



# Harbinger

www.graceevanston.org • churchoffice@graceevanston.org

May 2015

**Affirming,  
Courageous,  
Caring**

**Grace Lutheran  
Church of Evanston  
1430 South Blvd.  
at Wesley  
847.475.2211**

**Grace Is An Open  
And Affirming RIC  
Congregation**

## **OUR MISSION:**

To courageously live out our faith by sharing grace with each other and the communities we serve.

## **OUR VISION:**

All God's people will feel accepted, challenged, and cared for by Grace Church.

**10:45 Worship  
Every Sunday**

**Rev. Daniel Ruen  
Pastor  
pd@graceevanston.org**

•  
**Mark Bowman  
Music Director**

•  
**The Rev. Kaari  
Reierson, The Rev. Jen  
Rude, and The Rev.  
Raquel Rodriguez,  
Colleagues in Ministry**

•  
**Marie O'Brien  
Parish Administrator**  
•  
**Jackson DeLeon-Lopez  
Sexton**

## **Tools for the Journey: An Update on Generations Class**

Stephanie Kulke

Oh great, another weekly event to shoe-horn into the already cluttered family calendar. And rather than drop my tween at the curb so I can squeeze in some errands, I actually have to be there and participate?

But PD handed us an essay about the importance of not lessening conversation with, or connection to our youth at this phase of their lives, fraught as it is with physical and emotional changes, peer pressures, and boundless opportunities for their ethics to be tested. I was convinced, or at least freaked out enough to give it a try.

On that note, my 11 year-old and I started our Confirmation class journey last fall. The experience has stirred up many memories of my early experiences within the church, as well as my young adult rebellion against the church, and subsequent search for spiritual contentment through a wide range of philosophies and practices.

In the first weeks of the program, I told PD I felt like a mixed up adolescent/young adult all over again – so many whirling and confused thoughts and attitudes about faith were coming up for me. And PD and Grace were not taking a hard line with dogma or doctrine, which would have given me the comfort of rules to conform to. How would I know if I was do-



ing church right? How was I supposed to answer the discussion questions that were a rich, probing and sometimes unsettling part of each session? And all of us parents have such a wide variety of experiences--some are long time ELCA members, some brought up Missouri Synod like me, some from different faith traditions, and some had no religious upbringing at all.

Because I was re-entering Lutheran worship and church life after a nearly 20 year break – I really needed to get back to basics. PD did not fail us: He started each session with a review of Grace Lu-

theran's values: Affirming, Courageous and Caring, and explained how these are values Grace members believe that Jesus embodies, and pointed to the supporting passage in Matthew about love. I found this a reassuring and grounding place to start our discussion each week.

In the fall session we spent 6 weeks learning about the life of Jesus, responding to such pithy questions as "Did Jesus know he was God?" and "Why didn't God's son appear to us as a strong ruler or super hero?" Through our discussions, I was able to reclaim something of value from my Sunday School days: namely my admiration of Jesus as a gentle, accepting

Continued on next page

## **Coffee Hour Meeting**

Join us for a brief meeting following worship Sunday May 17, to discuss ideas for coffee hour.

Upstairs, downstairs, real dishes, paper plates and cups, separate children's table and other ideas. Current hosts and people who are interested in hosting are encouraged to attend. If you have ideas, please come; you are not obligated to become a host.



We do need more people to serve in order to have coffee hour return to its previous format that includes food as well as beverages.

If you cannot attend the meeting but have some ideas, please e-mail me at [schubertn@comcast.net](mailto:schubertn@comcast.net) and I will share those ideas with the group.

**Nancy Schubert**

and loving human being. It was a pleasant surprise to discover that deep under my conflicted thoughts about church and religion, that I'm inspired by the example of Jesus' life and teachings. I realized that a big reason I come to church every week is to be reminded I'm loved and forgiven, and to "fill up my tank" so I can go back out into the world ready to love, forgive and lend support to others. Sing it with me now: "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so..."

In the winter session we learned about 6 major religious traditions from Judaism to Bahai, several of which pre-dated Christianity, and all of which had some overlapping concepts, whether it be creation stories, or incorporation of bread and wine into the worship service. I was able to look fondly at my 20-something self and accept that my dabbling in other spiritual practices was not merely oppositional rebellion against my Missouri Synod Lutheran upbringing, but a genuine search for spiritual principles I could believe in that weren't hypocritical or compromising of my values to respect and care for people who are different from me.

It is remarkable to me that our confirmation class curriculum openly acknowledges other religions, explores how they fit together in a historical timeline, and even honors the spiritual practices of other people of faith. I was moved by our experience worshipping at Congregation Beth Emet. We were given a very warm welcome, and there was obvious affection and respect shared between the members of Beth Emet and Grace – especially PD who was called out during the service by the cantor. This was a radical departure from the dismissive or judgmental attitude I picked up on from the church of my youth.

I know now that I have some spiritual healing to do. When I stopped going to church during college, I was issued a "peaceful release" from the church register, in other words removed from the membership roll. As a result I felt free from hypocrisy, but also separated from the bits of being Lutheran that I had found comfort in.

