



# Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

*"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"*

## Newsletter

June 2 and 9, 2019

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Dr. Sue Steib

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

## *On Grief and Loss*

When a person first begins to experience loss, it feels like a deep lake of murky, brackish, water. The deeper the person dives into the dark waters, the more distant the bottom appears, and there are times they wonder if they will ever make it out. For some, grief can become all-consuming and debilitating at a physical, emotional, and spiritual level. We describe the feelings of abandonment with adjectives like, "Numb, Empty, and Incomplete." We use vivid imagery of feeling like "A part of us is missing," and we wonder if we will ever be the same.

Societal expectations about grief compound the problem. We live in an age that avoids pain and grief. The expectations of family and friends are often, "Be happy, life is good, you'll be okay, he would have wanted you to go dancing, you will honor her by going to this party, be your happy self for the holidays, etc." These phrases are often meant to cheer the person up because, at heart, the grief of our family and friends makes us uncomfortable. We don't know how to fix it, so we resort to platitudes that are well-meaning but give a message that grief is not normal, not healthy, and not to be allowed to last more than just a couple of weeks.

I find these expectations counter-productive and lacking the necessary empathy our grieving friends need. There is a myth that grief should be brief. After all, "We need to get back on the horse, back to the land of the living, back to normal." Let me put my Social Worker hat on and debunk these "flight to health" expectations. Grief takes as long as it takes. For some people, this may be a couple of weeks or months, for others, this can be a few years. You are not mentally ill if your grief lasts longer than your neighbor's pain. Dealing with loss is a process and, when you shortcut the process, you end-up repressing your grief, burying it deep in your heart and mind, pretending it is gone. But, there is a miraculous thing that happens to seeds when they are buried in fertile soil: they grow. The rule of thumb in grief recovery is that if you don't deal with your loss, your body will do it for you. There is a scientifically proven connection between mind and body and what happens to the brain, invariably, affects the body, and vice-versa. Repressed grief can lead with anxiety, depression, gastric problems, headaches, muscular tightness, and several other problems which can become significant if not treated.

Grieving is not unthankfulness or faithlessness. I often counsel parishioners who feel shame and guilt about their grief: "God has blessed me with so much, I shouldn't be depressed. I have such great kids, I feel selfish worrying more about me than them. Life is so beautiful, I feel like my faith is suffering because I don't enjoy this beauty." Let me clarify that as Christians, we grieve not like those who have no hope, but we grieve

nonetheless. Grieving is such a biblical concept that the Bible gives us an entire genre of literature, called "Lament." Our forefathers raised their hands up to God and said, "How long shall I cry out, and you don't answer?"

Grief is a very human reaction to loss, which means it is healthy, it is a process, and it is very individual. I once answered the following question from a parishioner: "When will normal grief become pathological? At what point should I be concerned?" The rule of thumb is that if your grief is seriously affecting your activities of daily living in a substantial way, which has lasted more than two weeks, and which seems to be getting worse, you may need to seek some professional help. Some of these activities of daily living are: bathing, eating, taking care of your physical needs, taking care of dependents' basic needs, etc. Another rule of thumb is a marked increase or decrease in appetite, energy levels, sleep, natural sources of pleasure, and libido can be indicators that your grief has become somewhat disordered, and you may need to see a therapist. You can experience one or two of these symptoms and still be okay, but, once the variance begins to affect activities of daily living substantially, you may need to consult with your doctor.

I have found that talk counseling, spiritual direction, and prayer often lower the symptoms of anxiety and depression. Please come and see me or invite me to come to see you. Don't suffer alone when help is a call away. If you feel uncomfortable calling your priest, please remember that we are a Church rich in resources. Many of our parishioners have become incredible mentors and friends to folks who are grieving. Call some of your friends and invite one of them out for coffee. Life is always better when it is lived out in community.

And, please know that we are praying for you during this difficult time. May our Lord continue to bless you.

- Fr. Roldan+

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### *Children and Youth Update*

It has been an exciting few months in our Youth and Family Ministry Programs! We have had 5 new members join our youth group and become actively and consistently involved. It has been so wonderful to see our youth warmly welcome these new faces. As we did last summer, we will begin meeting for coffee and fellowship at the Birdman every Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. beginning Friday, June 7. All youth entering grades 6-12 are welcome to join us!

