



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

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

Newsletter

June 17 and 24, 2018

(225) 635-4065-Office

(225) 635-4410-Fax

Rector

Vy Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan

rector@gracechurchwfp.org

Parish Administrator

Meg Kendrick

administrator@gracechurchwfp.org

Preschool

(225) 635-4030

Lisa Foster

preschool@gracechurchwfp.org

Kari Ebner

Alyssa Louis

Stacy Loyacono

Director of

Music Ministries

Melvin E. Hale

music@gracechurchwfp.org

Coordinator of Family Ministries

Alyssa A. Louis

youth@gracechurchwfp.org

Vestry

Leslie Daniel

Christian DeJean

Dr. Tom Flynn

Zed Howell

Heather Howle

Richard Kendrick

Drew Nordgren

Dr. Pat Schneider

Dr. Sue Steib

Missy Higgins, Treasurer

treasurer@gracechurchwfp.org

Stewart Hughes, Chancellor

Website

www.gracechurchwfp.org

Love Found Me

I start every Centering Prayer with the words, "Remember that in this place and at this moment there is nothing you need to do, nothing you need to be, and nothing you need to pretend you are to be loved by God." We then practice breathing and then we begin our 20-minute cycle of meditation. After the silent meditation, we process the experience and we often talk about how our personal walk with the Lord has gone for the prior month. I don't know where I learned this particular formula, but I am certain that I am not the author. I honestly don't remember.

The words are powerful. In the here and now of this moment God is present, God is love, and God is grace. Life is full of grace and full of blessings for those who open their eyes and allow themselves the courage to see them. The whole world is filled with God's grace, which is not to say that the world is void of any suffering or pain. What it means is that it is possible to see God's blessings even in the midst of suffering and pain. It is possible to see grace all around us, even at moments of darkness and doubt. This is a complete mystery that can only be understood when we see God himself as love. Because God is love, we have reason to believe that nothing can ever separate us from his blessings to us, in and through his son, Jesus. This is what Paul tried so hard to preach and to teach. There is nothing that we can do to separate us from the one who loved us first, while we were still sinners. His love for us is not dependent on human merit. There is nothing we need to do, other than to open ourselves to his love and mercy. Those who spend their lives in the rat-race of merit, for whom God's love is dependent on their actions, faith, charity, contrition, and piety miss the point all together. There is nothing we can do to deserve God's love. It is freely given, it is abundant, and it is everywhere.

The little prayer goes on to say, "There is nothing you need to be." I am not saying that God does not wish for us to have transformed lives that honor him and love our neighbors. What I am saying is that God's love and blessing precede and facilitate the transformation God wants for our lives. This love and blessing are not the result of our transformed lives, but the cause. God doesn't wait until we are the best people we can be to love us and bless us. Just the opposite, God loves us and blesses us as we are, with all the rough edges we develop over time. He then leads us gradually into an awareness of his love and mercy towards us. It is this awareness that leads us to transformation. We don't need to be saints before God loves us, his love sanctifies us and leads us to holiness.

Lastly, our little prayer affirms that "There is nothing you need to pretend you are" to earn God's love. We live in a world filled with appearances and, when it comes to being holy, many fake it until they make it. This is exhausting. Pretending takes hard work because it requires the constant projection of a version of ourselves that is not real. We become actors in God's presence, which is ironic because God knows us

as we really are. We don't need to pretend we are better than we really are in order to get God's attention or God's love. All we need is to accept God's love as we are and to ask him to make us into the people he wants us to be. It is often those who pretend to be holy who act as the moral police of their households, churches, and communities. This moral police refuse to accept that our human condition is a reality we all share. We are all broken and we are all in need of God's forgiveness and love. To acknowledge our need without pretense leads to humility. God knows us as we are, he loves us as we are, and in due time God himself will make us into the people he wants us to be. It is all about him.

Getting off the merit treadmill is very hard. For many years I refused to believe that I had nothing to do with the act of salvation and that I was loved unconditionally. I had tried for more than 30 years to earn my salvation with fear and trepidation. I had become an expert at self-mortification. I was a very successful guilt-and-shame farmer and my harvest was abundant. I blamed myself for everything and I felt as though I was a cockroach under the foot of an angry God. I knew God loved me, but I was also told that God's justice and righteousness required my atonement and sacrifice. His love, like a refiner's fire, would send me to hell or purgatory one day, to purify me from my sin. I imagined that God's love was like the "love" (pity) one has for someone already sentenced to death.

