



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

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

Newsletter for
August 07 and 14,
2016

(225) 635-4065-Office
(225) 635-4410-Fax

Rector

Very Rev. Dr. Roman D.
Roldan
rector@gracechurchwfp.org

Associate Rector

Rev. Dr. Peter Kang
associate@gracechurchwfp.org

Parish Administrator

Anne Klein
secretary@gracechurchwfp.org

Pre-School

(225) 635-4030
Diana Weller
Preschool@gracechurchwfp.org

Stacy Loyacono
Emily Barrow
Crystal Rogers

Melvin E. Hale
Director of Music Ministries
Music@gracechurchwfp.org

Vestry

Dr. Landon Anderson
Christian DeJean
Dare Didier
Heather Howle
Richard Kendrick
Mickey Melancon
Thomas Olsen
Robert Singer
Dr. Adam Whatley

Glenn Thomas, Treasurer
treasurer@gracechurchwfp.org

Stewart Hughes, Chancellor

Website

Christianity is a Struggle

For the Apostle Paul without the Holy Spirit there is no possible way for a believer to be "In Christ." Likewise, without the gifts of the Holy Spirit we could never live in community and become the "Body of Christ." As James Dunn affirms, "The inspiration and the concrete manifestations of the Spirit in power, revelation, word, and service are all necessary, because, without these, grace soon becomes a position, the gifts of the Spirit become an office of the Church, ministry is degraded to a mere bureaucracy, the Body of Christ becomes just an institution, and the koinonia (fellowship) is reduced only to an invisible reserve." This invisible reserve is called the "Communion of Saints." Without the Spirit this fellowship becomes a nebulous spiritual thing, and fails to become a reality in the lives of people here, where we live, love, worship, and work.

One of the special gifts of the Holy Spirit is that he allows us to live within the paradox and conflict that resides at the very heart of Christianity. The best way to describe this paradox and conflict is to appeal to concepts well known to Paul himself. The paradox is that we have a foot on two different realities: death and life. The conflict is that we are constantly afflicted by the conflict between the Spirit and the flesh. Christianity is a faith of struggle. Our faith is constantly assaulted by doubts and questions, life is always threatened by death, love of other is constantly a threat to love of self, acceptance sometimes allows fear to turn it into intolerance, communal love often devolves into hatred, truth is often sacrificed at the altar of expediency or personal gain, civility often becomes juvenile name-calling and public temper tantrums, and the list goes on.

It is so tempting for some of us Christians to go back into the cloistered life of monasteries, whether real or imagined. To isolate from everything and everyone in pursuit of spiritual purity, to turn away from the death that is so apparent in our lives, from all conflicts of the flesh, and to escape into a world of mental and spiritual make-believe. But, this is not the Christian way. The paradox is that even though in Christ we live according to the Spirit, and are destined for eternity, we still live in a body that is afflicted and assaulted by all the infirmities and afflictions of humanity. Our Spirit-filled lives will forever be in conflict with our temporal, transitory, weak, and self-directed humanity. This is the paradox. There is no escapism allowed for the Christian. With every step we take we must make a decision to walk in accordance to the Holy Spirit or to walk in accordance to a different spirit, what Paul calls "the flesh." Either option is possible. We can either walk in the Spirit of God, or we can walk in the spirit of selfishness, apathy, hatred, and paranoid-fear of the other. We can either chose to build God's kingdom in our homes, communities, and our country, or we

can choose self-directed lives, where we are the center and measure of all things. This conflict will follow us until we take our last breath and the choice is always ours to make.

Christians find strength in weakness, this is at the heart of our faith. To the world, the cross of Christ is a sign of defeat and utter foolishness, but to us it is the victory of God. This is the reason why Paul will boast about nothing else other than Christ crucified. We Christians believe that it is precisely at moments of doubt, temptation, fear, and weakness that God is the most present in our lives. This is why the Christian response to these very human realities is not violence, hatred, isolation, or scape-goat-ing, but rather, love, forgiveness, compassion, grace, acceptance, and prayer. Even when our hearts break and this world appears incomprehensibly cruel, we turn to God in our weakness and act in the strength that only love can give us. Strength to console, to forgive, to re-build, to reach out, and to unite.

