



Grace United Methodist Church
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Naperville, IL 60540-7424

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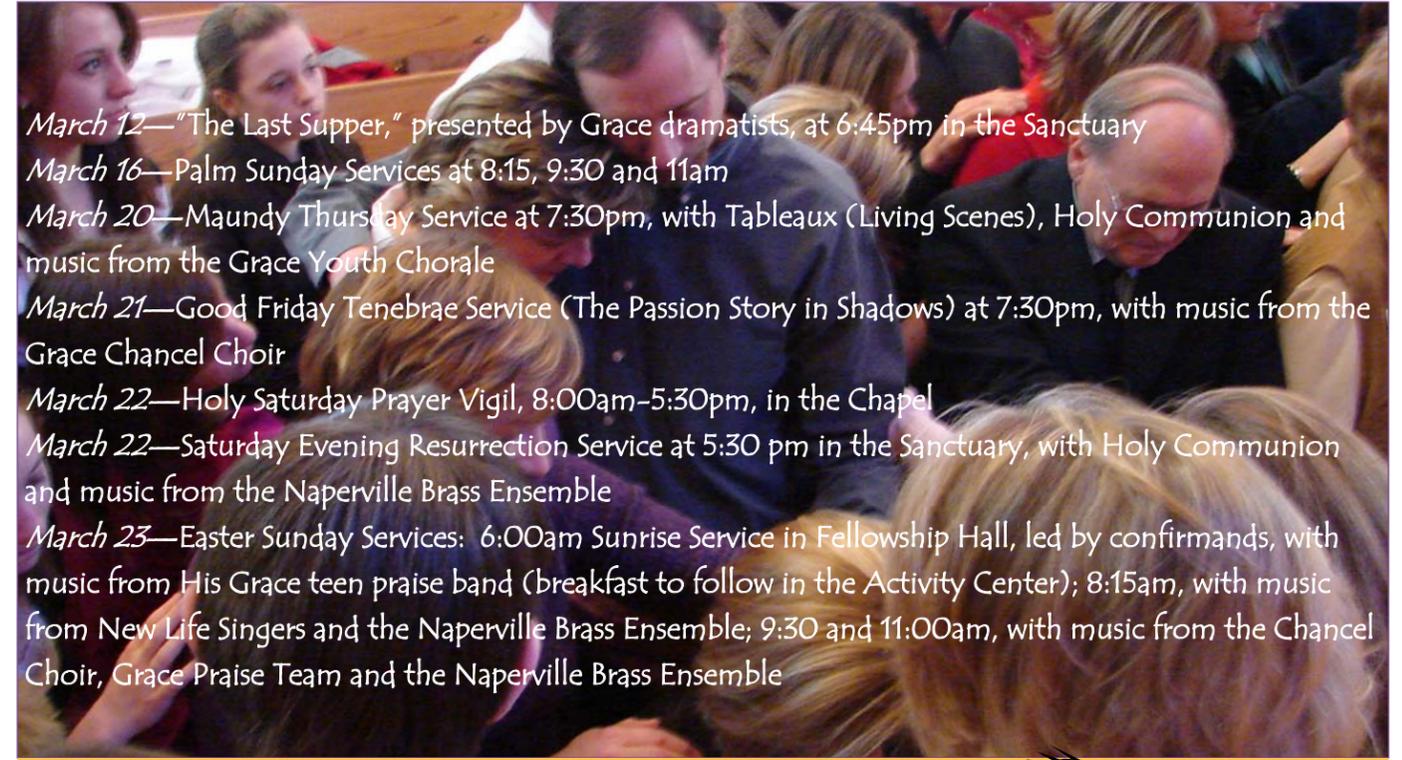


GRACE NOTES

A Communications Ministry of Grace United Methodist Church

Building up the church
 to the glory of God.
 Ephesians 4:12
March 2008

Holy Week is Near...Is Your Heart *UNBOUND?*



- March 12*—"The Last Supper," presented by Grace dramatists, at 6:45pm in the Sanctuary
- March 16*—Palm Sunday Services at 8:15, 9:30 and 11am
- March 20*—Maundy Thursday Service at 7:30pm, with Tableaux (Living Scenes), Holy Communion and music from the Grace Youth Chorale
- March 21*—Good Friday Tenebrae Service (The Passion Story in Shadows) at 7:30pm, with music from the Grace Chancel Choir
- March 22*—Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil, 8:00am-5:30pm, in the Chapel
- March 22*—Saturday Evening Resurrection Service at 5:30 pm in the Sanctuary, with Holy Communion and music from the Naperville Brass Ensemble
- March 23*—Easter Sunday Services: 6:00am Sunrise Service in Fellowship Hall, led by confirmands, with music from His Grace teen praise band (breakfast to follow in the Activity Center); 8:15am, with music from New Life Singers and the Naperville Brass Ensemble; 9:30 and 11:00am, with music from the Chancel Choir, Grace Praise Team and the Naperville Brass Ensemble

