

amazing

IN YOUR LIFE | IN OUR COMMUNITY | IN THE WORLD

Grace

A monthly publication of Grace Presbyterian Church in Walnut Creek, California

May 2024

Dear Grace Church Family,

“Change ain’t lookin’ for friends.
Change calls the tune we dance to.”

Al Swearengen, “Deadwood”

When I include a quote in my monthly pastor’s column (see above), it usually comes from the Bible. The quote above is an exception, but an appropriate one for this month and for this issue of the newsletter. [FYI—Al Swearengen was a character on the HBO series “Deadwood.”] We all live in the midst of a “river of constant change” and life in the church community is no different.

One of the big changes you will find inside this month’s newsletter is that the end of April (the 26th to be exact) is the last day of work for our dedicated and wonderful Church Administrator/Office Manager/Pastoral Counselor Judy Williams. After 17 years at Grace Church, Judy is retiring. I hope that you will all join me in wishing Judy the best in well-deserved retirement.

I want to personally thank Judy for the essential and significant ministry she had done here at Grace. I’ve learned over 30+ years of “professional” ministry in six different congregations is that the administrator (or office manager or secretary) is one of the most important positions in a church. They are usually the first point of contact for members, visitors, and strangers.

In addition to the personal connections, Judy also is responsible for compiling and printing the weekly worship bulletin and the monthly newsletter, producing the email communications to congregation, and managing the many groups who use the church facilities. All of this is done with grace and expertise.

In the course of her work, Judy has handled the most mundane and most delicate situations. I’ve had the pleasure and good fortune over the past four years to see how Judy extends a warm welcome and comforting words in even the difficult circumstances. Somehow, she’s never too busy to speak with or assist the many visitors to the church office. She will be greatly missed!

Since Judy informed the Session of her plans to retire, the Personnel Committee has been working diligently to find a new administrator. (Please give a word of thanks to the committee members Marlene Hall, Kris Ludwigsen, and Sharon Lyons.) After much effort and consideration, they have recommended Debora Chew as the new Church Administrator of Grace Church. We will introduce Debora in a future newsletter, but please stop by the office to say hello.

I also want to highlight to events coming up in May. On Sunday, May 19 we will celebrate Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit. You are invited to wear red, orange, or yellow that day (the colors of the flame). Then on Monday, May 14 at 12 noon we will hold a Memorial Day picnic in the Oak Room. There will be a sign-up sheet to RSVP, and we hope you will invite your family and neighbors to join us!

Grace and peace, *Mark*

**Submit articles
for the next issue
by May 17, 2024**

Sunday Worship at 10 AM

www.gracewc.org
[www.youtube.com/
@GracePresWC](http://www.youtube.com/@GracePresWC)

**Office Hours: Tues-Fri
9:30 am—3:00 pm**
Closed Monday & Saturday

**Reach us anytime by email:
gracepreschurchwc@gmail.com**

Phone: 925-935-2100

**Sr. Pastor Mark Burnham:
925-433-5459 or
revmrb@gmail.com**

Pastor Emerita: Charie Reid
Music Director: Jumi Kim
Treasurer: Linda Neyer
Asst. Treasurer: Wendy Watkins
Financial Scty: Faye Hutchings
Administrator: Debora Chew
Preschool Director: Joy Martin



MAY SUNDAY WORSHIP

- May 5 – 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- May 12 – 1 Corinthians
15:1-26
- May 19 – Acts 2:1-,
1 Cor. 12:1-13
- May 26 – Job 1:1-22

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Gessica Johnston	05/11
Lavenia Black	05/13
Sonja Luscher	05/14
Sara Allen	05/19
Roger Reaber	05/23
Mary Munsell	05/25

Church Membership

Are you curious about what it means to be Presbyterian and a member of Grace Church? Let Pastor Mark know if you would like more information. Grace welcomes all and we hope you are interested in becoming an official member of the church.

—Outreach Team

Pentecost Sunday is May 19th

In celebration, and in togetherness on that Sunday, please wear red, yellow and orange clothing to signify the unifying flame of Christianity.



Financial Report

\$4,280 was collected for the recent *One Great Hour of Sharing* Offering. Thank you for your generosity!



Pledge 2024 to-date

Pledged: There are **69 pledges** totaling **\$232,213**, 93% of the target amount of \$250K

Given: **\$129,937** (52%) has been given of the *targeted amount* of \$250K. **56%** has been given of the *pledged amount*.

—Faye Hutchings, Financial Secretary

Memorial Day Picnic

Monday, 5/27 at noon.

Enjoy a traditional picnic and a brief ceremony following the lunch.



Please sign up in the Narthex

Join Friends for a Picnic and Ceremony on Monday, May 27 at Noon.

Grace Church’s traditional Memorial Day Picnic will be held in the Oak Room again this year – food served on the deck, tables inside. Lunch will be followed by a special program, also in the Oak Room.

The traditional picnic fare of hot dogs, potato salad, watermelon and even lemonade will be available beginning at 12 noon, served until

12:45. A short program will follow at one o’clock.

Invite your friends and join us for this important day of remembrance and thankfulness. **Please let us know you are coming—there is a signup sheet in the Narthex or contact the church office to RSVP.** We look forward to serving you and if you want to be involved, please let us know.

