

## Don't Let the Garbage Truck Pass You By

By Pastor Cindy Marino

**I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. ... that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery--Christ. Colossians 2:2**

It had been a busy few weeks. The garbage was piling up, literally. The staff appreciation party at the parsonage in January produced Mexican food catering pans, boxes and containers. I still had Christmas wrappings and boxes ready to go. Then came several late Tuesday night meetings in a row. Preoccupied, I forgot to take the garbage cans to the curb for the Wednesday morning pickup. You know that sick feeling you get when you awake to the sound of the disposal truck's diesel engine as it accelerates past your house? #foreheadslap

I have an extra-large garbage container, but even that wasn't enough. "Overflowing" doesn't begin to describe the unsightly array of bags and boxes that accumulated. I did finally make it happen. I'm sure the neighbors thought I was moving out or remodeling when they saw me dragging the construction sized black bags to the curb.

The next morning, I cringed as I looked to see if the guys on the truck had cleared away my pile. No one should have to take on someone else's excess garbage. But, it was gone—all of it! What a great feeling! Smelly garbage gone! Bags gone! I had my garage and my life back under control.

That might be a bit of an exaggeration—but, only a bit. Little things can pile up!

Lent is the time in the life of the church when we are finally reminded to take the proverbial garbage to the curb. The season of Lent invites us to empty our hearts, minds and spirits of those false narratives we collect to rationalize our lives and make sense of our broken world. We come to this time to dispose of our skepticism, our pride, and our selfish ways. We ask God to replace them with patience, a teachable spirit, faith, and a renewed commitment to love.

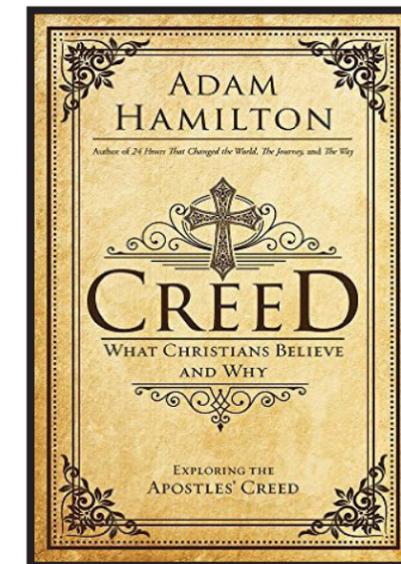
This year we are asking a few big questions to get the cleanup process started: What do Christians believe? Why do they believe it? Why does it matter? Using Adam Hamilton's latest study, "Creed," we are asked to consider how our behavior reflects those beliefs we find at our core.

We all act out of guiding values shaped by our life experiences. Do those values reflect our beliefs? These are the questions we find as we explore the Apostles' Creed, the ancient words that have been explored by generations of newcomers to the

Christian faith preparing for baptism on Easter Sunday. The Apostles' Creed outlines the beliefs that shaped the values that guided the early Christian life. Over time, the early church fathers refined the creeds as they drilled down into specifics around how they experienced the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, and Jesus Christ as Messiah.

I am excited to join you in these conversations! We are offering classes and group discussions at several times throughout the week. (For more information, "Creed" classes on Page 2). The book is also available in the office or Narthex for \$15.

Please consider using this time of Lent to sweep out the old and make room for the new. Get to know a few of your fellow garbage collectors. It's time to kick it to the curb and make room for God.



### “Creed” Adult Bible Study Choices:

Class sign-up sheets are available online ([www.peopleofgrace.org](http://www.peopleofgrace.org)), in the bulletin and at the table in the Narthex on Sundays.

#### Sunday Starting March 5

9:30 a.m. The Forum Class (FS) Facilitated by Pastor Bill Bryan, Hearts on Fire (Room 250), New Connections Class (Room 226), 10:45 a.m. Facilitated by Mark Himel (FH) and 11 a.m. Open Hearts & Minds (Room 232)

#### Mondays Starting March 6

1 p.m. Sisters Bible Study- All Women's Study (Room 254) Facilitated by Pastor Tammy

#### Wednesdays Starting March 12

9:30 a.m. Facilitated by Pastor Tammy (Room 254) Childcare Provided.

#### Thursdays Starting March 2

11:30 a.m. Facilitated by Pastor Cindy (Room 231) 6:30 p.m. Facilitated by Pastor Cindy (Room 231).

#### Online Discussion

A link will be emailed upon creation of the group. Facilitated by Pastor Matthew

### Over-50 (March 9)

Ever wonder what goes on during those “Honor Flights” for World War II and Korean War veterans?

On Thursday, March 9, our own Les Pauls will tell us about his Honor Flight last year.

This veteran of the Korean War and a long-time Grace member will share his journey with us.

Please register in the Church Office or (630-355-1748) by Monday, March 6 to hear this inspiring story. Tickets are \$10 cash payable at the door.



**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!

# VISION UPDATE | Let's Revitalize Grace!

By John Bodine, Grace Projects Team Chair

**How do you feel when you enter Grace? How do you think a visitor might feel? Do you give up fighting your way through narrow halls after worship to get to coffee and just head for your car? Are you comfortable finding your way around Grace or do you just stick to the places you know?**

These are some of the questions that Grace members participating in the master plan interviews will be considering during the last two weeks of February. Our project partners, JNKA Architecture, will have already poured over questionnaire input from members that will guide them in probing a bit deeper to reveal current issues and future needs. They have already drafted drawings of our existing facility to use as a reference for these discussions, helping participants visualize the big picture.