"Death and Transfiguration" continued from page 6...

acceptance, only peace. Peace, like I hope for our friend Elaine; peace, as I'd wish to offer to each of you. May your path be blessed with the presence of God, who can accomplish all this, just for the joy of it. Amen.

Someone wrote for this year's Lenten Devotional Booklet of her discovery that salvation isn't "just for when you die"; that service done for the love of Jesus brings a taste "right now" of eternal joy. In the same way, I'd like to urge that this journey that begins in terror of death, a journey which may take more struggling than we'd like, and which may, by God's grace, end in joyful acceptance, is one we can begin long before the doctor says, "I've got bad news for you." Listening to this piece of music (which I did over and over again) helped me to hope for the possibility of the crown that can lie beyond the cross; if listening helps you with one small step in your own journey, then I thank God for letting us share the path, if only for a moment.

There might be one stray bit of testimony in favor of this composition. Someone wanting to deny any concession to death might try to question how much the youthful Strauss could have known about the subject when he wrote this piece at age 25 (in 1889). The answer might be there was a bit of prophecy at work here: when Richard Strauss was on his own deathbed in 1949, he murmured, "Death is just like I wrote it...."

—Merrill Litchfield

Family-friendly!

Weekly Communion

Music from **Vickie Wagner**

Join the Circle!

Without you, it's just square.

Join us Saturday evenings, 5:30 pm, in the Activity Center for an informal, intimate alternative to Sunday worship

It's Never Too Early to Plan for Summer!

This year, Vacation Bible School makes a big splash July 14-18! Registration information will soon be available. Contact Margaret Harrison at 630-355-1748, ext. 241, for further information or to offer your help as a volunteer. We need lots of assistance in many areas, so please consider being part of our VBS team this year!

Summer Youth Missions Headed for New Orleans, St. Louis



Grace youth leaders kicked off our 2008 Summer Youth Missions February 24, sharing this year's destinations, information packets and fundraising plans. Historically in Clarksville, TN, this summer's Side-by-Side trip will focus on Katrina-torn New Orleans June 7-15. Junior high students will return to St. Louis July 27-August 1.

"Our first glimpse of the new New Orleans may be heart-wrenching or humbling, invigorating or full of hope; we can't be sure," wrote Youth Ministries Coordinator Gaye Lynn Loufek in the Side-by-Side packet she put together. "But we can be certain that we are part of God's quilt...out of the remnants of our lives, God creates a beautiful tapestry." Building on the "fabric" theme of this year's Side-by-Side mission, Gaye Lynn adds, "He will

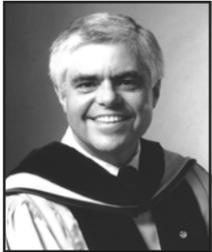
gladly take all of us, the pieces, and guide us so that we may help turn a thread-barren place into a beautiful tapestry and allow a community to feel wrapped in love."

Last summer, Grace made its first visit to New Orleans, in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity. This year, our group will work with Mission Lab New Orleans and stay on the campus of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Side-by-Side is open to participants who have completed 8th grade, on up through adults.

For junior high students (12 years old by July 27, 2008), Grace's "Love Out Loud" mission will travel to St. Louis, MO, working with Group Workcamps on community projects and staying at North County Christian School in Florissant, MO.

Writes Gaye Lynn of this trip, "A year ago, we set out to make a difference in some of the impoverished areas of St. Louis...little did we know that, although our intent was to change the lives of others, we would be forever changed."

In addition to shareholder contributions, this year's summer youth missions will be supported by three fundraising events, the first of which was March 9th's "Stone Soup" and Pie Luncheon. Next up is a youth-run carwash, "Suds on Sunday," on June 1. A golf outing is also planned. More information will be available in the coming weeks on shareholder sponsorship and fundraising events. Please contact Gaye Lynn Loufek at 630-355-1748 for further information on either of our summer missions; information packets/forms can be found outside the Youth Office.



Pastor's Journal

Let Us Not Ponder "Why?"

