luncheon  
11 a.m., Oak Rm.*

A heartfelt thank you to members  
and friends who give of their  
time, talent and treasure to Grace  
Church throughout the year.  
*(See details inside.)*



*Stewardship Campaign Kick-off  
Sunday, October 27*

*10 a.m. Worship with Calvin Sodestrom*

Enjoy a play presentation of the  
Readers' Theatre, *Edythe's Gifts*.  
Starring some of our favorite  
Grace Church acting troupe.

A poster for the Chromatica Choral Ensemble. The background is a dark night sky with a vibrant aurora borealis in shades of blue, green, and purple. The title 'NORTHERN LIGHTS' is written in large, yellow, stylized letters at the top. Below it, in smaller yellow text, is 'A CELEBRATION OF CHORAL MUSIC FROM NORTHERN EUROPEAN COMPOSERS'. Underneath that, it says 'PERFORMED BY' followed by the word 'chromatica' in a colorful, multi-colored font. At the bottom, there is a vertical yellow line. To the left of the line, the names and titles of the artistic director and accompanist are listed. To the right of the line, the date, time, and location of the performance are listed. At the very bottom, there is a yellow banner with text for ticket information.

**NORTHERN  
LIGHTS**

A CELEBRATION OF CHORAL MUSIC FROM  
NORTHERN EUROPEAN COMPOSERS

PERFORMED BY

**chromatica**

**Back in 2019**  
**Saturday, Nov. 2**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Grace Presbyterian Church**  
**2100 Tice Valley Blvd.**  
**Walnut Creek**

**David Huff**  
Artistic Director  
Conductor

**Julie Rieth**  
Assistant Director  
Accompanist

**For ticket information**  
**Visit [www.ChromaticaChorale.org](http://www.ChromaticaChorale.org)**