

Grace United Church of Christ

Shalom

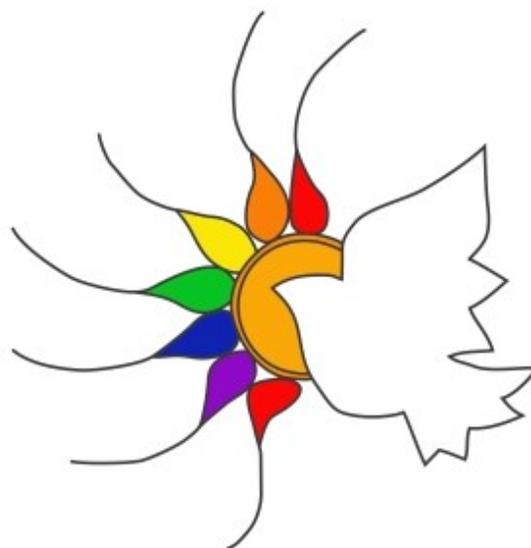
September 2014

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Let's Jump!

I stood on the cliff looking down 75 plus feet to the river below. All my friends had already jumped, but they did not fear heights the way I did. I wanted to jump. I knew the water was deep enough, but what if I could not reach the safety of air after plunging so deep into the water? What if there was some unseen obstacle? It was such a long way down. My friends cheered me on. "Come on Chris, jump, it will be fine!" I stepped to the very edge of the cliff, peering down, trying to reassure myself that it was safe, feeling my knees shaking, telling me not to do it...

Twice I told myself I was ready to jump, only to find that not all of me agreed, my body betraying my mind. Then I did it. I jumped as far from the cliff as I could, filling my lungs with all the air I could muster. Falling, falling, anticipating the impact of the water; 75 feet is a long way. I remember being confused because of the delay before hitting the water. It had been almost instantaneous for my friends, where was the water now? Would I have enough air to sustain me?

And this I think is the best metaphor for where Grace is right now! We have spent the summer investing in community, playing, and taking a break from all the pressures. We have taken time to reflect on our journey to the cliff top, examined our surroundings and at the same time we can see the changes ahead: the holidays, the Christmas season, a new way of doing Christian Education, new ways of being church in the 21st century, and even a new pastor. Now is the time when we stand on the cliff looking down. We know we will plunge into God's grace and find salvation, find our calling, and yet we have some fear. Can we really make it? Will we be okay? Are we doing it the right way?

I hit the water hard. It was warm and welcoming on top, relaxing my body from the ball I had curled into; lengthening, swimming for the light above. I was deep, my arms trying to paddle for the surface while momentum carried me deeper. I fought to swim my hardest, barely keeping the panic from overtaking me. My fingertips were the first to surface, then my head, gasping for breath, splashing in the water I had conquered. I had done it! It was terrifying and wonderful all at the same time. I let out an awesome bellow of triumph, ready to do it again!

Take a deep breath, take my hand, let's jump!

Shalom
Pastor Chris

President's Message

How many changes have occurred in your life over the past year? Do you ever find yourself identifying changes, and then systematically categorizing them into “good” and “bad” changes depending on how it made you feel?

What about the changes happening at Grace UCC? We are searching for a new settled pastor and a new music director. We are working on recreating our youth programming and how we utilize the Evangelism Committee. So many changes! Does it “feel” like too much? If so, take a moment to reflect on Isaiah 43:19, which says, “Behold I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

Whether you are experiencing change personally or at Grace, let us rejoice in God's presence through every change, faithfully believing in a greater plan, and resist the temptation to limit God's possibilities in our lives. Remember: God IS still speaking. Let's listen and be open to new possibilities.

Peace,
Amy Southall, Council President

Fun Outdoor Events at Grace

The Congo Life Committee has been busily planning lots of events for the fall to bring together members of all ages and interests. Get out your calendars and pens because you'll want to mark down these dates. You may want to invite friends to join you at these fun events also.

▪ Sunday September 7: Stay for a church picnic after outdoor worship and the Memorial Garden dedication. Congo Life will provide hot dogs with condiments and sauerkraut, and drinks. Members are invited to bring a dish to share. (Stay for the food and fun, whether or not you have a dish to share.) In addition to food and games for all ages, we'll be having a dessert contest this year. Dust off your favorite “secret” recipes and join the fun. We'll have prizes for Best Pie, Best Cake/Cookie, Oldest Baker, Youngest Baker and Best Use of a Vegetable in a Dessert.



▪ Friday September 19: Pull up a chair around the campfire at Grace at 8pm. Congo Life will bring the fire, you bring snacks to share and a lawn chair. These campfires have been popular this summer and there's no reason not to continue them into the fall.