A young man enters a university lecture hall and, without warning, opens fire, wounding and killing people with whom he has no prior relationship. We are horrified, saddened, angered, and fearful. We want to know why. We want there to be a reason. We want there to be an explanation. We want someone to blame who could have forestalled this tragedy.

An explanation would make the inexplicable rational in its own way. A reason would give the act, however twisted, a context. The answer to why might make it possible for us to work at preventing such random violence from ever happening again. Seeking someone or something to blame for the irrational act of a diseased person may mollify our feelings of helplessness and hurt, but it does not solve the spiritual problem.

Authorities serve a purpose in helping us discern what we might do toward prevention. And it seems natural to focus our concerns, our thoughts, and our attention on the shooter, because in him may lie the answers to our questions. Yet in doing so, we give privilege to the irrational and unexplainable in our spiritual life. It is far better to focus our attention on the victims. Let us name them and give our energy to grieving the loss of possibility and potential that makes us all smaller.

Gayle Dubowski -- Julianna Gehant -- Catalina Garcia -- Ryanne Mace -- Daniel Parmenter

Grace and Peace,

History of a Hamball



Each spring, Grace's United Methodist Women are hard at work making their famous hamballs, those remarkably tasty spheres of baked ham that are the star attraction of the annual Hamball Luncheon. Though confused at times for a dance ("Ham Ball") and a sporting match ("handball"), the popular event has a history nearly four decades old.

Grace's Hamball Luncheon began 38 years ago as a means of raising funds to equip our kitchen when Grace moved to its current location. It was a favorite event at a Methodist church in Racine, WI, where Grace members Mardelle Fleming and Lorraine Scoville had previously attended. Grace's first Hamball Luncheon, held at our previous Ellsworth Street location, served 300 people. Tickets were \$1.50.

Attracting busloads of attendees each year, UMW's Hamball Luncheon continues to serve the community as well as raise funds for local and worldwide missions. Last year, Grace UMW's giving totaled over \$24,000, thanks to the generous support of our UMW members and the response of the people of Grace to our fundraisers throughout the year. Please join us for this year's Hamball Luncheon on April 11! (details at right)



2008 Annual Hamball Luncheon

Presented by Grace United Methodist Women

Featuring

Hamballs
German Potato Salad
Assortment of Cold Salads
Variety of Pies
Rolls and Beverage

Friday, April 11, 11:00am-1:00pm

In Grace's Fellowship Hall
Tickets: \$8.50 per person

Purchase tickets in the Grace Church office
or in the Activity Center on Sundays.
Table reservations can be made for five or more

Open to the public—invite your friends!

A Delicious Fundraiser for Local and Worldwide
Mission Projects

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Extensive church announcements appear weekly in "Grace in Mission," our Sat./Sunday bulletin insert, and online at www.peopleofgrace.org.

Holy Week/Easter Services (see pg. 1)

Pictorial Directory Sign-ups (see pg. 3)

College Ministry Forming (see pg. 5)

Irish Dancers Tap Into "Over 50"

Over 50 Fellowship meets on Thursday, **March 13**, 12:00 p.m., for lunch and a "reel" good time with Irish dancers! Cost is \$5, payable at the door; please reserve by noon on March 11.

Women's Circles

Mary Circle will meet Tuesday, **March 18**, 9:15 a.m., in the home of Elaine Pauls, co-hosted by Winnie Graver. Please bring items for Loaves & Fishes...**Martha-Esther Circle** will meet Tuesday, **March 18**, 9:15 a.m., in the Fireside Room.

Where do you fit on your priority list? Are you even on it? If you are, do you feel guilty, and if you're not, how do you give what you don't have? With what are you filling your "soul reservoir"? These questions and more will be explored with Rev. Dr. Carol Findon—all women are welcome to join us! Contact Leslie Stapleton for free, loving childcare at 630-961-9304...**Ruth Circle** will meet Wednesday, **March 19**, 9:15 a.m., at Audrey Owensby's, co-hosted by Judy Goist. Sandy Leedy will present a book review; please bring a gift for Family Shelter.

Restorative Yoga II

Healing Minister Rev. Adrienne Ann Ilseman is offering two more of her popular restorative yoga sessions, one on Tuesday, **March 25**, 7:00-8:30 p.m. (\$15), and another on Thursday, **March 27**, 6:30-7:30 a.m. (\$10). Register in advance with Rev. Carol Madalin (630-355-1748, ext. 246), and experience the healing power of yoga!