That kind of arrogant self-mortification made me self-focused, self-righteous, and hypocritical when I was a young man in seminary. I thought salvation was up to me and I believed that no one else was as serious or committed to the act of salvation as I was. I became a fierce critic of those peers in seminary who were not obedient to every letter of the Church's law. I criticized them for their offenses against celibacy, for their lack of piety, for their pleasure-seeking behaviors, and for the lack of earnestness of their prayer life. I felt alone and I believed I was the only one "playing by the rules." Depressed and terribly alone, I saw no other option but to leave seminary.

I encountered freedom when I became an Episcopalian and learned that salvation had never been up to me. I was 33 years old and I felt as though I had met Christ for the first time. Little by little my guilt and my shame were replaced by joy and acceptance of God's blessings. I encountered the tremendous gift of Holy Scripture, I fell in love with the radical Christ of the Gospels, and I learned that God's name was LOVE. My salvation was up to him through the sacrifice of his Son on the cross. There was nothing I needed to pretend I was. Love had found me and rescued me from my navel-gazing self-introspection and shame. There is not a day that I am not grateful for that Amazing Grace that found me when I most needed it. Blessings, Fr. Roldan+

Ministry Spotlight: Vacation Bible School

VBS will be held July 9th through the 13th from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and is open to all children age 3 through entering 5th grade. During this week, our children will explore the culture of ancient Babylon when Daniel and his friends were in captivity through experiences that have an authentic, traditional Bible-times feel. Children will learn that God is always with us, just as God was with Daniel so long ago. They will walk away with the comfort of knowing that God will be with them when things change, when we need help, when we're afraid, when we're lonely, and even when we're thankful! We can't wait to explore Babylon and open our children's hearts to God's love. Register your child today by visiting: <https://vbspro.events/p/events/gracechurchwfp>. If you are interested in donating or allowing us to borrow an item for Vacation Bible School, please see the board located in the Jackson Hall foyer. If you would like to volunteer for VBS please reach Meg Kendrick at administrator@gracechurchwfp.org. We can't wait to see you there!



Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

Brianna Blanchard, Jason Kennedy, Charlotte Maxwell, Tom Morris, Eric Nelson, Sara Nelson, Kay Tengler, Wendell Wade, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Alicia Dwyer, Erin Fuslier, Jack Anderson-June 17; Teri Tandy, Kenneth Blue-June 18; Taylor Ferris, Linda Flynn-June 19; Elaina Klein, Leslie Daniel, Ruth Reed, Tim Kane, Laura Thompson, Mary Lyle Whatley-June 20; Neal Croft, Ryan Sparks-June 21; Anne Klein-June 22; Mills McClendon, Mary Camille Bell-June 23; Shewen McClendon, Charlotte Peno-June 25; Madeline Wright-June 26; Patti Percy, Barbara Norwood-June 28; Laura McClendon, Claudia Tully-June 29; Briana Boucher, Kathy Anderson-June 30.

Wedding

Anniversaries

Roman and Chris Roldan-June 17; Rucker and Susan Leake-June 18; Colin and Amanda Browning, John and Sue Steib-June 19; Donny and Susan Davis-June 21; John and Lisa McGehee-June 25; Charles and Louise Jenkins, Belton and Dare Didier, Bob and Elizabeth Finley-June 28; Don and Barbara Norwood-June 30.

What's Happening at Grace?

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Sister Abigail, Claiborne Arbuthnot, Charles Barham, Micaela Kell Bennett, Wayne Bergeron, Isabella Bertucci, Leslie Bickham, Phillip Bowen, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Sandy Davenport, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Cathy Doslavic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Jane Hamilton, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cathy K., Jody Lemoine, Jessica Liddle, Max, Charlotte Mayeaux, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Robin Michel, Bill Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Susan Pray, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Roland Troups, Deborah Vines, Dennisia Williams, Rufus Yerger, Lynn Zinn.

Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Brown-ing, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Polly Finley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, Aaron Zuccaro, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Congratulations and blessings to Charlotte and Elliot Johnston whose wedding was celebrated on Saturday, June 9th at St. John's Chapel.

