



# Shalom

September 2017

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*Welcoming All • Sharing Love • Proclaiming God's Grace*

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## Love Over Fear

*"Do not fear" — the Bible*

It is said that the phrase "Do not fear" appears in the Bible 145 times; I haven't counted them but I think the idea is close enough. These days, I must admit, I find myself frightened more than usual. I read and reread all of the verses that tell me not to fear, but some days it's not enough. The news is frightening, politics are frightening, relationships are frightening.

It's okay to name that we are afraid. It's okay to name that sometimes hearing "Do not fear" 144 times is not enough.

Because everybody else needed to keep hearing it too. That's why it's there 145 times. Because the Israelites kept needing to hear it. And the disciples kept needing to hear it. And the early Christian communities needed to hear it. No matter how many times they'd already heard it, they still needed that 145<sup>th</sup> reassurance. As do we.

We are not alone in that need. There are people, marginalized people, people of color, of different faiths, and different gender identities who are on the front lines of fear every day. As Christians, we are called to stand beside them and bring that gospel of "Do not fear" to all those beloved by Christ.

It's important for us to be able to say, "I am afraid." It is important to hear marginalized people say, "We are afraid." But it is most important for us to read "Be not afraid" and bring those words to the front lines of fear and justice and say "Be not afraid" 145 times. With each set of 145 steps closer to the coming Kingdom of God, we say to ourselves and all who have ears to hear, "Be not afraid. Be not afraid. Be not afraid."

Pastor Katie



## Discover the Bible Sunday Mornings

Join us Sundays starting September 10 at 9am for a 15-week adult class using the Kerygma Program's "Discovering the Bible" study series with teacher Rick Chamberlin. Having completed the Old Testament, the series resumes with the study of the New Testament. All are welcome.

## Partners in Faith

I write this letter with a heavy heart over the recent events in Charlottesville and around the country. I am appalled by the increase of blatant hatred and lack of respect for human dignity in this country over this past year. We must reject hatred and the fear instilled in our diverse community both individually and as a church. In Matthew 15:11, Jesus says: *“It’s not what goes into the mouth that contaminates a person in God’s sight. It’s what comes out of the mouth that contaminates the person.”* We need to be proactive in denouncing the groups such as the white supremacists, neo-Nazis and the KKK that are terrorizing vulnerable people in our society. Beyond the very open displays of hatred promoted by these groups, we need to address the subtle and not so subtle discrimination that exists around us every day.

Discrimination is often the outcome of prejudice, a pre-formed negative judgment or attitude. Prejudice leads people to view certain individuals or groups as inferior.

Reasons we discriminate:

*Race, colorism (lightness or darkness of skin), sexual orientation, disability, age, stuttering, name, weight, religion, gender, nationality, the list goes on . . .*

Allowing subtle actions of discrimination to occur without being addressed just makes them more acceptable. I am guilty myself but I am trying every day to be more accountable. I recently read a very well written article in the Lancaster newspaper, “Take a Side”, that addressed the heart of the issue. “We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”

Pretending racism and discrimination no longer exist here in Lancaster is putting our heads in the sand. The KKK has demonstrated right here in Lancaster County. A world where words and actions against any person but most especially Jewish people, people of color, women, and members of the LGBTQ community is totally unacceptable and we need to stand up when we see this happen. We can start by not stereotyping individuals.

I believe Jesus would have been first in line to stand against demonstrations of hate. “Love your neighbor as yourself” doesn’t mean just the ones that look like you. When will we all realize diversity in our society is like the beauty of a rainbow?

Yours in Christ,  
Karen K. Wentz, Assembly President

*Shalom* is published monthly (with a combined July-August issue)

for friends and family of Grace United Church of Christ.

Rev. Katie Cort, Pastor, and Lynn K. Miller, editor,

invite your questions and comments.

Interview with Sam Tarasenko:

## Meet Grace's New Director of Music

Story & photo by Denise Pfeiffer



Sam will start September 25 as Grace's music director. He is a graduate of Temple University with a bachelor of arts in music and a minor in art history. He Sam had started a community music program at his previous church that he hopes to do here as well. Please join the Music Search Team in welcoming him.

Q: *What city do you currently live in?*

A: Philadelphia

Q: *Where's your family from originally?*

A: My mother is originally from Kazakhstan, but moved to Ukraine where she met my father. Then in 1994 they moved to the United States where I was born. I can speak Russian and some German.

Q: *How did you first become involved in music?*

A: I started playing piano when I was six years old. One of my teachers offered to teach me piano.

Q: *Where did you start training professionally?*

A: I had a professor who moved to Ephrata from Saint Petersburg, Russia, who began training me as a classical musician. She has been the greatest influence on my musical development.

Q: *What do you hope to bring to Grace UCC?*

A: I would like people to leave each service feeling more fulfilled than they did before they entered. My hope is that people will experience peace and will have a transformative experience.

Q: *Who is your favorite composer?*

A: Johann Sebastian Bach

Q: *What styles of music are you drawn to?*

A: Electronic music, hip hop, rap, avant-garde music, anything underground, Berlin EDM (electronic dance music)



## Little Shepherds Start Back

Little Shepherds classes will resume Sunday, September 17 (note new date).