March Book Club

Grace Book Club meets again on Wednesday, **March 26**, 12:45 p.m. in the Fireside Room, to discuss Anne Tyler's *Digging to America*. Co-hosted by Audrey Owensby and Winnie Graver. April's book selection is *Enrique's Journey*, by Sonia Nazario; hosted by Eleanor Preston.

Career Transition Workshop Underway

Grace's Fellowship of Christian Men is currently sponsoring an eight-week Career Transition Workshop on Saturday morn-

ings through **April 19**, 8:00-10:00 a.m., at Grace. CTW offers practical, useful information integrated with Scriptural insight for job seekers and career decision makers of all ages. Led by career consultant Dr. Robert Parker, CTW uses a tested curriculum developed by professional career consultant and executive coach Dave Cox. Registration brochures are in the church office or Activity Center. Contact Dr. Parker at 630-717-6050 or rparker@enablingsi.com. Come as often as you can; you do not have to attend all eight workshops to join us.

Annual Hamball Luncheon (see page 2)

Women's Night Together (see page 3)

"Under the Acacia Tree" (see page 5)

"Cuisine for a Cause" Needs YOUTH!

On Saturday, **April 26**, Naperville CARES will host its 5th Annual "Cuisine for a Cause" benefit to alleviate homelessness and facilitate self-sufficiency among Naperville families. Held on the Naperville campus of NIU, 7:00-10:00 p.m., this fun event features the specialties of over 20 of our city's finest restaurants, live and silent auctions and local entertainment. Much needed are people to bus tables, set up and clean up. Grace youth and confirmands, this an important step in service! Contact Amy Williams at 630-369-0713 to attend or to help out with this worthwhile event.

Fellowship of Christian Men

FCM will meet for its second quarterly meeting of the year on Friday, **April 25**, 6:30-9:00 p.m., for dinner and discussion. Open to all men of Grace, FCM is an excellent forum for topics relevant to men today and a great way to meet other men in our church. Contact Bob Pacanowski at bobfod@aol.com or 630-355-0408 for registration information and future events.

Rebuilding Together-Aurora (see pg. 3)

Naperville Men's Glee Club Concert

Please join us for a wonderful evening of music when the Naperville Men's Glee Club performs at Grace on Saturday, **May 3**, at 7:00 p.m. This concert will debut a song written by Jackson Berkey especially for the Glee Club! Grace member Bill Langham's family commissioned this work in honor of his 75th birthday. A silent auction will begin in Fel-

lowship Hall one hour before the concert and continue during intermission. Auction results will be posted in the Narthex following the concert. Available at the door, tickets are \$15 for adults; \$12 for students and seniors. Contact Judy Langham at 630-862-3799 for more information.

Prayer Shawl Knitters/Receivers:

Have you ever knitted a shawl for Grace's Prayer Shawl Ministry? Have you been wrapped in the warmth and comfort of one? Have you knitted and received a prayer shawl? Whatever your prayer shawl involvement, *Grace Notes* wants to hear from you! Please contact Barb Ceruti at 630-355-1748, ext. 240, or gumcnotes@peopleofgrace.org.

Youth Focus Group Opens to Congregation

Grace youth leaders have been talking to junior and senior high students about what they want to see happen in our Grace Youth Ministry. They will also open the lines of discussion to our entire church on Sunday, **March 16**, at 10:30 a.m. outside the Activity Center. Please make sure to stop by and let your thoughts be known!

YOUTH NEWS

- Summer Mission Trips (see page 1)
- We are having three fundraisers this spring/summer for our summer youth mission trips. The first was our "Stone Soup" and Pie Luncheon, and coming up is a "Suds on Sunday" carwash and a golf outing. Watch for details—get involved!
- Grace's Maundy Thursday service **March 20** needs actors for tableaux during worship. No lines; no parts to learn! Contact Gaye Lynn Loufek at 630-898-8986 if you're interested.
- Sunrise Easter worship needs breakfast coordinators! Confirmands, you're leading our 6:00 a.m. Easter worship service in Fellowship Hall. Tell your folks we need two breakfast coordinators and additional food items. Visit http://www.peopleofgrace.org/youth_missions on our web site for details—scroll way down. This web page also details service opportunities for youth and confirmands.
- Confirmation robes! If you haven't been measured, please send Gaye Lynn your height and weight ASAP!

Church Council Update continued from page 4...