The Interviews will be completed on Sunday, February 26, and will be followed by a consolidation period in which JNKA will summarize what they've heard and delve into architectural implications. On March 15, the Grace Projects Team will meet to review and critique a report of the findings by JNKA, setting the stage for conceptual design and development. Thereafter, the team will meet every three weeks to critically review work to date and steer evolving concepts until June, when a "Town Hall"

will be planned as an open forum for review by all Grace members. No construction activities have been committed to or planned for at this point, though capital funds of about \$1million dollars are available to Church Council from the Glenna Holloway Estate Gift.

During this design period, we plan to keep Grace members updated through monthly progress reports in Grace Notes, and weekly summary notes in Grace in Mission. At any time, members are encouraged to touch base with Grace Projects Team Members with questions and concerns. This is an exciting venture with inspiring possibilities, but we are mindful of the importance of keeping in focus our objective of presenting a welcoming spirit to all and best enabling programs and activities for young families and children.

If there are questions or concerns, please contact a member of the Grace Projects Team:

Jeff Barbeau	John Bodine
Chamus Burnside-Savazzini	Larry Hartman
Mark Himel	Betsy Koepnick
Ron Laub	Gail Lindsay
Rick Loufek	Cindy Marino
Steve Peters	Ron Wills

# Facing Division Together

By Pastor Cindy Marino

We call it BoOM--the Board of Ordained Ministry. This is my fifth year of serving on the BoOM. Each year we spend two days in February and another two in March at a Candidates' Conference, selecting your pastors for the future. If you think we in the local congregation have differences of opinion, try getting 52 pastors, deacons and laity to come to some consensus!

Despite the social and theological issues that divide us, those serving in this most sacred and difficult way hold tightly to the process we've agreed upon to evaluate candidates. It isn't perfect. But we trust God to direct the process to the end that God desires.

In this God-directed selection process, there is great joy and hope in the relationships formed as we do this holy work together. The person seated next to me at BoOM may think differently, but neither of us is there to push for anyone's personal agenda. Instead, our process prompts us to discern where God is working in the life of those who feel they are called to join us in leading God's people through ordained ministry. Watching for God's work in and through these candidates, carries us from a place of contention to a place of compassion, from a place of criticism to a place of curiosity, from being miles apart to moving toward God together.

When I think about the question, "Why Church," I am reminded that Jesus formed his followers as people of grace and compassion. Spending time together in prayer, worship, study, service and fellowship was a means through which the Holy Spirit formed each one as the person God created them to be.

It's ok if you don't agree with someone. There is a way forward: listen for the words behind the words being spoken that contradict your own opinions; accept the person speaking, even if you don't accept their opinion; consider their circumstances; above all, see them not as a label, but as God's child. Ask yourself, "What is God asking me to learn through them?"

You most likely will not change another person's position. But if we, as the church, can model a way to respond to one another in love--rather than react by assuming the worst--perhaps we can have the important conversations that will move us toward one another rather than away. Our United Methodist process of staying connected in prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness is powerful beyond measure. God is directing us to the end that God desires. Glory to God! Amen!



## Youth Summer Missions: June & July!

We personally invite you to come along!

**Side xSide (June 10-18)** welcomes all who have completed 8th grade - adult! This is a great time to serve "side x side" with your child; we always need adults to come along! Registration is now open for youth and adults ([www.peopleofgrace.org](http://www.peopleofgrace.org)).



**Hope @ Home (July 11-13)** welcomes all who will be entering 6th-8th grades in the fall of 2017, as well as adult leaders/chaperones. Hope @ Home is a homebound mission experience, bringing hope to our neighbors in the Chicagoland area. Serving in your own "backyard" alongside your child can be a very rewarding experience. Registration is now open ([www.peopleofgrace.org](http://www.peopleofgrace.org)).

Our next meeting for both mission teams will be held on March 12, at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Contact, Gaye Lynn Loufek, Director of Youth Ministries (630-355-1748).



**Grace United Methodist Women**  
present their

## Annual Hamball Luncheon

~Featuring~  
Hamballs  
German Potato Salad  
Assortment of Cold Salads  
Variety of Pies  
Rolls and Beverages



**Friday, April 21, 2017**  
**11:00 am - 1:00 pm**  
**Grace United Methodist Church**  
**300 E. Gartner Road, Naperville, IL**

**\$12.00**  
Proceeds Donated to Missions



~For Tickets~  
**Church Office 630-355-1748**  
(table reservations can be made for 5 or more)

## #GraceWins

The Grace Youth Choir presents...

#GraceWins, a contemporary worship musical event on Saturday, March 11 at 5 p.m. and Sunday, March 12 at 11 a.m. The Youth Bell Ensemble will also play during this musical worship services.

Grace friends, you will be encouraged and blessed by this worship musical! Please join us to support our youth and experience this great contemporary worship experience. Contact Dan Wagner ([dan.wagner@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:dan.wagner@peopleofgrace.org)) for more information.

## Whodunit? Calling ALL K-7th graders!

Help us solve the mystery in this spring's musical, "A Not So Terrible Parable"! This is a perfect opportunity for those who have always wondered about choir or have been unable to make a full year commitment. Rehearsals are Sunday afternoons from 2 p.m - 4: p.m. beginning March 12.

Contact Lynn Leitzen ([lynn.leitzen@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:lynn.leitzen@peopleofgrace.org)) or (630- 355-1748) for more information