

## Facility Enhancement Focus of Visions Team Work in 2017

by John Bodine, Grace Visions Team Co-Chair

As we begin 2017, we can take some satisfaction from progress made last year on addressing the Visions Team goals. In addition to seeing new energy and expanded participation in our Children and Family programs through leadership of Chamus Burnside-Savazzini, and engagement of visitors and potential new members through the work of Mark Himel, we have also expanded the engagement of our members with *Grace Connect*, our new data system.

The strategy for exposing members to the system has been to work through Grace Group Leaders and their group members, such as Church Council or Stewardship & Finance Committee. This approach has gone relatively smoothly, and a plan now is being developed to complete the roll out to all members over the next few months.

Since *Grace Connect* is an on-line system, we will require an email address for each member before they can be activated. Members will then be able to query their up-to-date Giving Statement on-line, sign up for Grace Activities such as the Grace Greeters or Ushers schedules, and interact with fellow Group members. Full utilization of the rich variety of features in *Grace Connect* will come gradually as we all become more familiar with the tools and discover new ways to fulfill our church mission – *Gather, Grow, and Go*.

We have also progressed in our discussions with local architects to assess opportunities for enhancing our facility, interviewing four firms and visiting five churches over the last two months that have been or are in the process of being renovated. Various members of Church Staff and our Grace Projects Team have participated in these discussions and

visits, and all have expressed surprise at how enlightening some of the architect observations have been.

We all are so familiar with our Grace building that it's hard to imagine something different. This is an opportunity to re-think and re-imagine how Grace can be better shaped and structured to meet future needs:

- Can our Narthex be opened up to provide a brighter, broader gathering space, perhaps with extended views of the Lacy Garden?
- Can we provide more spacious, effective children check-in and activity spaces?

- Can we better connect our family, worship, and gathering spaces to make finding one's way around Grace more intuitive and easier, especially for visitors?

To assist in answering these questions, The Grace Projects Team has chosen to partner with JNKA Architects of Park Ridge, and to work with them to develop a Grace

Renovation Master Plan. We expect this to begin in January and to take three to five months.

The process will involve a questionnaire available to Grace Members for input on needs and ideas, followed by a series of small group meetings with the architects to get a deeper understanding of our culture, our desires, and broad perspectives across our membership. JNKA will then formulate concepts for renovation of key spaces that take into account building codes and regulations.

The resulting concepts will be refined through further discussions and meetings, and, when finalized, will be reviewed for cost estimates and logical construction "phases" that can be completed as funds become available. This will be an exciting undertaking and every effort will be made to be sure all Member interests and concerns are considered.



JNKA Architects of Park Ridge has been chosen to assist in the creation of a Grace Church Renovation Plan.

### Grace Hosts Church Marketing Event

How do we share the Church's story with a new generation? How do we connect in a digital age? Join us on Saturday, January 28th at Grace UMC from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (sponsored by the Aurora District) for worship and conversation with Rev. Dr. Phil Schroeder of the North Georgia Conference.



Schroeder

The interactive presentation, will cover target audience, effective ways to market the church story, how to recover the art of storytelling in an image-oriented world. For more information, or to register to attend, please contact Ashley Pierce at [ashley.pierce@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:ashley.pierce@peopleofgrace.org) or (630) 355-1748.



**Did you know?** All of Grace's Sunday services now stream LIVE via [www.peopleofgrace.org](http://www.peopleofgrace.org). Join us no matter where you are!

## GRIEF SHARE®



**Have you experienced a lost in your life? Are you looking for ways to deal with grief?**

A new group is starting soon that can help you as your journey through your grief. This 13-week class will be utilizing resources from the *Grief Share* program to help you face the challenges of grieving, and move toward rebuilding your life. Facilitated by Katy Klepper and Judy Cornett, the class will start on Sunday, February 12 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 254. For information, or to sign up, please contact Mark Himel at [mark.himel@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:mark.himel@peopleofgrace.org) or (630) 355-1748.

## Foundation Grew and Supported Many Grace Ministries in 2016

by Scott Oats, Grace Church Foundation Chair

2016 was another year of “caring and sharing” for the Grace Church Foundation. Our memorial, principal retained, and principal spendable accounts give us an opportunity to enhance the initiatives of our church and reach out to the broader community. It is a blessing to use the dollars others have so generously donated for these projects.

The Foundation supported the academic and spiritual development of our youth in the congregation by providing scholarships to North Central College. Four of our youths received \$1,000 scholarships to attend North Central College. The United Methodist “Dollars for Scholars” program and North Central College both match our scholarship tripling the amount for each student. The North Central College Tuition Fund, established through a bequest from Anna Stephenson in 2001 and the Bill Abe Endowment, provided the funds for the scholarships. These are good examples of planned giving and current giving that allow the Foundation to expand church programs beyond the annual budget.

Our Memorial Funds — plus generous donations from present and past members, families, and friends of Grace — have given us the opportunity to enhance our facility by sharing the cost of installing handicap doors at the entrance on the lower level. Grace sponsors Boy Scout Troop 555 by letting them meet in Fellowship Hall. Memorial funds were also used to provide Lifetime Membership in the Eagle Scout Association for five Scouts obtaining the Eagle Rank.