Are we clear on where we are heading as a church? Are we communicating effectively about all of the diverse ministries and mission work conducted at and through Grace? Are we inspired and engaged in our church environment? If not, why not? I can say that the dialogue stemming from

this feedback and commentary has been impassioned, caring, and introspective. Feedback is a gift that enables improvement. We will take it in and determine appropriate actions to address these concerns.

Church Council was not able to fully review the input from the Listening Post at our Feb-

ruary 26 meeting, due to discussion on the budget, but we will schedule this topic as the primary focus for our next meeting on March 25. We will also repeat the Listening Post theme of "How do we attract new members to Grace?" on Palm Sunday, March 16, outside of the Activity Center between services. We welcome and en-

courage your input. I will keep you posted on the conclusions and actions we define through this effort.

Remember to wear your name tags, and don't forget to greet someone you don't know each Sunday – let's be a truly welcoming congregation, and make new church friends!



"Death and Transfiguration" continued from page 4...

program/sleeve notes: "The four sections of the poem may be summarized as follows: A sick man lies in his small chamber, exhausted by his struggle with death. The clock ticks as he falls asleep, smiling wistfully at dreams of childhood. Death renews the battle, but life gains a temporary victory, and the dying man sinks back on his bed. For a moment all is still, but delirium brings memories of childhood and youth. He confronts the aspirations of manhood and his attempts to attain an ideal that constantly eluded him. Eventually 'the last stroke of death's iron hammer resounds.' What was sought in vain on earth is granted in heaven—deliverance from the world and transfiguration."

My own flickers of envisioning, as my imagination was sparked by various suggestions in the music, might well be different from yours, but that's okay. Let me

mention some of them. In the first section, I liked how the orchestra captured the boredom of the long, dull day of the sickbed (when even the clock seems to yawn and stretch before changing minutes); the "sigh" in the music, as he turns over in bed. Suddenly, arrestingly, alarm dashes all boredom away as he "sees" the approach of the Grim Reaper—you hear the menace of that fatal approach, the fright, even terror, of the sick man's response: he'd run away if he could, but he can only grapple with the grisly phantom to gain a moment's respite. The third section, with its odd mix of recollection and conflict, I never did figure out for myself; those notes I quoted above came as a revelation when I got my CD version. In my teen years, I simply bore with it, waiting for the glory of the fourth, the "Transfiguration" section. The main theme of the transfiguration, an ascending sol-do-re-mi, is also the tune, oddly enough, of the ditty "How Dry I Am"—it just

sounds more impressive when played by an orchestra; to me, that gentle upward tune suggested the effortlessness with which the departing soul wafted aloft (so unlike the roaring "blast-off" by which still-living people attempt to reach the heavens).

"What was sought in vain on earth is granted in heaven—deliverance from the world and transfiguration."

Ms. Wright says the "transfiguration" section "culminates in [a] passionate and exalted theme of the majestic finale"; for me, the sudden change of the nature of the music into grandiosity, as a pipe organ is added to the orchestra, suggested the surprising, and overwhelming, appearance of the gates of heaven. As the chord progresses, almost impossibly, into a higher, deeper, more majestic chord, my mind's eye saw those heavenly gates swinging open in welcome. At this point, the brass choir swells into

dominance. My first thought was that the bright metal image of brass suggested the glint of golden streets; more enduringly, I still like the idea of a brass fanfare celebrating a triumph: the safe arrival in heaven of one more child of God!

But what of "transfiguration"? If you'd have asked me back then, I'd have simply replied something about the transfiguration of "mortal to immortal, of corruptible to incorruptible." But now I think my early imagination was just a bit lame (or "undeveloped," if you'd prefer a more objective, less self-deprecating term). Though what I thought then still seems true, there's so much more that gets transfigured in that heavenly passage: death itself is transfigured from "ghastly end" into "passage to bright beginning"; that Grim Reaper that the patient feared so desperately is transformed into a figure of Christ, whose action is transformed from "ripping the poor victim away from the comforts

of his own home" (as his fears had falsely screamed), into "bringing him Home to pleasures forevermore." Transfiguration, indeed.

There's one more thought, almost a postscript, that the music suggests to me: that "majestic finale" that I revel in quickly comes to an end; it fades away almost as promptly as it had materialized. It seemed to me that though I/we had been privileged to see our friend's transition from earth to triumphant heaven, there were limits to that privilege: we could not enter those glorious gates with him. Until we drink that bitter drink of death ourselves, we can only watch as he enters: we're left outside as the gates simultaneously swing closed and vanish from our sight. What delights me in these last few moments of the composition is the tranquility of the music, the "perfect peace" that comes from knowing our friend is safely home. There is no sadness in the orchestra, no funereal note, only

(Concludes on back cover)

Grace Volunteers Build Hope, Right Here at Home by Barb Ceruti

Though it is no longer called "Christmas in April," the mission to rebuild one house, one family at a time that is now known as "Rebuilding Together-Aurora" must certainly feel like Christmas to the families whose homes are given new life each year on the last weekend in April.



