



# Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

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

## Newsletter

May 14 & 21, 2017

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## Website

www.gracechurchwfp.org

## *Five Marks of a Healthy Church According to Acts 2:42-47*

This last Sunday we read the well-known passage from Acts, which gives us a window into the early days of the church. The passage clearly shows five movements and behaviors that helped them add members to their number every day. Those five marks remain incredibly relevant for us today and I want to challenge all of us to apply them every day as we interact with God, each other, and new comers.

**A Church with a Rich Life in Community:** The passage starts with "Those who had been baptized devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." Evangelism, through the preaching of the Apostles and Disciples, had done its job well and many had been baptized. Bringing people in is only half of the challenge, however. The next challenge is to provide an environment rich with learning (discipleship), fellowship, prayer, and the breaking of bread (Both literally, as in Agape or communal meals, and liturgy, as in the celebration of the Lord's Supper or Eucharist). We must provide a church life that feeds our souls and enriches our lives. We must pray and learn together, celebrate the sacraments and have fun together at High Teas, banquets, concerts, and various celebrations. Faith is better lived and easier to manage when you have a Spirit-filled and loving community.

**A Far Reaching Church:** The passage continues, "Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles." The members of the church, especially its leaders, loved and cared both for their own parishioners and for the outsiders who were showing an interest in the church. This care and concern was often manifested through prayer for those in need. In prayer many were experiencing physical and spiritual healing, a deep sense of forgiveness, incredible divine love and acceptance, and conversion. A healthy church is a praying church and a power-filled church. We often become unnecessarily weary and cautious about asking God for miracles, praying for healing, imposing hands on others, etc. These are all marks of a church where the Holy Spirit is taken seriously and where the faithful still believe in God's ability to break into our lives and change us from within. We often become religious practitioners of rites and rituals, rather than people in love with Jesus of Nazareth and open to the gifts he gives us through his Holy Spirit. The early church teaches us to be more open to God's Spirit and to open ourselves to the wonders the Spirit does through us.

**A Generous Church:** The passage continues, "All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need." Many lived in community, but many lived in their own homes. What's important is that this church cared for those in need. They generously contributed to the ministry of the church by providing the resources necessary to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the infirm, attend to the widows

and orphans, and welcome the stranger. An “alive church” is a church that is constantly thinking about and doing something for those in need. The moment churches become insular, self-preoccupied, and separated from the real needs of their community they begin to die out. People want to help and churches must give them opportunities to minister and feel included in the work of the Gospel. At Grace we say that we have a ministry for anyone who wants one. I pray that you will consider joining one of those ministries soon. When you place your gifts at the service of others, soon you find your life enriched, and you begin to feel more gratitude for the blessings God gives you. Churches that have a deep concern for the poor are churches that embody Christ’s love for the world.

**A Praying and Evangelizing Church:** The passage goes on to say, “Day by day, they spent much time together in the temple”. The purpose for their daily visits to the temple was to pray and to befriend others who might be interested in joining the church. Both prayer and evangelism were at the heart of these Temple visits and we know of several successful sermons that added great numbers to the church. Churches that grow have members who love the church and who become involved during the week. Many of us “do Church” on Sunday mornings and this is great, but there are others who connect deeply during the week. They attend discipleship programs, Bible studies, and various ministries. They attend Morning prayer at 8:00am Monday through Wednesday, and 9:15 on Thursdays. They attend Wednesday liturgy at 5:15pm and our Healing Service on Fridays at 7:00am. They volunteer to help around the office, clean our kitchen, replant our gardens, wind-blow our parking lots, etc. These daily “Temple Visits” feed them spiritually and make them feel more connected to this amazing place. In terms of evangelism, the early church never stopped preaching the Gospel of Jesus and welcoming newcomers to their number. This is best done on a one-to-one basis and with the people you already know and the people you meet in various social environments. Churches grow because their members want them to grow. So, go ahead and invite your friends and acquaintances. We would love to get to know them and to add them to the family.