We encourage training and development of our leaders through the Continuing Education Fund. This year we funded the tuition for Lynn Leitzen, Director of Children’s Music Ministries, to participate in the training program of the Choristers Guild Institute in Wingate, N.C. This training is very valuable in Lynn’s ongoing work with the children’s programs at Grace. We also helped fund for Dan Wagner, Minister of Music, to attend a Choral Conductors Workshop at George Fox University. This was a five-day professional development workshop for conductors of choirs. A group of the Church staff attended the Leadership Summit at the Church of the Resurrection UMC in Kansas City. This is a respected and recognized program for Church leadership. We



The Foundation funded four scholarships to North Central College, continuing Grace Church’s longstanding relationship of giving to NCC — including its former building, now Miley Swallow Hall.

are grateful to Ruth Gish and others whose generosity and evangelical spirit resulted in an endowment to provide high quality education for our leaders.

Parents Day Out (PDO) is an outreach ministry that serves families in our Grace Church congregation and surrounding communities. The play area was remodeled and greatly improved in 2016 and the Foundation supported a portion of the costs through the Landscaping Fund — established through the generosity of a current member of the congregation to maintain and beautify the church grounds.

The Rodney Gene Lacy Memorial Garden is a vital asset of Grace. It is supported by one of our members. It serves as a blessing to those who have loved ones interred in the Garden, and is open to all who yearn for an area of peace and beauty throughout the year.

One of the major areas of responsibility for the Foundation is being a good steward of the gifts we are given. To that end, we work with several financial institutions to identify the direction of our investments. Each year we assess our financial position and determine what percentage of our gains will be allocated to our individual principal retained accounts. This discussion provides the staff with an entire year to consider their priorities and present them for approval. It remains the purpose of the Foundation to support the church in areas other than those covered by the annual budget. We are grateful for those that have given and continue to give to the Foundation. Your gifts are being used to glorify God and meet the needs of those in our church, community and broader world.

## Pierce to Spearhead Church Communications

The Grace Church Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) is pleased to share it has hired Ashley Pierce to coordinate communications efforts and assist the congregation’s business administration. Ashley comes to Grace from the Northern Illinois Conference’s Aurora/Elgin District Office, where she served as chief administrator for the region. Ashley joined the Grace staff, effective December 1.

“After working in the Conference office, I have come to realize more clearly the importance of communications and connection in the life of the local church as a way to impact the community of God,” Ashley says. “I am looking forward to working with the people of Grace UMC, to build stronger relationships both inside and outside the walls of the church, in order to grow the family of God in Naperville and beyond.”

Ashley is the mother of two teenage girls — Abbie Grace and



Clancy (pictured) — and lives in Montgomery with her husband, Mike. She enjoys running, playing with her two dogs, reading, watching Alabama college football and spending time with friends and family.

Ashley can be reached by e-mail at [ashley.pierce@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:ashley.pierce@peopleofgrace.org). For more information on the hire, contact Pastor Cindy Marino or SPRC chair Robin Schmuckal.

## Over-50 Welcomes Local Biographer Feb. 9

Just like that groundhog Phil, Over-50 will resurface in February to welcome Sue Johnpetler, author of *No Ordinary Life: Memoir of a World War II Bombardier*, who will speak to her biography of Naperville resident Glenn W. King on Thursday, February 9, in Fellowship Hall.

Glenn, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant with just a few missions to complete before returning to his home in Wyoming, was shot down south of Berlin in the waning days

of the war.

*No Ordinary Life* is Glenn’s incredible story of resilience as a prisoner of war and his ultimate return home to complete college and pursue an engineering career in the petroleum industry. Signed copies of the book will be available for purchase.

Please sign up in the church office by Monday, February 6. Cost for the dinner at noon is \$10 cash, per person, payable at the door.



## Grace Gardens Team Improves Grounds

by Jim Nelson

Grace Gardens Team

Our 2016 goal was to maintain an attractive, inviting environment for the members and visitors to Grace Church throughout the year while reducing labor. To minimize volunteer labor needs, we reduced the number of garden plots, redesigned the remaining plots for lower maintenance, and established contracts for regular maintenance and special projects.

We eliminated a small plot near the entrance to the upper parking lots. The plot near the front entrance with the two crabapple trees was redesigned for better appearance and less maintenance. Excavation near Rear Door 4 and removal of a dying tree presented an unplanned opportunity to improve the overgrown landscaping there. Old evergreens and tall grasses were removed, a new tree planted and new plants moved from other locations were installed. Severe erosion near the Lighthouse and on the Gartner side of the church was stabilized with rock.

If you noticed how good the gardens look, thank the great volunteers who do the work. The group includes Betty Long, Bill and Winnie Harrison, Rob and Jan Smucker, Joanne Fink, Amy Westerhold, Bob Saville and John Kelsh. We appreciate Steve Piper who provided trees, tree maintenance and welcome advice. Ron Laub and Steve Peters are always helpful, too; as are the heavy lifters — B&B Landscaping and Padilla Landscaping.