"We came to you anticipating help with a few repairs, and in coming to our home with a servant's heart, you saw many needs and met those needs above and beyond what we would have expected," wrote the Borg family, in whose Aurora, IL, home Grace volunteers repaired lights and locks, installed windows and flooring, refinished railings, scraped and painted, replaced countertops, staircases, drawers, doors, doorbells, faucets and storm doors last year—all in one day! By using their skills, knowledge and lots of elbow grease, some 20 men, women and teens from Grace came together to restore hope for a local family.

"It's neat when you've got 20+ people working together, be-

cause they can do Task A, B, C," said Thatch Irwin, who for the past eight years has organized Grace's participation in this project.

"This is a great one-day activity that helps people and demonstrates the Christian spirit," said 8-year-old Rebuilding Together veteran Steve Southworth. "It is great to be part of an activity that transforms someone's home, and I enjoy

sharing the work with my Grace Church friends."

Rebuilding Together-Aurora, a non-profit organization established in 1993, gathers volunteers from churches, service clubs, cities and businesses to provide one day of service refurbishing the home of a low-income family. Homeowners may be elderly, disabled, or have young children, and they must meet certain criteria to receive the assistance of Rebuilding Together-

Aurora. The average cost of repairing each home is approximately \$3,800, and donations to Rebuilding Together are gratefully accepted. Grace Church contributes \$2,000 per year to the organization, and each year faithful Grace volunteers join together to rebuild. Both skilled and unskilled volunteers from our congregation are needed again this year on our work date of Saturday, April 26.

Said Grace member Richard Bray, who has worked with this mission for the past five years as a way of giving back to the community and helping those less fortunate, "I enjoy working on projects like this and can add value, as I have some skills in construction." But, assured Barbara Hartman, anyone can be involved in the project. "I like to put my faith into action...we can all contribute something, no matter our skill level. I spent a lot of time scraping old paint!"



For Brian Fahs, an Aurora resident who is planning to join Rebuilding Together for the fifth time this spring, the most satisfying aspect of the project is helping those in need nearby. "I get a great feeling from helping out someone in my city. Grace has a history of sending hundreds of people away for missions, but there is both the need and the opportunity to serve right here."

Echoing the sentiments of all of our Rebuilding Together volunteers, Barbara Hartman said she is most fulfilled by making a difference in someone's life. According to the Borg family, the Grace team was a gift from above. "You were truly an answer to much prayer and faith in God's great provision," they wrote in their thank you letter to our volunteers.

If you would like to donate to Rebuilding Together-Aurora or volunteer to work on April 26, contact Thatch Irwin at 630-961-3278 or tirwin@wideopenwest.com.



"Women's Night Together" April 18
Ladies, mark Friday, **April 18**, on your calendars for a very special evening of spiritual, emotional and physical rejuvenation. Last year's "Women's Day Apart" was so well-received, we're hosting another event—this time in the evening (6:00-10:00 p.m.), with some very pleasant surprises! Sponsored by the Grace Evangelism Committee, "Women's Night Together" is not to be missed...put this special night on the books now! More details to come.

You Oughtta Be in Our Pictures!
This year, we're producing another pictorial church directory, so please sign up now to schedule your photo sitting. Without everyone's picture, we cannot display the true complexion of our entire Grace family. Photo sessions are at Grace; dates and times are as follows:
Tues.-Fri., April 29-May 2, 3:00-9pm
Sat., May 3, 10:00am-4:00pm
Tues.-Fri., May 6-9, 3:00-9:00pm
Sat., May 10, 10am-4:00pm
Sign up for your session by calling Phyllis Pepiot in the church office (630-355-1748), or sign up in the Activity Center on Sundays, beginning March 9. You may also sign up online at www.peopleofgrace.org; click the Lifetouch button on the home page. Photography and proof viewing occur on the same day. The whole process takes about an hour. Sign up today!
Make-up sessions will be available at other area churches. There will be a \$10 charge for submitting a photo (some exceptions apply). Photo submissions must not be copyright protected. Publication authorization forms must be submitted for copyrighted photos.