Vacation Bible School is quickly approaching. We are so excited to be traveling through Athens to study Paul's journey. All children from preschool through 5th grade are welcomed to join us for this fun-filled week of songs, crafts, skits, games and bible lessons.

Our Children's Church Ministry is as vibrant as ever. It is always such a joy for me to walk through the Gospel reading with our children and watch them begin to grasp these important lessons. Just this past weekend we did a lesson on the Holy Spirit where we made men out of clay and tried to breathe life into them, obviously unsuccessfully. It was such an interactive way for them to see the difference of how God didn't just blow his breathe on Adam, but gave him the Holy Spirit, as He also does for us.

If you have any interest in providing a meal for our youth group or church mice, serving as a volunteer for youth group, VBS, or Children's Church, please do not hesitate to reach out. I would love to grab coffee and talk about ways you can get involved!

- Alyssa Louis, Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator  
youth@gracechurchwfp.org or 245-1385

### *Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill*

Kathy Anderson, Jack Anderson, Valerie Barnes, Diane Christopher, Neal Kelly, Jason Kennedy, Charlotte Maxwell, Tom Morris, Eric Nelson, Sara Nelson, Kay Tengler, Mary Thompson, Wendell Wade, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

### *Birthdays*

Ann Newton, Luke Farmer-June 6; Lynda Truitt, John Emory Walker-June 8; Hugh Reid, Shondell Havard-June 9; Alyson Curry, Emile Pourciau-June 10; Rachel Armstrong, Megbe Hughes, Edward Daniel V-June 12; Cary Benton Fitzmorris, Kell Martin-June 13; Abby Dowd-June 14.

### *Wedding Anniversaries*

Paul and Cary Fitzmorris, Russ and Rhona Wray, Rob and Christie Reinhardt, Kirk and Lisa Kleinpeter-June 2; Roy and Alma Ruth Skaggs-June 3; Charles and Louise Reichman-June 4; Chase and Steve Cunningham, Chris and Tara Grace Jones-June 6; Pat and Lucie Butler-June 7; Hugh and Ginger Reid-June 9; Glenn and Eleanor Thomas-June 10; Elaine McKenzie and Jonas Motes-June 11; Ricky and Renee Sparks, Bryan and Laura McClendon-June 13

## Grace News & Upcoming Events

### Other persons prayers are asked for:

Claiborne Arbutnot, Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Wayne Bergeron, Isabella Bertucci, Leslie Bickham, Luanne, Phillip Bowen, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Mason Brudewick, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Daryn Conrad, Rob Cox, Frances Woods Curry, Sandy Davenport, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Deselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Ellen Ewald, Sara Fahey, Mark Felner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Jerry Green, Jim and Claire Hackney, Jane Hamilton, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jeansonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cathy K., Mike Larisey, Jody Lemoine, Jessica Liddle, Max, Charlotte Mayeaux, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Cheryl Meaux, Robin Michel, Bill Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Randall Nachman, Walter Oliveaux, Barton Platte, Elizabeth Poole, Susanna Prescott, Tammy Riggs, James and Sylvia Roach, Cole Rourke, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Rusty Snyder, Cade Stapleton, Angel Thompson, Roland Toups, Millie and Howard Varner, Deborah Vines, Emily Walz, Trey Watson, Denisia Williams, Lynn Zinn.

### Those serving in the armed forces:

Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Carlile Cointment, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Polly Finley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Aaron Zuccaro, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), 1st 222 Aviation Regiment.

**There will be a training for all Eucharistic Ministers** following the 10 a.m. service on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please let Meg Kendrick know if you are unable to make it.

**Men's Prayer Breakfast** will be held on Wednesday, June 5th at 7 a.m. in Jackson Hall.

**Centering Prayer** will be held on Wednesday, June 5th at 9 a.m. in the Golsan House.

**Our annual Pentecost Picnic will take place here at Jackson Hall on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.** Grace will provide the drinks, fried chicken, and rolls. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for the dishes we will need and/or to be on the cleanup crew. Please prepare a side dish for 10 people. We will have inflatables and fun games for family fun. Congregants are encouraged to wear red and dress casually for our annual picnic. We pray you can join us for a day of good food and better fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Dixie Blue, dixiewblue@gmail.com.