▪ Saturday October 4: Hiking at Tucquan Glen. Lace up your hiking boots, pack your favorite trail mix and meet fellow hikers at noon at Babies R Us near Park City for a hike at one of the county's most beautiful hiking spots.

Congo Life has more activities coming in October and November. Stay tuned to *Shalom* and the Sunday announcements for details.

Update on Grace's Pastor Search

The Pastor Search Committee consists of Suzy Luber (chair), Beth Bowers, Laura Carey, Jeff Dombach, Chris Helm, Verna Labrador and Nick Santaniello. We have been reading profiles of candidates for the position of pastor at Grace UCC. We have discussed several candidates but to date none seems to be a perfect fit for Grace. The committee last met August 28 and meets every two weeks as the profiles are received until a pastor is found.

~ Pastor Search Committee

Notes of Thanks from the Handbell Choir

The Memorial Bells of Grace would like to thank Tom and Marilyn Miller for staining the handbell music stands this summer. They look beautiful. Thank you.

I would like to thank the Endowment Committee for giving me the opportunity to attend Vibration Vacation for handbell enthusiasts and directors in August. Much was learned during the two day workshop. Greatly appreciated.

~ Jeff Clouser, Director of Bells



Centennial Capital Campaign Update

*Grace upon Grace
for a second century*

September 7 will be an extra special Sunday at Grace with the dedication of the Memorial Garden. An original sculpture designed and created by Jeremy Waak, Pennsylvania College of Art and Design professor, will be unveiled for the commemoration of persons whose ashes will be placed in the garden. (See page 4 for details about the Memorial Garden and the new sculpture.) We have received contributions for half the cost of this sculpture and owe the balance of \$1,000. Contributions are welcome!

Maintaining the Memorial Garden will be the job of our new part-time gardener, Deb Becker, who is also the church custodian. The \$500 fee to have an individual's ashes placed in the garden will be used, in part, to pay for garden maintenance.

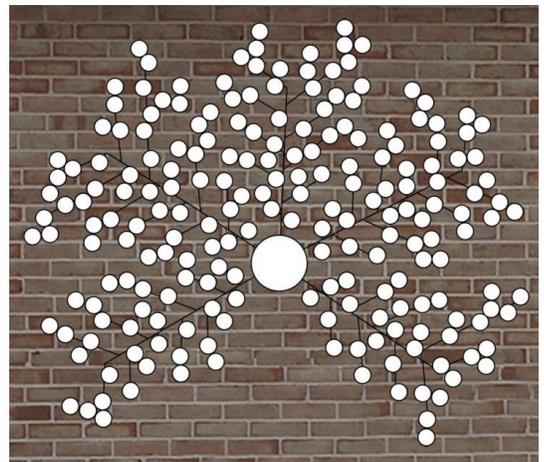
With the completion of the Memorial Garden, we have paid B.R. Kreider & Son for all garden construction costs. In addition, this summer, we paid a deposit for the organ repair scheduled after the first of the year. These expenses necessitated the use of \$16,000 from our line of credit at Cornerstone. As Capital Campaign contributions come in, we hope to repay this loan quickly to minimize interest costs.

Thank you to everyone for ongoing support of Grace Capital Campaign projects. As of July 31 we have received a total of \$105,458 for the Capital Campaign. Our goal is to raise \$180,859 by the end of 2015.

~ Centennial Capital Campaign Committee

Memorial Garden of Grace

- ✚ **Purpose** – The Memorial Garden is a sacred outdoor space for the interment of ashes in an alternative setting to a cemetery.
- ✚ **Accessibility** – The Garden is accessible at all times and is open to the public. Walkways are handicapped accessible.
- ✚ **Eligibility** – Interment in the Garden is open to all members, friends and family of Grace United Church of Christ.
- ✚ **Committal of Ashes** – Cremated remains in *biodegradable containers* will be laid to rest with dignity and respect by interment (burial) or scattering of ashes.
- ✚ **Commemoration** – No individual sites will be designated with markers or memorabilia.
- ✚ **Memorial Name Sculpture** – The name of the loved one will be engraved on our Memorial Sculpture located in the Garden (photo, right).
- ✚ **Request Forms** – Requests for committal of ashes are available from the Grace UCC office.
- ✚ **Fee** – The fee for committal in the Grace Memorial Garden is **\$500** and will include an inscription of the loved one's name on the Memorial Sculpture. The fee will help to offset the cost of caring for the Garden to ensure that it is always a beautiful and reverent place.
- ✚ If a family would like to make arrangements ahead of time, **pre-payments will also be accepted.**
- ✚ For funeral or memorial service fees for the Pastor or Director of Music, please contact the church office.