Music Notes

Masterworks Spring Concert

Mark your calendars for a spring choral concert, presented by the Grace Chancel Choir and Orchestra on Sunday, **April 20**, at our 8:15 and 9:30am worship services.

"Celebrate Life!" Grace teens will present their musical, "Celebrate Life," about the Gospel writers on Sunday, **April 27**, at our 11:00 worship service.

Children's Choirs to Present "Elijah!"

Grace's Cherub, Angelus and Junior Singers Choirs will be telling the musical story of God's great prophet, Elijah, on Mother's Day weekend (Saturday, **May 10**, at 5:30 worship, and Sunday, **May 11**, at the 11:00 a.m. worship). Auditions are now underway, but it's not too late for any child in grade K-7 to join the choir for this 10-week commitment. Children can join our musical anytime between now and Easter, but the earlier, the better! This year's musical will be dedicated to the memory of Elaine Jungnickel, who devoted countless hours to Grace children's musicals over the years.

Praise Team Seeks Drummer and Keyboardist

The Grace Praise Team is in need of an experienced drummer and keyboardist for our 11:00am worship rotation. Contact Lynn Leitzen at 630-355-1748, ext. 249, if you or someone you know is interested in this opportunity.

Church Council Update by John Bodine



Stewardship and Finance Committee has completed a follow-up on contacting Grace members who had not yet pledged for 2008 as of the end of January. This has increased the pledge amount, but not sufficiently to cover the full budget planned for 2008. Together with Church Council, there has been a determination to make our membership aware of the shortfall, and to make another appeal in order to avoid cutting programs that are deemed essential to carrying out the mission of Grace. A team is being formed to prepare a plan and materials to accomplish this goal. Based on the results, a judgment will be made by mid-summer on the status of pledges to our budget and what further actions are required. Your help and consideration will be important.

Our Church Council Listening Post focused on "How do we attract new members to Grace?" February 24, and a fair amount of input was received. There were thoughts expressed about the need to retain current membership, the need to be explicitly welcoming to visitors, and the need to engage new members proactively in Grace programs and activities. There were thoughts about strengthening our leadership, accountability, and follow-through with programs and activities as well as suggestions about adjusting worship content and style to appeal to different interests. (continued on page 6)

"Death and Transfiguration": A Musical Tale of Hope for the Easter Season by Merrill Litchfield

Like many others these days, I am mourning the death of Elaine Jungnickel. The loss of her bright spirit, one that so lovingly gave of herself to her family and friends, one that also gave many gifts to Grace Church, including the sharing of joys and sorrows in our Cancer Support Group—this is a loss, indeed, one that will need both time and the touch of God's healing grace to accept.

Of the many varied reactions to loss, such as anger, sadness, depression, denial, bargaining, or acting out when we cannot find the words to give vent to our feelings, acceptance is the most positive option, but one we know we cannot have

just by wishing for it. The journey we must travel before we can come to acceptance can lead us down a long and tangled path, through a jungle of conflicting feelings. Though the need to make that journey comes sooner or later to all of us, the path we find, if we find any at all, is different for each of us. An insight that seems like "The Answer!!!" to one person may sound "way off the path" to other seekers, who may be asking different questions. I'd like to share a couple of my own steps from that path; if they are of some help to you, then praise God, and you're welcome to them. If they're of no help to you (at least for now),

let's not worry about it, but let each go with God as we walk our different paths.

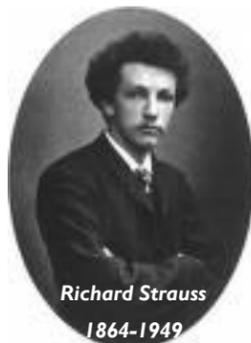
Not surprisingly, some of what I've learned about mortal life I learned by trying to prolong it as a paramedic: the feeling of triumph when we can delay death, if only for a short time; even more, those years of experience taught me the rock-solid certainty that all lives come to an end. Though this has been a rich source of meditation and learning for me, it probably offers too many possibilities for a single essay. So for this moment, I'd like to mention a different experience, one you may be able to share in more fully. After all, it's

far easier to borrow a CD from the library and listen to a 20-minute piece of music than to train as a medic and serve a few years of pushing Band-Aids!