Outreach Team: Roz Cannelora, Freddie Delamain, Meg Keeley, Sharon Lyons

**Hannah Circle Meeting
May 14 at 10 am in the Library**

In our Bible Study, **Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke—Acts**, baptism connects us to God, and the community of faith. At the May meeting, we will be discussing **Lesson 8 - Lydia Encounters Jesus in Worship** - “*God, grant me grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other*”. **Scripture: Acts 16:11 - 15**

Light refreshments will be served and a Zoom link will be sent for those who cannot come in person. Invite a friend or neighbor; all are welcome. One doesn’t have to attend Grace Church to be part of Hannah Circle.

Faye Hutchings, Moderator pro-tem



Farewell, but Not Good-bye

My son, Brett, was still just twelve years old on April 1, 2007, when I first walked in the door as your Office Manager. He is 29 now. It is hard to believe that seventeen years have gone by since I first met Roger and Charie and so many of the great congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church. Most recently, working with Pastor Mark Burnham has been an honor and a pleasure. I have enjoyed my position here, especially getting to know so many of you.



Throughout my tenure, I have been inspired by the people of Grace living their faith by welcoming all, giving, volunteering, and caring for each other. The congregation's enthusiasm and commitment to the Church are the life-breath of this place. I feel privileged that you all have included me as a part of it all these years.

It has been my incredible good fortune to participate in numerous special projects, since 2007. I have participated in various campaigns, assisted in the creation of numerous church publications, led the Rossmoor Friends of Grace Team, been part of the Transition Team, and had the advantage of working with and learning from former, CEOs, Finance and Marketing professionals, Musicians, Artists, Clergy, Teachers, Builders, Mechanics, Cooks, Writers, Homemakers, and individuals from all backgrounds and professions. This is part of the beauty of Grace; everyone has something to offer, share or teach.

This is not the end of my relationship with Grace Church, but a new beginning. I shall miss all of you more than I can express and thank you for making me a part of the family of Grace. Please give your new Administrator, Debora Chew and warm welcome.

Affectionately, Judy Williams

Introducing Debora Chew

Our new Office Administrator began on Tuesday, April 23. She has vast experience as an Administrator. The Personnel Committee (Marlene Hall, Kris Ludwigsen, Sharon Lyons) think she will be a valuable asset for Grace. The office will be in good and very capable hands. We were blessed with over 60 applicants, interviewed five, and feel our final selection will be a blessing to us all.

Debora will tell us more about herself in a future issue of the newsletter.



In Loving Memory Mary Ann Littig 6/3, 1942—4/22, 2024

Jon and Mary Ann Littig joined Grace Presbyterian Church in March of 2011. Although Jon was previously baptized, Mary Ann was not. She was baptized at Grace on April 24, 2011.

With their friendly and helpful nature, both the Littigs immediately became beloved members of the congregation. Mary Ann was still working as a math professor at Diablo Valley College, while Jon was retired.

They served as ushers and greeters, at fellowship time and were instrumental in helping at all special events and projects. They were the right arm of the late Rita Chorné when it came to decorating the Oak Room for the big Advent Tea. Mary Ann was an avid Bridge player and played with the Grace Bridge Club. She was honored in 2021 with the PW Lifetime Membership Award. Both the Littigs served in leadership roles at Grace. They were friends to all.

The Littigs moved to an Adult Community in Mt. Juliet, TN in 2021 to be near to daughter, Elizabeth and her family. Cards may be sent to Jon Littig at 408 Cottonwood Dr., Mt. Juliet, TN 37122



In Loving Memory Betty Rose Foster December 21, 1926 - April 17, 2024

Most recently, Betty lived in Guatemala with her son Leland Foster and family. Betty joined Grace in 2002. Her late husband, the Rev. Hal Foster was one of the Parish Associates at Grace until his passing in 2012.

Betty was a member of the Presbyterian Women, the Needlers, and the Flower Guild. she was know for her impressive knitting skills and the numerous beautiful Iris flowers she grew and shared with us at the worship services.

Condolences may be sent to her son Stephen Foster at stephenhfoster@gmail.com. A memorial service may be planned for a future date.



In Loving Memory of Geri Rentz November. 21, 1941 - March 20, 2024 Memorial Service Wed., May 22 at 11 am

The congregation is invited to celebrate the life of our church member and friend, Geri Rentz.



Sunday Worship at 10 AM
May 2024

WELCOME STATEMENT

*We welcome and celebrate
all who join with us*

—the young and the old,
the rich and the poor,
the gay and the straight,
the strong and the weak,
the meek and the brave
—and though we are
different one from
another, we are united
in loving and praising God
and in loving each other.



Prayer Chain

If you have concerns that would benefit from the power of prayer, please contact Faye Hutchings or the church office.

In-person SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES are at 10:00 AM.
Join friends for Fellowship time after church.

Livestream worship in on <https://www.youtube.com/@GracePresWC>—Every Sunday at 10:00 am.

Recordings of past services available on our YouTube channel. Or,
Watch recordings of worship services anytime at www.gracewc.org

Listen to the latest Sunday sermon on your phone. Dial 925-236-2487

Church Membership: Please speak to Rev. Burnham for information.

Meetings and Gatherings

Bible Study, Wednesdays at 10 am in the Library or on Zoom.

Saturday, May 4—Scouts (Girl Troop) Car Wash, main parking lot, hours TBA

Sunday, May 5, Worship with Communion at 10 am

Session Meeting at 11:30 in the Library or on Zoom

Sunday, May 19, Pentecost Sunday—Wear red, yellow and orange to church

Wednesday, May 22, 11am, Memorial Service for Geri Rentz

Monday, May 27, Memorial Day Picnic and Ceremony, See inside for details.

The event is free—All are welcome. Sign up in the Narthex or by contacting the office.