**A Hospitable Church:** The passage tells us, “They broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.” Not only did the church celebrate the Agape meal often, but they invited each other for various meals at their homes. They opened their hearts and their homes to each other and to others who were joining the church daily. This type of hospitality has biblical roots and is one of the best ways to grow churches. People live in isolation from each other. Any church that offers opportunities for connection and the expansion of peer groups will attract new members. Hospitality also includes the welcoming of newcomers at Sunday Church. We can’t underestimate the importance of a friendly greeting, an introduction, a shaking of hands, and an invitation to coffee hour. Research shows that people are more likely to return to churches they visited if they see the church as friendly, welcoming, and loving. Our behavior can attract others in the same way that the behavior of the early church attracted others. We hear that “Day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” Church growth is up to all of us!

I pray we will continue to show these five marks of a healthy church and that we will one day become the most welcoming, loving, and hospitable church we can be.

Blessings, Fr. Roldan+

**The Finance Committee** meets on Tuesday, May 16 at 4:30pm and the **Vestry** meets at 5:30pm in Jackson Hall.

**St. John’s Chapel** will have a celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday, May 21st at 7:30am.

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

David Barnes, Jamey Daniel, Daisye Howell, Lucile Lawrason, Tom Morris, Sara Nelson, Kay Tengel, Sarah Roland, Eleanor Thomas, Wendell Wade, David Walker, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

**Birthdays**

William Croft, Lynn Gaudet, Carol Woodward, Coco Treppendahl-May 14; Judy Nordgren-May 15; Marsha Lindsey, Olivia Elliott, Samantha Kang-May 16; Mary Austin Willis-May 18; Betty Sessions, Heather Howle-May 19; Cecile Means, Sara Nelson, Dwight Singer-May 20; Cindy Seeman-May 21; Karen Dwyer-May 22; Billie Fort, Suzette Daniel-May 23; Susan Roland-May 24; Joe Gerry, Suzanne Beckley, Rusty Kleinpeter, Collin Loyacono-May 27.

**Wedding**

**Anniversaries**

Abram and Lacey Harvey-May 14; David and Coco Treppendahl-May 18; James and Briana Boucher-May 19; Jordan and Liz Truitt-May 21; Hamilton and Debbie Willis-May 22; Mark and Eve Clevenger, Miles and Missy Higgins-May 23; Steve and Lynn Gaudet-May 24; Keith and Maddie Watts - May 26.

*Other persons prayers are asked for:*

Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Morris Bennett, Leslie Bickham, Phillip Bowen, Leo Brown, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Mac Bullock, John Caruthers, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Bob Crowley, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cecil Kelly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Paul McGuff, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Kathy Drew Matter, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, David Merritt, Robin Michel, Dorothy Anne Millikin, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Cecelia Polito, Susanna Prescott, Susan Pray, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Cole Rourke, Stephen Seale, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Roland Troups, Denham Turner, Darold Whitmer, Zane Woodward.

*Those serving in the armed forces:* Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, 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.

**Your prayers** are asked for the family of Max Heinze, son of Aaron and Laura Means Heinze and nephew of Jesse Means, who died in Texas on April 29. Funeral services were held May 6 at the First Methodist Church with burial following in Grace Cemetery.

**Your prayers** are also asked for the family of Margie Sheets who died on May 4th. Services were held in Grace Church with burial in Grace Cemetery.

**Grace Youth Group** is collecting items to make Blessing Bags for the homeless that we will be delivering to Project Lot on June 10th. Please drop off items to Meg Kendrick's office in Jackson Hall. Last drop off day will be June 7th as we will be assembling the bags at youth group that evening. Please see the list on the bulletin board in Jackson Hall for the specific items we are looking for including deodorant, toothbrushes toothpaste, feminine hygiene products, fingernail clippers, chap stick, band aids, hand sanitizer, socks, blue jeans, jackets, blankets, hand towels, tennis shoes, reading glasses, backpacks, granola bars and gift cards (we play bingo and hand out \$5 gift cards to winners. Suggested restaurants are McDonalds and Raising Canes. Others welcome, just make sure there is a location near downtown Baton Rouge)

**West Feliciana Quarterly Ladies Prayer breakfast:** Please come to the St. Francisville United Methodist Church, 4744 Fidelity Street, on Saturday, May 20, 8:30am until 10am, for fellowship, food and a program. All women of the church are invited.