Back in my teen years, an odd coincidence of inclination and opportunity let me explore my awakening love of orchestral music. Happily enough (for someone with a lively imagination, like I had), the very first record I bought featured two "tone poems" by Richard Strauss, music intended to suggest—though not exactly describe—some sort of happening. "Til Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks" was the featured "side A" piece (that title was probably what led

me to buy it, since it appealed to my sense of mischief). Though I liked the title music a lot, the piece that has meant more to me in the long run was the one on the flip side: "Death and Transfiguration."

Let me give you a general description of it by quoting Elizabeth A. Wright's



(Continued on page 6)

College Ministry Forming at Grace

A new college-aged small group ministry is starting here at Grace! If you are age 18-25, we invite you to be part of this exciting new program. Our first meeting is Tuesday, **March 11**, 7:30 p.m., in Room 234. Meetings will likely be an hour and a half every other week; however, we can discuss everyone's availability at our first session. The four components of our small group will be Biblical Equipping (applying the Word to our lives), Community Building and Care (a time of sharing), Prayer and Worship, and Missional Service. Consistency and confidentiality are the tenets of our group. You are welcome to bring a friend. If you have any questions, or if you missed our first meeting, please feel free to call Christine and Josh Freeman at 630-416-8810, or e-mail cfreeman@wowway.com. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Weekday Children's Center Receives Quality Counts Grant

Weekday Children's Center, sponsored by Grace since 1965, recently received approval of grant funds of over \$9,700 through the Quality Counts Child Care Grant, funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Child Care and Development. With these grant funds, WCC will be purchasing a number of items, including classroom furniture, musical instruments, toys for outdoor science exploration, and a variety of classroom items. Each item was carefully selected to meet quality indicators required by the grant. Grants are administered within defined areas in the state. In DuPage and Kane Counties, only half of the proposals submitted were funded. Weekday's funding, at

90% of that requested, was among the highest in the area. Congratulations, Weekday Children's Center! For information, contact WCC Director Erin Cetera at 630-355-5495 or weekday@xnet.com.

Thank You, Nagys!

Many thanks to Jim and Sherri Nagy, of Cutting Edge Graphics, who made our outdoor "Unbind!" and Saturday Evening Worship banners and signs. The Nagys also made our Christmas Eve banner and luminaria sign. The signage looks great, and your generosity is much appreciated!

"Under the Acacia Tree"
Sat., April 19, 6:30pm
in Fellowship Hall

Families, join us for a special evening of African food, songs and rhythms, stories from amazing people, and celebration of hope for Africa! A special offering will be taken in support of building water wells in Darfur and of Methodist missions in Kenya

Because of spring break, the deadline for April Grace Notes news is **Monday, March 17**

Grace Notes is published for the members and friends of Grace United Methodist Church. To submit news, please contact Barb Ceruti, Communications Director, at 630-355-1748, ext. 240, or e-mail gumcnotes@peopleofgrace.org

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GRACE PERSONALS

Sympathies to the Friends & Families of...

Charlie Lavender, friend of Mary Davis and family

Elaine Lund, cousin of Jill Ridder

Ventan Yablonski, husband of Evelyn Yablonski

Students at Northern Illinois University, whose lives were taken on February 14

Baptisms

Melissa Elizabeth and Chase Matthew, children of Craig and Holly Patterson, were baptized on February 16

Kendall Elizabeth, daughter of Brian and Lori Fahs, was baptized on February 17

Austin James, son of Jeff and Shannon Sitterly, was baptized on February 17

Celebrations

Zachary Kenneth, son of Donald and Traci Nelson, was born on February 27

Paul III, son of Paul Grysh, Jr. and Melissa Hunt, and grandson of Paul and Lorie Grysh, was born on March 3

Letters of Thanks

Dear Grace Church Members,

Thank you for your prayers, cards and e-mails, assistance and love over the past six months during our son Eric's initial struggles with cancer. We are so thankful that we are in such a caring community. We can't imagine coping without your support and the support of other friends and family. Eric and his family are moved into their new home near Plainfield; he has started his new job, and their lives are returning to something like normal. He seems to be doing well, but the journey is not over. He has started on a new chemotherapy, which we pray will be effective. We live on hope, we pray for healing and for peace.

The last six months have humbled us, have caused us to more fully appreciate the caring of you all and have brought us closer to Jesus. But sometimes it is hard to listen to a hymn with a dry eye. One of the hymns on Sunday, January 27, spoke volumes to us: FWS #2162 "Grace Alone." (In part) "Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown He will provide, Christ in us our Cornerstone, we will go forth in grace alone." Amen!

Please continue to pray for Eric and his family.



Thank you all,
Bob and Donna Plummer