David Treppendahl will be hosting a weekly study of Richard Rohr's book *On the Threshold of Transformation*. The book study will meet weekly on June 13th and 20th at 7 a.m. Please let Meg Kendrick know if you will be able to join the lessons, administrator@gracechurchwfp.org or call the Church office. Fr. Roldan will lead the lesson at the monthly Men's Prayer Breakfast which will be on July 11th at 7 a.m..

Church Mice will return this Wednesday, June 13th from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. This program is open to all children pre-k to 5th grade. Join your child for the 5:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist and then have them stay for dinner and a fun-filled lesson. We are in need of parent volunteers for Church Mice and meals, if you are able to cook and volunteer please reach out to Lisa Foster at lisastrauch3@gmail.com.

There will be a Finance Committee Meeting on Tuesday, June 26th at 4:30 p.m.

There will be a Vestry meeting on Tuesday, June 26th at 5:30 p.m.

The Church offices will be closed on Wednesday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day. There will be no evening Eucharist service at 5:15 p.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast will meet on July 11th at 7 a.m. The Centering Prayer Group will meet on Wednesday, July 11th at 1 p.m.

Altar Flowers are needed for the following dates: July 8th, July 29th, November 18th, November 25th. If you would like to sign up for one of the above dates, please contact Meg Kendrick at the church office 225-635-4065 or by email administrator@gracechurchwfp.org.

Thank you to Mr. Mickey Melancon for building the steps with the rail for Jackson Hall and for building the catapults needed for Vacation Bible School's outdoor game session. Thank you also to Mrs. Sharon Gauthier for taking the time to stain and seal them. We appreciate your dedication to Grace Church and its congregation.

Volunteers are still needed for the Nursing Home Ministry on Thursdays. If you are available to help, please join this important ministry. Join the Nursing Home Ministry team for morning prayer Thursday at 9:15 a.m., they will head to the nursing home at 9:45 a.m.

If anyone is interested in taking training classes with their dog at PetSmart in order to become certified to take their dog to nursing homes, hospitals or hospice centers please contact Dixie Blue at 225-931-5431 or dixiewblue@gmail.com. Scholarships are available for the training.

As many of you are aware Brianna Blanchard, daughter of Collette and Alan Dwyer was in a terrible car accident. A fund has been established at Whitney Bank to help aid in Brianna's recovery. The fund will help to pay for transportation, lodging, and medical treatments not covered by insurance while Brianna recovers. To help Brianna and the Dwyer family, please donate to the Brianna Blanchard Medical Fund at any Whitney Bank location or by making a donation to Grace Church, memo line: Brianna Blanchard. If you have any questions please contact Fr. Roldan, rector@gracechurchwfp.org or 225-635-4065. Please keep Brianna and her family in your prayers as she continues on the path to recovery.

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
P.O. Box 28
St. Francisville LA 70775

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 14
St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday June 17, 2018

Acolytes: Paul Opperman, Clara Jane Hughes,
Jesse Means, IV

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: Lucie Butler;
10 a.m.: Rucker Leake, Richard Kendrick

Ushers: Will Plettinger, Shannon Pollet

Lectors: Glenn Thomas, Landon Anderson

Vestry Rep: Heather Howle

Altar Guild: Team 4

Altar Flowers: Ronnie and Pat Martin

Sanctuary Candle: Anne Klein

Coffee Hour: Donna Wright

Babysitters: Shelby Griffin, Angelina Hardin

Sunday June 24, 2018

Acolytes: Emma Olsen, Grant Rome, Wyatt Olsen

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: S. Gauthier/ C. Stevens;
10 a.m.: Maria Gerry, Sara Klein

Ushers: Rob Reinhardt, Joe Savell

Lectors: Will Plettinger, Donna Wright

Vestry Rep: Richard Kendrick

Altar Guild Team 1

Altar Flowers: Will Plettinger

Sanctuary candle: Carolyn Douglas

Coffee Hour: Donna Wright

Babysitters: Landry Higgins, Marleigh Jaehnel

June 17th, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist
at Grace & St. John's
Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Pentecost Picnic

June 24th, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist
Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

Wednesday, June 20th

7 am - Men's Prayer Breakfast

5-7 pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Eucharist

Thursday, June 21st

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, June 22nd

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, June 24th

7:30am - Eucharist

9:15am - Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, June 27th

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Eucharist

6-7 pm - Church Mice

Thursday, June 28th

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, June 29th

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study