This year the group is divided into two age groups. As usual the first Sunday will be Family Sunday with no Little Shepherds meeting.

Returning teachers are Jim and Karen Wentz, Holly Keller, Amy Southall, and Verna Labrador. Anyone who is interested in teaching, please see Verna Labrador. Working with the students is a rewarding, fun experience. We have many interesting things planned.

I encourage you to tell your friends about our lively student program. If you need more information, contact Verna Labrador.

## Seminarian Update

As I begin my final year (YES, final!) at Lancaster Theological Seminary, I ask for your continued prayers. Along with my classes at LTS, I will have field education at Penn State Hershey Medical Center in their clinical pastoral education (CPE) program. This unpaid internship will help develop my pastoral care and chaplain skills. I continue to discern a call to chaplaincy.

As many of you know, I've had problems with my car. I'm praying that by the time you are reading this, these issues will be resolved, and the red Jeep will be ready to drive to Hershey two days a week. Thank you again for all of your support, love, and prayers.

~ Amy Fishburn



## Community Ministry Survey - - The Results are In!

Thank you to those who took the time to fill out the survey asking what community events you would like to see Grace involved in now through next May. Out of 14 surveys, the top four vote getters were:

-  Christmas Giving Tree – one time event
-  Trick or Treat at Grace – one time event
-  Become a WISE congregation (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged for mental health) – a process that will need a group of three or more people
-  Grace, Grub, and Gab – a monthly gathering at a restaurant to talk about God, scripture, etc. The first gathering will be Wednesday, September 20 at 6:30pm - location to be determined.

I will soon be contacting those of you who indicated that you would be interested in helping plan these events.

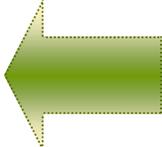
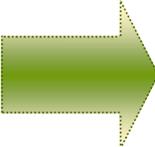
~ Amy Fishburn, Community Ministries Lead

## Grace's Safe Church Team Announces "Safe Church Sunday"

Your Safe Church Team has been attending Saturday morning meetings for the national "Safe Church" program led by Samaritan Counseling Center. You may be asking, "Don't we already have a Safe Church policy?" Yes, two years ago we approved a Safe Church policy. We're using this as a base to expand upon, as we have discovered that much legal language must be present in the policy. In addition, we learned about the necessity of including a theological foundation. While there were elements of this in the 2015 policy, we hope we've been able to strengthen this foundation in the revised policy.

Our theological statement begins with 1 Peter 5:2. We are called *"to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it."* We feel this scripture fits with our mission of being called to "Welcome all, Share love, and Proclaim God's grace."

We concluded the statement with 1 Corinthians 16:13 - "keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong." This reflects that the Safe Church process is not easy. We are preparing for the possibility that abuse may, and odds are will, happen at some point in the life of Grace Church. We find strength in this passage.



Join us in worship Sunday, October 15 for **Safe Church Sunday**.  
Elements of worship will illuminate this important work.  
Then, stay after the service for a **one-hour workshop** from 12-1pm.  
**"What is Safe Church?"** will be led by the Samaritan Counseling Center.  
All adults and teens are **strongly encouraged** to attend.  
Food will be provided.  
If you have questions on what will be covered at this workshop,  
talk with a member of the Safe Church Team

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue this work. Show support for this vital work by bringing us any questions you may have, and by attending the workshop on Sunday, October 15 at noon.

Safe Church Team Members:

Amy Fishburn, Herb McCollom, Amy Southall, Sara Ulrich, Karen Wentz, Pastor Katie

### Time for "Friends Helping Friends"

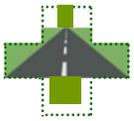
Get your tickets for "Friends Helping Friends" to support our monthly breakfast at First Reformed! Boscov's is once again partnering on this fundraiser Tuesday, Oct. 17, where a \$5 shopping pass gives you a 25 percent discount on your purchases for the day, and the entire \$5 stays with Grace Church to support the community breakfast. See Jessie or Holly to purchase a ticket.

~ 2nd Saturday Breakfast

### Members & Friends of Grace Invited to "Hope Upon Hope"

The next gathering of Hope Upon Hope is Thursday, September 14 at 7pm at Marilyn Miller's home, 342 W. Cedar St., New Holland.

Hope Upon Hope is a mental wellness, friendship, and support group for members and friends attending Grace UCC.



## Parish and Community Health Resources

**Ask Dr. Trudie:** *"The Road to Health is Paved with Good Intentions"*

Not a day goes by that my husband doesn't get an email touting the health benefits of bananas. It all started innocently enough when he opened an email from a friend which included useful tips, like rubbing the inside of a banana skin on an insect bite to stop the itching, but the ensuing mailings have suggested that bananas will cure pretty much whatever ails you. If this were true, you'd think that every doctor in the world would be encouraging patients to eat more bananas, while buying stock in Dole and Chiquita. This is NOT happening. Now, I'm sure there are conspiracy theorists out there who say that big pharma is quashing this information and bribing doctors with free pens to keep on writing prescriptions. Right.