Memorial Sculpture

*For more information about the **Grace Memorial Garden** please contact the Memorial Garden Committee or the Pastor.*

Neighbors in Need

On Sunday, October 5, we will be receiving the Neighbors in Need special mission offering. This offering supports the United Church of Christ's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Please give as generously as you can.

World Communion Sunday

Celebrated the first Sunday in October, World Communion Sunday has taken on new relevancy and meaning in a world where globalization often has undermined peace and justice and divided the peoples of God's earth. On this day in diverse ways we celebrate our oneness in Christ in the world we are called to serve with hope for grace, reconciliation and healing.

Grace Becoming Even More Accessible to All

Starting September 7 at 9am, a new task force will meet Sundays to study the United Church of Christ's "Accessible to All" (A2A) materials for a better understanding of how Grace UCC can truly be open to all people. The group will meet in the Garrett Room.

Rooted in the resolution passed at the 2005 General Synod ("Called to wholeness in Christ: becoming a church accessible to all"), A2A challenges all UCC congregations and organizations "to become accessible to all; to embody a philosophy of inclusion and interdependence; and to support and implement the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990." An A2A congregation makes the commitment to be physically and attitudinally welcoming of people with disabilities.

See Jeffrey Hamilton or Amy Fishburn for more information.

Understanding Suicide – A Gathering

Sunday, September 21 after worship

There will be an opportunity at fellowship time on this Sunday to learn about suicide – warning signs, and helping persons who may be contemplating suicide and families who have experienced a suicide in their families.

Jeffrey Hamilton will be leading this gathering and providing materials. If you cannot attend, and would like copies of the materials, please contact him at (717) 419-1152.

Pastoral Care for Suicidal Persons and Their Families

A Workshop for Faith Leaders and Communities

Wednesday, September 24, 9am - 2:30pm

Lancaster Pastoral Counseling and Education will be providing a community workshop focusing upon understanding suicide, how to reduce it, assess persons at risk, and support these persons and their families. Lunch will be provided.

Members of Grace Church are welcome to join for all or part of this class. For more information, or to register please speak with Jeffrey Hamilton, (717) 419-1152.

Let's Get Out of Town!

Join the Spiritual Life & Growth Committee as we travel to Hartman Center Saturday, October 18 for a day retreat. We will spend time together discussing the life of our church, as well as enjoying one another's company. It is also the annual Fall Festival, so we'll have time to enjoy the food, silent auction, music, and hayrides! We will leave the Grace parking lot at 8am for the two-hour drive. We plan to be back in Lancaster by 6pm. Sign up on the sheet in the narthex, and if you are willing to be a driver, please indicate that as well.

~ Amy Fishburn and the Spiritual Life & Growth Committee



Parish and Community Health Resources

Ask Dr. Trudie: “You Have Two But Can Live With One”

We tend to take our vital organs for granted — that is, until they start to fail us. Take your kidneys, for instance. Not an especially glamorous organ, the kidneys work away, day and night, while we go about our daily routines. We may even look on them as a nuisance, causing us to get up at night or making it necessary to take a break from a road trip or ball game. However, the kidneys are actually pretty amazing organs that do so much more than produce urine.

Each kidney contains about a million nephrons, units that filter the blood to remove waste from plasma, the liquid part of our blood. They also regulate the excretion of potassium, maintain a normal acid/base (pH) balance, regulate fluid volume, help maintain healthy bones, and secrete the hormone responsible for stimulating the bone marrow to produce red blood cells. Certain medications are metabolized by the kidneys and depend on the kidneys to maintain therapeutic blood levels.

Most people are born with two healthy kidneys, so how do we get into renal (kidney) trouble? The two types of renal disease are chronic and acute. Acute renal disease happens when there’s a sudden insult to the kidneys such as burns, dehydration, trauma, sepsis, surgery, or injury.

The more insidious chronic disease is the result of long term conditions like hypertension, diabetes, recurrent kidney stones or urinary tract obstruction, hepatitis B or C, arthritis, heroin abuse, and certain over the counter and prescription medications. The disease is classified in stages 1-5, based on how well the nephrons are

filtering the plasma. This is measured and expressed as the GFR, or glomerular filtration rate, and is used along with other markers to determine renal function.

Most people in the first three stages are asymptomatic. Those with stage 4 or 5 disease may have increased urination, blood in the urine, or swelling. Because the kidneys remove toxins, in stage 5 patients will experience malnutrition, loss of lean body mass, and muscle weakness. Because the kidneys play a role in maintaining normal red blood cell count, renal disease results in anemia, which in turn causes fatigue, reduced exercise capacity, diminished cognitive function, and lowered immune response. The anemia can also be associated with cardiovascular disease and heart failure.