This faith journey of the Generations Confirmation Class is giving me both an opportunity to heal, and to grow into a different kind of Christian than I thought possible. The best way to describe it is an affirming, courageous and caring Christian.

I couldn't be happier that my daughter is being exposed to these units of study on Christianity, world religion, Lutheran doctrine, and whatever else the amazingly committed and creative teaching team of PD, Clare, and Sarah will come up with.

My daughter is being encouraged to ask questions (one of the hallmarks of Judaism, we learned!), search her thoughts and heart, and be open-minded to the ideas of her peers both within Grace Lutheran and without.

I believe faith is not a creed you memorize from Luther's catechism book and swallow hook, line and sinker without questioning. But rather it is a lifelong journey, to be explored and strengthened day by day, week by week, year by year.

It is my hope that my daughter comes out of Generations with a faith toolbox, filled with stories, images, and experiences that can help her find comfort, direction and vision of her purpose, intended especially for her by her own loving God.

## Generations Class

By Alice Wilson

I had no expectations for confirmation class. I didn't even really know what confirmation meant. After the first day I knew we were going to have parent-child talks, we'd watch short videos, and we'd break into a student group and parent group where we would learn more about our topic playing games.

So far I really liked the world religions unit the best. I liked that we could compare our religions to other religions, and discover that there were some similarities and some differences.

We did some class field trips. I enjoyed our youth outing to the Soup Kitchen, because I knew we were helping homeless people, and they were happy about it, which made me feel happy.

I like having PD, Sarah, and Clare for teachers because they make our learning fun!

## Hospitality Center

Hospitality Center Collection on Sunday, May 17, 2015. Items can be placed in the cabinet in the coat room prior to May 17.

### Hospitality Center Breakfast Needs:

**Juice** - 5 half gallons

**Hot Chocolate mix** - 2 cans (not the kind that needs milk added)

**Coffee** - 1 large container

**Peanut butter** - 1 large creamy, 1 large crunchy

**Jam/Jelly** - 2 large jars

**Instant Oatmeal** - 5 boxes of individual packages

**Syrup** - 6 bottles

**Sugar** - 1 Five-pound bag

**Creamer** - 1 large container

**Fruit**



***Jewel-Osco***

## Jewel Grocery Cards for Sale on Sunday, May 10

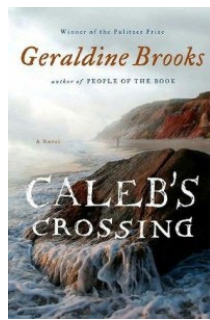
On Sunday, May 10, Hope Little will sell Jewel Cards benefitting the North Shore Crop Walk. Find her after worship.

## Grace Book Group

Our next book group will meet on Sunday, June 28th, 3:00 - 5:00 at Nancy VanBrundt and Connie Wood's home, 2425 Central St, Unit 2D, Evanston 60201, 847-869-2289.

We will be discussing *Caleb's Crossing* by Geraldine Brooks.

Happy reading!



## Baptism

**From Carl Brownell:** Several weeks ago I approached Pastor Dan about getting baptized. He thought I should explain why and invite others to join me in this journey.

I was never baptized as a baby. As a child in the 1970's, my family attended a Unitarian Church in Columbus, Ohio. As an adult, I did not attend any regular church service. But I have always been interested in religious traditions. I studied history in college and teach it to high school students. Once Jeanine and I got married and started having children, we felt that giving them a grounding in a religious faith was important. Once we started attending Grace regularly two years ago, we found a community that shared our interests in having an ongoing reflection of what the Bible and Jesus' ministry can mean in our lives today. Though the lack of religious ceremony in my life has made me reluctant to participate in rituals like communion, I feel that I am ready to more fully embrace their meaning and my involvement in them.

Pastor Dan and I want to have a series of discussions on baptism. I invite anyone to join us. It could be others who, like me, have never been baptized and would like to consider it. Or it could be those who have been baptized but who would like to re-examine its historical roots and symbolism. We would love to have a small group who can join us in this examination of baptism: its meaning, its variations and its practice. Please contact Pastor Dan or myself (at [carlbrownell@hotmail.com](mailto:carlbrownell@hotmail.com)) by Memorial Day if you are interested. We will be looking to schedule our discussions in June and July.

Thanks.

## GRACE NEWS & EVENTS



### A Need for Ushers

Looking for a way to get more involved at Grace?

Maybe you just want a chance to greet everyone as they come in and get to know them better?

Ushers have these opportunities!

And right now we have a need for more ushers, so this is your chance.

Don't pass it up.

It's easy, fun, important, and hey, you're going to be at church anyway.

Talk to Russ Kohnken, 847-927-4712, [rkohnken@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rkohnken@sbcglobal.net), if you'd like to know more.

We have low commitment options, so give it a try!

