



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

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

Newsletter

August 11 and 18, 2019

(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

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
Dr. Tom Flynn
Zed Howell
Kathy Kane
Tommy Loyacono
Drew Nordgren
Dr. Pat Schneider
Dr. Sue Steib
David Treppendahl
Missy Higgins, Treasurer
treasurer@gracechurchwfp.org
Stewart Hughes, Chancellor

Website

www.gracechurchwfp.org

A Sad Story

I had not seen her in a few years, and I was looking forward to catching up. She and I had been great friends at some point in our former lives, and I remembered her irreverent sense of humor. She had a relaxed demeanor and a laid back approach to the field of Social Work. We both worked in a mental health clinic where our clients were in constant crisis. I worked with the children, and she worked with the parents of families affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Sometimes it was the child who was infected and dying, sometimes it was one of the parents, and sometimes it was both. When needed and appropriate, she and I had joined sessions of the parents and kids to work on specific issues. Our jobs were hard, and going out for a drink with one of the most fun people I had ever known was a highlight of my week.

I used to think about her as having a "lightness of being," unusual for people in the helping professions. She honestly loved people, and her non-judgmental presence made a huge difference in the short lives of children at a time before the HIV/AIDS retroviral therapies. We lost thirty-seven combined clients in three years, and they often asked for her at their deathbeds. Leaving her was one of the hardest things my wife and I did when we left New Jersey, and I couldn't wait to see her.

Remembering how much fun she was, I decided to make New Orleans the destination for our reunion. She was now married to an Italian fellow, also from Jersey, and we decided to stay in the same hotel and spend a few days in the city. Days before she was due to fly, she called me to request that we switch our reunion to Baton Rouge. She said New Orleans had always made her uncomfortable. We agreed because we have a Condo in the city and this would save us on hotel rentals. Baton Rouge still has enough fun stuff to do, and the whole purpose of the reunion was to catch up anyway.

The day before she and her husband flew in, she called me back. She wanted to cook for us at the apartment she had rented in the city through Air B&B, instead of going to a restaurant. Neither she nor her husband drunk alcohol, and she tried hard to avoid temptations. I agreed because I have friends who are alcoholics and understand fully how "people, places, and things" can become roadblocks to sobriety.

The first thing I remember seeing her again was that "the lightness of being" for which she was known seemed to have disappeared. She looked edgy, angry, and preoccupied. She had ascended in her career and now run a large Mental Health Clinic. She spent half of our time together complaining about Psychiatrists she had to fire and therapists who had no work-ethic. Her vocational rehab specialists saw themselves only as

baby-sitters. And governmental agencies kept cutting her funding. Lastly, her clients complained always about fees, even when they paid no more than five dollars a session.

We listened patiently and spoke briefly about our experience in ministry over the last decade. At this point, she revealed this was the reason she had worked so hard to reconnect with me. She had received a vision a few months back telling her my family and I were heading straight to the “eternal flames of Hell.” At first, my wife and I thought she was joking, but I soon noticed that she was serious. She was genuinely concerned for the salvation of my family. Remembering how much I had loved her in our youth, I said, “Tell me more about your vision.”

She said that when she learned, I had joined the Episcopal Church, she had felt sick to her stomach for about three straight days. She then had several dreams where God let her see my anguish in Hell. The problem, as she saw it, was that the Church I had joined stood opposite to the Bible on all important issues. She then proceeded to teach us about what the Bible says about women in ministry, divorce, and marriage. She said she grieved for us because our Denomination does not follow traditional instructions on the role of men and women in matrimony, and for this reason, we were contributing to family break-up. As an example, she said the Bible preaches the place of women is in the home, men are the leaders, and women owe them obedience.

All of these grave sins, although severe, were pardonable, and she hoped we repented from them soon enough and sought God’s forgiveness. She believed our position on sexual ethics, however, was unpardonable. This was the unforgivable sin because it was an abomination that even God would refuse to forgive at the last day.

My wife and I remained neutral on all these issues because we didn’t want to engage in a long theological or biblical argument. It was obvious our friend adhered to a literal understanding of Scripture and there was no way I could convince her otherwise. After she finished her monologue about religion she moved on to politics. And this is when this story becomes relevant. I just finished reading some of the lines from one of the manifestos of the two mass shooters in our country over the weekend. Some of the words sounded very similar to my friend’s political rantings. I believe we are facing an epidemic of hate, thinly veiled in Pseudo-Christian thought. As a Christian pastor, a father of four, and a Social Worker, I am deeply concerned and saddened by this.

When these tragedies happen, over two hundred and fifty this year alone, we all think of the disaffected young men performing these heinous acts. But, my friend’s story reminds me that there are many men and women out there who are just as filled with hate towards “The Other” as these shooters were. I do believe the word “epidemic” applies here and we as Christians have a responsibility to challenge hate in all its forms.