To the Christian who takes his or her faith seriously the conflicts inherent in our faith should not alarm or discourage us. There are only two responses to the Spirit-flesh conflict. The first, we continue forward, we fight to live by the Spirit of God everyday and reject the inhumanity of this world, whether that inhumanity comes in the form of violence, or in the form of political repression, subjugation, exploitation, or political polarization. We take one step forward everyday, even when from time to time we must stop to cry in despair, comfort those who suffer, pray for those who let hatred be their very motivation for life, and commend to God those without a voice in our world. We continue forward, choosing the Spirit of God over any other principle or power, no matter how tempting this power is, and no matter how appealing his promises might become.

The second option is to go backwards. To loose our faith and abandon our hope. To devolve in our humanity and become the very evil we fear. To allow hatred, unbridled ambition, selfish motivations, and fear to rule our lives. To isolate from God and the people and communities he places in our lives and “eat, drink, and be merry” for the world is ours for the taking and no one else matters. This is the life of the flesh. This is the life of death Jesus warns about. The end result of this course of action is absolute disconnection from God and others.

Mourning and feeling defeated are not indications that the Holy Spirit is not with us. Just the opposite, our spiritual conflicts are a sign that we are alive, a sign that God’s Holy Spirit is playing his role in making us more and more like God’s Son. Suffering must lead to hope, because, for the Christian, death always leads to life. Don’t be afraid of the conflict or the paradox. The Holy Spirit acts through conflict and paradox to lead us closer to God and to each other. A life without conflict is a life that has no place for God. We discover God more fully in the midst of darkness. It is at the very cross that we can see Christ’s love for humanity the most clearly.

May he continue to bless you, Fr. Roldan+

Children Chapel begins on September 11: We need volunteers to teach in rotation. Please call Fr. Peter or Christie Reinhardt if you can participate.

Our ECW is hosting the **ECW Baton Rouge Deanery Fall meeting** on Saturday, August 13 in Jackson Hall. Registration is 9:30-10am. The ladies of Grace Church invite you to the Holy Eucharist, an informative presentation, a meeting of the Deanery and a lovely lunch (\$8.00 donation). Please RSVP to Jackie Cage at jackiecage@att.net. If you can help with preparation and clean up, please call Sheryl Wynters, (225) 629-4133.

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

David Barnes,
George Black,
Wayne Blake, Cecil
May Dwyer, Tom
Morris, Sara Nelson,
Jim Roland,
Margie Sheets, Jim
Tengler, Wendell
Wade, Pam Will-
son, Jake Wray,
Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Jessica Finley-8/7;
Julie Stewart-8/8;
Hunter Fusilier,
Audrey Reinhardt,
Justin Peno-8/9; Don
Strittman-8/10; Rox-
anne Thornton-8/11;
Diane Davis, Miles
Higgins-8/13; Becky
Wright, Carter Leak,
Kathy Bankston-
8/14; Lacy Maxwell,
Lynn Ballard-8/15;
Axel Pattison, Susan
Schneider-8/16; Iris
Stewart, Elizabeth
Morris-8/18; Olivia
Adams, Cullen
Weller-8/19; Louise
Maryman-8/20.

Wedding Anniversaries

Tony & Lisa Horn-8/
7; Pat & Melissa
Dowd-8/9; Zed &
Rachel Howell-8/10;
Robert & Cindy
Seeman-8/11; Don
& Penny Reinhardt-
8/13; Tommy &
Laura Thompson-
8/14; Mike & Lea
Williams-8/16; Bert
& Jerry Babers-8/18;
Eric and Sara Nelson-
8/20.

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Jolie Berry, Tommy Bishop, Phillip Bowen, Leo Brown, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, John Caruthers, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Molly Douglas, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Juanita Ferguson, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Elmo Hegwood, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, Jill Joffrion, Mary Jo Kaly, Cecil Kelly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Paul McGuff, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Robin Michel, Dorothy Anne Millikin, Jim Mire, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Alice Mier, Mike Morris, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Peter Purpera, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Stephen Seale, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Glenn Thomas III, Terri Thompson, Roland Touns, Denham Turner, Darold Whitmer, Zane Woodward.

Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Brown-ing, James Boucher, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads.