The point is, we're always getting medical advice from the internet, magazines, and well-intentioned relatives, and much of it pertains to plant-based remedies. I do realize there are proven health benefits, beyond their nutritional value, to foods. Bananas are in fact a source of potassium. Garlic can help lower blood pressure and may have an effect on lowering cholesterol. Red yeast rice will help lower cholesterol and cinnamon can help bring down cholesterol and may help reduce blood sugar levels in type 2 diabetics. But how many bananas do you need to eat to take the place of that potassium replacement pill, and how many cloves of garlic will you need to consume to lower your blood pressure? In the case of bananas, you'd need to eat a lot and would probably end up hating them as much as Roger does. With garlic, etc, manufacturers have been able to extract the active ingredients and put them into pills, capsules, and extracts. Reputable manufacturers monitor the potency of their supplements just as pharmaceutical houses do, and just as your doctor needs to help determine the proper dosage for traditional medications, he or she can help determine the appropriate dosage of

non-traditional supplements.

While supplements can be an important part of your wellness plan, they may not always be enough. Over the years, I've found that lots of people hate taking medication. Sometimes it's just wrapping your head around the fact that your health is no longer perfect. In some cases, it's the cost of the medication and the hassle and cost of seeing a doctor a few times a year. But lots of times it's from reading the package insert that comes with your medication, listing all the possible side effects. I admit, they can be off-putting, but remember, ANYTHING a patient experiences during the development of a medication has to be included as a potential side effect. Usually it's the short list of common side effects that you need to think about, but there's always the chance you'll be one of the 1% that gets the weird rare symptom. If you DO have an issue with your medication, herbal or traditional, DON'T just stop treating your high blood pressure or other chronic health issue. Unlike the last century, medical schools are educating physicians to listen to people and to take a more holistic approach to treating disease, including many alternative medications and treatments.

You can expect to be inundated with medical advice from the internet, magazines, and family. Your Aunt Millie will tell you her neighbor had the same symptoms as you and was cured by drinking dill pickle juice three times a day. My advice is, see your primary care physician and get an accurate diagnosis, develop a treatment plan you can both live with, and, if you like it, go ahead and drink some pickle juice.

*[Dr. Trudie welcomes readers' comments and suggestions for articles. Contact her c/o [graceucc@comcast.net](mailto:graceucc@comcast.net)].*

## Neighbors in Need Offering Coming October 1

The Neighbors in Need special offering of the United Church of Christ supports our ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

The UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries uses **two-thirds of the offering** to fund local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues: the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

**One-third of the offering** supports the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) of the United Church of Christ. UCC forebears established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today 20 UCC congregations are on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation is in Minneapolis, Minnesota. CAIM supports these churches and their pastors and is an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

**Neighbors in Need helps make a better world possible.  
It needs your support.**

Please give generously. And remember, contributions to Neighbors in Need can be made anytime online at [ucc.org/nin](http://ucc.org/nin)

### **Grace & Embrace Partner to Screen "Gender Revolution"**

Mark this date on your calendars! The National Geographic Society's groundbreaking documentary, *Gender Revolution*, will be shown on Tuesday, September 26 at 6:30pm in Grace's sanctuary. We're expecting a crowd, so best seats may be gone by 6:15.

The show will run for one hour followed by a break for conversation and snacks, then resumed for a final hour. If you are not quite sure of the difference between the terms — cisgender, transgender, transsexual, transman and transwoman — you will be informed by a fascinating show in which Katie Couric interviews scientists, psychologists, activists, authors and families going through a gender revolution. The program is being presented by Embrace, a coalition of churches supporting those in transition. Grace UCC is a member of Embrace.

### **Sunday Morning Flower Sponsorship Ending**

Beginning Sunday, October 1, we will no longer continue Flower Sponsorship for the weekly worship service. If anyone would like to place flowers on the altar for a special occasion you may contact the church office with your request. We will continue to enhance the worship space with flowers for Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. Thank you to all that have participated over the years providing flowers for our worship services.

~ Worship Planning Team

## Thank You for Making a Joyful Noise

Our Joyful Noise special offerings in recent months benefitted organizations near and far. YWCA Lancaster sent thanks for Grace's gift to their residence program, helping meet their mission of "eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all".

We received a "thank you" from Boys & Girls Club of Lancaster for helping them continue to provide a safe, nurturing place for children after school so they can reach their full potential as caring, responsible citizens.

Heifer International sent thanks for Grace's donation which will help lift people out of hunger and poverty, building lives of self-reliance and uplifting entire communities around the world in the process.

Grace's Joyful Noise collection for August and September will go to the "Families in Transition" program of the Lancaster School District. Funds will be used to buy school supplies for families in need, including book bags, notebooks, pencils, markers, uniforms, and personal care and laundry supplies.

~ Community Ministry Team



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1947 New Holland Pike  
Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17601  
(717) 397-1012  
[www.gracechurchlancaster.org](http://www.gracechurchlancaster.org)