I beg your prayers for my friend and for those who think and feel like her. Pray also for any pastors who preach condemnation and hatred. Lastly, please continue to pray for the victims of hate in this country and around the world. May God continue to bless you. Fr. Roldan+

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

Kathy Anderson, Jack Anderson, Valerie Barnes, Carolyn Douglas, 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

Roxanne Thornton-Aug. 11; Miles Higgins-Aug. 13; Becky Wright, Carter Leak, Kathy Bankston-Aug. 14; Lacy Harvey, Lynn Ballard-Aug. 15; Axel Pattison, Susan Schneider-Aug. 16; Barrett Dunaway-Aug. 17; Iris Stewart, Elizabeth Morris-Aug. 18; Olivia Adams, Dorothy Alice Longnecker, Audrey Ann Reinhardt, Cullen Weller-Aug. 19; Louise Maryman-Aug. 20; Karina Mulkey, Jamie Farmer-Aug. 21; Sophie Treppendahl-Aug. 22; Eliza Ann Barrow, Thomas Matthew Kendrick, Norah James McCain-Aug. 23; Arlene Hughes, Turner McCleendon -Aug. 24

Wedding Anniversaries

Robert and Cindy Seeman-Aug. 11; Don and Penny Reinhardt-Aug. 13; Tommy and Laura Thompson-Aug. 14; Mike and Lea Williams-Aug. 16; Bert and Jerry Babers, Kyle and Marcy Dunaway-Aug. 18; Eric and Sara Nelson-Aug. 20; Billy and Helen Williams-Aug. 23

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, Jessica DeLee, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Ellen Ewald, Sara Fahey, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Jerry Green, Jim and Claire Hackney, Jane Hamilton, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, 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, Dennisia 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.

Newcomer Ladies Luncheon on Saturday, August 24, from 11:00 to 2:00pm. Over the last ten years we have had Newcomers classes every year, many of which have included a meal. We are now thinking it would be very nice to have a Newcomers Ladies Luncheon for anyone who has joined the church over the last ten years, whether you have attended those classes or not. This luncheon will give an opportunity to graduates from various classes to meet other graduates. It will also be a great time for those who have not yet attended a Newcomers course to meet new members of Grace. Mr. and Mrs. Treppendahl have volunteered their wonderful home at 12285 Highway 965, St. Francisville, LA 70775. There will be a style show done by Grandmother's Buttons and Trends Boutique. We will have violin music by Matilda Fox-Smith. Catering will be provided by Linda Pruitt. We ask that you reserve a spot at the luncheon by texting Dixie Blue at (225) 931-5431 by no later than August 16th. All women of Grace Church are welcome to attend, but newcomers will be the honorees.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church: We have celebrated the feast of St. Mary the Virgin for decades at St. Mary's Church, right before the gates of the Louisiana State Penitentiary. We would like to increase attendance this year by moving the celebration to Sunday, August 18 at 5:00 pm and by encouraging many of you to use this evening service on this day as your "Church" experience for that week. We are so grateful for the work of the community in restoring this beautiful church that we want to show you our progress. Please come join us and bring a lawn chair. We will have a potluck supper afterwards, so, please bring a dish to share. If you have any questions, please contact Fr. Roldan or a member of St. Mary's board.

The August book selection for our Seekers and Sages church book club is: A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman. Everyone is welcome to attend and bring a friend. Details about time and place will follow at a later date.

We are in need of ushers to help us during the 10:00 am services. If you are interested, please contact Father Roldan.

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.

There are still open spots in our Preschool. Thursday, August 8th will be the first day for boys in our program and Friday, August 9th will be the first day for girls with Monday, August 12th being the first full day all together. Lisa, our director, has been working with our staff all summer to complete trainings and get everything ready for a wonderful school year. Lisa has made lots of exciting additions and changes to the preschool room such as adding multiple learning stations, installing a music wall on the playground and painting fun sidewalk games for our preschoolers to play to name a few. If you have any old pots or pans that you would like to donate to the music wall, or if you'd like more information on how to apply and register your child in our preschool, please contact Lisa at preschoolgracechurchwfp.org.

Grace's After School Program will begin on Friday, August 9th. The children enrolled in this program will ride the bus to Grace where they will be greeted by an adult and brought upstairs in Jackson Hall for snack time, homework help and games and crafts once their homework is done. We still have a few spots left for this program. If you have a Pre-K through 5th grade child that you would like to enroll, please contact Alyssa at youth@gracechurchwfp.org for all necessary paperwork.

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

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St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday August 11, 2019

Acolytes: Clara J Hughes, Lilly Higgins, Cecile Means, Jesse L Means

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: Lucie Butler
10 a.m.: Brandie Olsen, Sheryl Wynters

Ushers: Tony Horn, Tiger Olsen

Lectors: Glenn Thomas, Trish Toburen

Vestry Rep: Dr. Pat Schneider

Altar Guild: Team 3

Children's Church: Renee Wilson

Altar Flowers: Olivia Pass

Sanctuary Candle: Penny Reinhardt

Coffee Hour: Carlin Kendrick

Babysitters: Emma Olsen, Shiloh Felton

Sunday August 18, 2019

Acolytes: Paul Opperman, Joey Winn Peno, Olivia Adams, Hannah Adams

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: Sharon Gauthier/Cozette Stevens

10 a.m.: Dr. Landon Anderson, Joey Gammill

Ushers: Tom Morris, Will Plettinger

Lectors: Justin Peno, David Opperman

Vestry Rep: David Treppendahl

Children's Church: Charlotte Peno

Altar Guild: Team 4

Altar Flowers: Rachel and Zed Howell

Sanctuary Candle: Meg and Richard Kendrick

Coffee Hour: Charlotte Peno & Peggy Gammill

Babysitters: Shelby Griffin, Madie Kane

August 11, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

August 18, 2019

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

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

Wednesday, August 14

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Eucharist

Thursday, August 15

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, August 16

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, August 18

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

8:45am - Bible Study

10:00am - Eucharist

Wednesday, August 21

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, August 22

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, August 23

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study