Please continue to pray for all victims of senseless violence: These last few weeks have been extremely sad for most of us. The senseless violence we see often around the world has come so near to us that many of us are deeply worried about the future of our State and Country. Please continue to pray for all the victims and pray for peace and reconciliation. Please know that I am here if you would like to talk or pray. Blessings, Fr. Roldan+

“Over 50” Trip: Breakfast at Café des Amis: and dancing to the Zydeco music! Join the group as they travel to Breaux Bridge on Saturday, August 6 to have a breakfast at Café’ Des Amis and listen to the Zydeco band. You can even try dancing to the Zydeco music. It will be a fun atmosphere and great food. We will leave Grace Church parking lot at 7am with transportation provided by the church. Sign the list in the Narthex.

The Fall Bible Study will begin at 9:00 a.m. on September 7, the Wednesday following Labor Day. This one is an excellent one by Kathleen Norris called “Embracing a Life of Meaning.” It is a five-week study, and each week centers on a special subject that is related to having a life of meaning, e.g., the Bible, Community, Place, etc. The format is like that of the Forgiveness Study we did a while back, and, similarly, the DVD was created at St. John’s Anglican Church in Denver. The Bible Study Committee will facilitate this study. Please consider joining us on these Wednesdays, and let us know that you are interested by signing up in the Narthex. Workbooks will be available soon through Conundrum Book Store here in St. Francisville. If you have any questions, please contact Olivia Pass: oliviapass@bellsouth.net.

Fall Adult Formation Class: “The Sacraments”, led by Jason Kennedy, will start on Wednesday, September 7 at 6pm. No book is necessary- just sign the list in the Narthex.

Wooden Crosses: Last year as we repaired the ceiling, we replaced the original wood lathing with a different material. The strips of lathing were made into crosses. The Youth Group has been selling these as a fundraiser for several months. We have gotten in the brass plaque that goes with them. If you have already purchased your cross and want the plaque, please stop by the office and see Fr. Kang. We will give you the plaque to go with your cross. If you would like to purchase the cross and plaque, they are selling for \$10.00.

The Youth Group will present their “Joyful Noise Concert” on Sunday evening, August 7 at 6:00pm, by entertaining you with musical numbers they have been practicing during the summer. Everyone is invited to attend.

Choir Corner: Regular choir schedule resumes with practice at 6:00 pm on 8/16/16. New singers are needed. If interested, contact Mel at 931-3382.

Forward Day by Day is available in the church office for the quarter, August-October.

St. Mary’s Chapel at Wyanoke will celebrate the Feast of St. Mary’s on Saturday August 20th with a communion service at 10am followed by light refreshments. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Chamber Uncorked: You are invited to join the West Feliciana Chamber of Commerce for a Wine Tasting and Fund Raising on Saturday, August 13 from 6-9pm in Jackson Hall.

How it works: teams are composed of two people who bring three identical bottles of red wine. Two bottles are wrapped and place on the table for tasting; one bottle is put aside for prizes. Guests rate the wines. Prizes go to guests who brought the highest rated wines. Tickets are \$50 per team. Email: wfchamber70775@att.net or call 635-6717 for your ticket.

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

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Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday, August 7, 2016

Acolytes: Ethan Lyon, Emma Olsen, Clara Jane Hughes, Mathew Skaggs
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Bryan McClendon
10:00am: George Newton, Sheryl Wynters
Ushers: Carl Fontenot, Austin Roldan
Lectors: Will Plettinger, Donna Wright
Vestry Rep: Heather Howle
Altar Guild Team 3
Altar flowers: Olivia Pass
Sanctuary Candle: Carolyn Douglas
Coffee Hour: Christian & Jamie DeJean
Babysitters: Claudia Tully, Mary Willis

Sunday, August 14, 2016

Acolytes: Karina Mulkey, Paul Opperman, Lilly Higgins, Mary Jane Opperman
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Michelle Roth
10am: Maria Gerry, Richard Kendrick
Ushers: Tony Horn, Zed Howell
Lectors: Landon Anderson, David Barnes
Vestry Rep: Richard Kendrick
Altar Guild Team 4
Altar flowers: Colleen and Jean Hill
Sanctuary Candle: Don and Penny Reinhardt
Coffee Hour: Penny Reinhardt
Babysitters: Maggie Higgins, Landry Higgins

August 07, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6pm Youth Group
Joyful Noise Concert @ 6

August 14, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
EYC BBQ and Pool Party
Noon-3pm @ home
Of Tony and Lisa Horn

Wednesday, August 10

5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, August 11

10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, August 12

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, August 14

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist

Wednesday, August 17

5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, August 18

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, August 19

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study