Your doctor performs a complete history and physical to assess potential health risks and may order urine and blood tests to screen for kidney disease. Another commonly used tool to check for blockages or structural abnormalities is ultrasound. If you have diabetes, hypertension, autoimmune disease, or other conditions that could increase your odds for developing kidney disease, your doctor will be keeping a very close eye on your renal function.

By maintaining a healthy blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose, you can slow the progression of chronic kidney disease. Certain medications have a protective effect, while others, like NSAID’s (such as Motrin or Aleve), certain antibiotics, and IV contrast dye used in CT scans, must be avoided due to their nephrotoxic effects.

(Continued on page 7)



Fall Cleanup Helpers Wanted

Join the Property Committee Saturday, October 4 from 8am to noon for our annual fall cleanup! Some jobs that need to be done, inside and out, include weeding, washing windows, cleaning up under and around some of the pine trees, cleaning the kitchen, and straightening up around the outdoor trash area. Coffee and donuts will be provided.

~ Property Committee

Ask Dr. Trudie *(continued from page 6)*

When renal function declines to the point that the rest of the body is at risk, dialysis as a lifelong treatment or as a bridge to transplant is an option. Dialysis filters the blood, removing the wastes, excess fluid, and salt, and is done either using hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis. In hemodialysis, a surgeon creates access to your blood supply by either creating a fistula (joining an artery and vein together) or inserting a tube into a vein to provide a temporary access. Then the patient goes to a dialysis center where his or her blood is sent from the access into a machine that filters the blood and returns it to the patient. Most people need to have this done three times a week. With peritoneal dialysis, a patient instills a special fluid into the body cavity through a surgically placed tube; the body's peritoneal lining acts as a filter and the fluid is then drained from the body cavity. This may be done every night, or throughout the day.

As you can see, once your kidneys stop cooperating, dialysis becomes a large part of your life, and if you want to travel, you must plan ahead so your exchanges can be

done at other sites. Luckily, some people can receive kidney transplants and go back to their untethered lives. In patients who do not have heart, lung or liver disease, recent cancer, hepatitis, tuberculosis, life-threatening diseases, or risky lifestyle habits, a donated kidney can give a new lease on life. However, the blood and tissues must match, and a potential recipient may need to wait a long time until a suitable donor kidney is found. Additionally, the recipient must take medications several times a day for the rest of his or her life to prevent kidney failure.

So, avoid risky behavior like smoking and drug abuse that can damage your kidneys. If you have a condition that could lead to renal failure, do your best to keep it under control. Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using over-the-counter medications, and don't be afraid to ask your doc whether to adjust medications to allow for decreased renal function. Finally, consider becoming an organ donor, because I'm sure God has more than enough kidneys needed in heaven.

Dr. Trudie welcomes readers' comments and suggestions for future columns. She can be reached c/o graceucc@comcast.net.

New Bible Story Time Begins

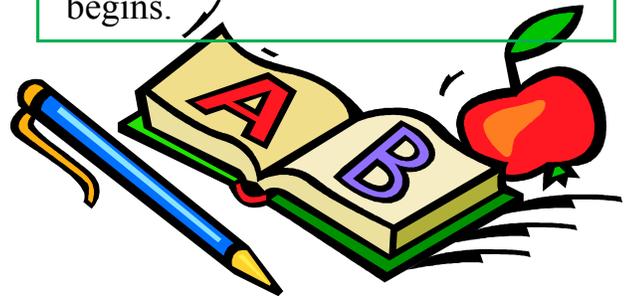
The Christian Education Task Force has been working on some possible changes to the program. Bible Story Time for kindergarten and up is one of these changes.

Bible Story Time will begin after worship Sunday, September 21 and will meet every first and third Sunday of the month during fellowship time.

All are welcome. Grab a snack in the fellowship hall and bring it with you to the Christian Education room.

Blessing of the Backpacks

Bring your backpacks to Grace UCC Sunday, September 14. Backpacks, students and teachers will be blessed as the new school year begins.



Sunday Morning Book Group to Study *The Language of God*

Remember the good time we all had discussing the book last year at 9am every Sunday? For those who would like to do it again, contact Herb McCollom at thistlescot1103@gmail.com. Starting September 7 at 9am, we will be discussing the paperback titled *The Language of God*, by Francis S. Collins, former head of the Human Genome Project. He refutes the idea that science and religion are at odds and challenges readers to find a unity of knowledge linking faith and reason. The book is \$15.

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*Welcoming All
Sharing Love
Proclaiming God's Grace*