**Welcome** to our newly baptized member, Jackson Corey Foster, son of Stephen and Lisa Foster, who was baptized on May 7 in Grace Church.

**It's graduation time:** we will have a celebration of our high school seniors on Sunday, May 21 at the coffee hour following the 10am service. Please come to congratulate our seniors, Shelby Griffin and Kristen Lyon, as they complete their high school education.

**Pentecost Sunday** is June 4. This is Grace Church's patronal feast day and we usually celebrate with a picnic after church. We love to have swimming for the children if there is a pool and fishing is always enjoyed. Grace Church provides the fried chicken and everyone brings a dish to share. If you are interested in volunteering, please let Fr. Roldan know.

**The Super Senior's Annual Pilgrimage to Middendorf's:** Please find the signup list in the narthex and sign up for the Super Senior's trip to enjoy some awesome fellowship, fun, and great food. Wednesday, May 17, we will meet in the parking lot at 9:30am; should be back by 3:30pm. We will rent a van for our adventure, with a reliable driver, our own Rector! Scholarships available, please join us.

**Congratulations** to Tab Ballard and Jeanne Pipsair who were married on May 6th at St. James Church in Baton Rouge.



**Vacation Bible School** is coming July 10 - 14, 2017! *Maker Fun Factory* promises to be a fun and Grace-filled week! There will be games, projects, songs, and delicious snacks. Please be on the lookout for registration link: [www.gracechurchwfp.org](http://www.gracechurchwfp.org), on our website. If you would like to volunteer, please call Christie Reinhardt or Meg Kendrick at 635-4065 or email [youth@gracechurchwfp.org](mailto:youth@gracechurchwfp.org). A needs-board for donated items, supplies, snacks, and materials for the week will be posted in the narthex of the church. And thank you in advance for your support!

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

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## Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

### Sunday, May 14, 2017

**Acolytes:** Karina Mulkey, Emma Olsen Clara Jane Hughes, Madison Pollet, Logan Reinhardt, Nicole Mulkey

**Chalice bearers:** 7:30am: Lucie Butler

10am: Mark Mulkey, Brandie Olsen

**Ushers:** Tiger Olsen, Joe Savell

**Lectors:** David Opperman, Justin Peno

**Vestry Rep:** Heather Howle

**Altar Guild Team 1**

**Altar flowers:** Mike and Carol Dufillo

**Sanctuary Candle:** Tom and Jeanne Morris

**Coffee Hour:** Stewart and Megbe Hughes

**Babysitters:** Madie Kane, Lorna Klein

### Sunday, May 21, 2017

**Acolytes:** Mathilde Fox-Smith, Paul Opperman, Lilly Higgins, Ella Corinne Howle, James Kirschling, Wyatt Olsen, Ethan Lyon

**Chalice bearers** 7:30am: Sharon Gauthier

10am: Sheryl Wynters, Maria Gerry

**Ushers:** Dwight Singer, Austin Roldan

**Lectors:** Ellen Klein, Glenn Thomas

**Vestry Rep:** Richard Kendrick

**Altar Guild Team 2**

**Altar flowers:** Mary Thompson

**Sanctuary candle:** Dwight and Martha Singer

**Coffee Hour:** Rob and Christie Reinhardt

**Babysitters:** Emma Olsen, Sarah Roldan

### May 14, 2017

7:30am - Eucharist

Bible Study

10:00am - Eucharist

Coffee Hour

### May 21, 2017

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

(Grace & St. John's)

Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Coffee Hour honoring our  
high school graduates

### Tuesday, May 16

4:30pm - Finance Meeting

5:30pm - Vestry Meeting

### Wednesday, May 17

5:15pm - Eucharist

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

### Thursday, May 18

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

### Friday, May 19

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

### Sunday, May 21

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

9:15am - Bible Study

10:00am - Eucharist

### Wednesday, May 24

5:15pm - Eucharist

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

### Thursday, May 25

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

### Friday, May 26

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study