**Mission and Outreach** will have a meeting on Tuesday, June 11th at 5:30 p.m. in Fr. Roldan's office.

**Vacation Bible School Registration is open for both participants and volunteers!** Please register at <https://vbspro.events/p/events/gracechurchwfpvbs2019>. We can't wait to for a fantastic week July 8th to the 12th! If you have questions or are interested in helping, please reach out to Alyssa at youth@gracechurchwfp.org or 245-1385. Be on the lookout for the Donate or Borrow Board or if you would like to make a monetary donation, you can make a check payable to Grace Church, memo line Vacation Bible School.

**Our Children's Church ministry is growing.** If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Alyssa at youth@gracechurchwfp.org or 245-1385 to learn more or join for a lesson.

**Grace Preschool is still accepting registrations for the 2019-2020 school year.** Our preschool is open to all students who will be three years old by September 30th, 2019. Registration packets are available in the church offices or online.

**Choir Rehearsals are now held following the 10:00 a.m. service** on Sundays. If you enjoy singing, come join the Grace Choir this summer. New members are needed. Questions? —phone Mel Hale at (225)931-3382 or talk to him or any choir member after church.

**If you are interested in volunteering** with our nursery ministry or know of a teen who would like a job, please speak with Meg Kendrick. We are looking for adult volunteers to help with this important ministry.

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### *Summer Office Hours at Grace Church*

This summer you may see some new faces in the church offices who are filling in while Meg is away on maternity leave. Our office hours will be changing for the summer. The Church offices will be closed on Mondays starting Monday, June 17th. The offices will be open Tuesday–Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Carol Stamey will be in the office and on Wednesdays and Fridays, Alyssa Louis will be in the office. You will still receive communications through Meg's email—[administrator@gracechurchwfp.org](mailto:administrator@gracechurchwfp.org).

Thank you!

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**Grace Church**  
of West Feliciana Parish  
P.O. Box 28  
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## Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

### Sunday June 2, 2019

**Acolytes:** Mary Elizabeth Barrow, RE Barrow, Baus Fin, Lena Fin.

**Chalice bearers:** 7:30 a.m.: Bryan McClendon

10 a.m.: Maria Gerry, Drew Nordgren

**Ushers:** Tony Horn, Zed Howell

**Lectors:** Rachel Howell, Drew Nordgren

**Vestry Rep:** Drew Nordgren

**Altar Guild:** Team 1

**Children's Church:** Alicia Dwyer

**Altar Flowers:** Alma Ruth and Roy Skaggs

**Sanctuary Candle:** Anne Klein

**Coffee Hour:** Peggy Gammill, Elizabeth Finley

**Babysitters:** Emma Olsen

### Sunday June 9, 2019

**Acolytes:** James Kirschling, Karina Mulkey, John B. Klein, Evelyn Pollet.

**Chalice bearers:** 7:30 a.m.: Carol Stamey

10 a.m.: Maria Gerry, Rucker Leake

**Ushers:** Richard Kendrick, Tom Morris

**Lectors:** Ellen Klein, Rucker Leake

**Vestry Rep:** Pat Schneider

**Children's Church:** Lisa Foster, Alyssa Louis

**Altar Guild:** Team 2

**Altar Flowers:** Mary Morse

**Sanctuary Candle:** Jane and Bobby Daniel

**Coffee Hour:** Pentecost Picnic

**Babysitters:** Madison Pollet, Emma Olsen

### June 2, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Coffee Hour

### June 9, 2019

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Pentecost Picnic

### Wednesday, June 5

5 - 7pm - Youth Group Open House

5:15pm - Eucharist

### Thursday, June 6

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

### Friday, June 7

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

### Sunday, June 9

7:30am - Eucharist

8:45am - Bible Study

10:00am - Eucharist

11:15am - Pentecost Picnic

### Wednesday, June 12

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

### Thursday, June 13

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

### Friday, June 14

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study