## May Birthdays

Nancy Schubert (5/3)

Barry Buck (5/4)

Karla Daye (5/8)

Nancy Mathyer (5/8)

Nate Johnson (5/9)

Lisa Kosnik (5/14)

Marie Auguste (5/18)

Carl Brownell (5/18)

Martin Inch (5/18)

Ava Daye (5/20)

Madelyn Boon (5/21)

Philip Kohnken (5/22)

Nancy VanBrundt (5/23)

Helen Yarbrough (5/24)

Emmitt Wilson (5/30)

May 10 is





# MAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## May 3

**Presiding** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Preaching** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Assisting Minister** ..... Craig Gonder  
**Music Director** ..... Mark Bowman  
**Lector** ..... Zora Tallon Ruen  
**Cantor** ..... Cassie Slater  
**Acolyte** ..... Cecilia Galicia  
**Ushers** ..... Nate Brown, Karla Daye, Jon Flaherty  
**Coffee Hour** ..... Ron Graef, Sue Graef  
**Altar Care** ..... Caitlin Sellnow, Janet Wright  
**Godly Play** ..... Jeanine & Amelia Brownell  
**First Followers** ..... Jarrod Gaither  
**Flowers** ..... Jan Blackburn

## May 10

**Presiding** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Preaching** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Assisting Minister** ..... Jarrod Gaither  
**Music Director** ..... Mark Bowman  
**Lector** ..... Jill Flaherty  
**Cantor** ..... Bonnie Gunzenhauser  
**Acolyte** ..... Ava Daye  
**Ushers** ..... Sarah Carson and Nancy Schubert  
**SPECIAL Coffee Hour** ..... Ginny Ayers, Marilyn Mason  
**Altar Care** ..... Caitlin Sellnow, Janet Wright  
**Godly Play** ..... Jeanine & Amelia Brownell  
**First Followers** ..... Kaari Reiersen  
**Flowers** ..... Jill Flaherty

## May 17

**Presiding** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Preaching** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Assisting Minister** ..... Connie Wood  
**Music Director** ..... Mark Bowman  
**Lector** ..... Nina Alvarez  
**Cantor** ..... Russ Kohnken  
**Acolyte** ..... William Thacker  
**Ushers** ..... Sarah Carson and Nancy Schubert  
**Coffee Hour** ..... Rina Campbell, Peter Spies  
**Altar Care** ..... Christian Lantry, TBD  
**Godly Play** ..... Kevin Dostal Dauer  
**First Followers** ..... Jarrod Gaither  
**Flowers** ..... Dee Johnson

## May 24

**Presiding** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Preaching** ..... Pastor Kaari Reiersen  
**Assisting Minister** ..... Taína Rodriguez Encarnación  
**Music Director** ..... Mark Bowman  
**Lector** ..... John Pedersen  
**Cantor** ..... Dominique Baptiste  
**Acolyte** ..... Zora Tallon Ruen  
**Ushers** ..... Jan Blackburn, Bob Shoaf  
**Coffee Hour** ..... The Mathyer Family  
**Altar Care** ..... Christian Lantry, TBD  
**Flowers** ..... Dee Johnson

## May 31

**Presiding** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Preaching** ..... Pastor Daniel Ruen  
**Assisting Minister** ..... Kim Brown  
**Music Director** ..... Mark Bowman  
**Lector** ..... Mark Mathyer  
**Cantor** ..... Reggie Bruce  
**Acolyte** ..... Logan Spies  
**Ushers** ..... Jan Blackburn, Bob Shoaf  
**SPECIAL Coffee Hour** ..... Clare Tallon Ruen, Zora Tallon Ruen  
**Altar Care** ..... TBD  
**Flowers** ..... Jan Blackburn

## Worship Notes for May

50 days of rest and relaxation. 50 days of rest and renewal. 50 days of meditation and reflection. 50 days of leave, after birthing a new life with the resurrected Christ.

50 days of Easter. 10 more than Lent, because our rejoicing should eclipse our fasting by a healthy margin. Why 50? Seven days multiplied by seven weeks (both biblical numbers) = 49, plus one more day of celebration for good measure. A little grace cherry on the top for all. 50 days.

Because we're using the Narrative Lectionary, these 50 days will be filled with the Spirit of God rushing out into the world as told in the book of Acts, as well as working through Paul and his letters, written to the scrappy, conflicted, and beloved house churches where our church began to grow and develop its foundation. We'll focus our preaching on these lessons, but there will always be an accompanying Gospel lesson read each Sunday.

Easter doesn't end until May 24th, Pentecost. On that day we'll baptize Louisa, Dave and Lisa Kosnik's daughter, and Pastor Kaari will preach. It will be a wonderful gateway into the Green season at Grace.

As always, I look forward to seeing you at the Welcome Table.

-Pastor Daniel

## Grace and ELM: New Connections

Grace congregants probably already know that Rev. Jen Rude is the Program Director for Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM).

ELM affirms and supports LGBTQ Lutheran rostered leaders and seminarians, while engaging allied congregations in seeking justice and access for all.

Grace has had a long connection with ELM predating Pastor Jen joining their staff.

Last month, Grace's Parish Administrator Marie O'Brien started part time work for ELM, coordinating their donations and other duties.

While this work doesn't impact Marie's work at Grace, Pastor Daniel and the Grace Council have expressed support of this connection.

Additionally, the Council approved ELM Director Amalia Vagts' request for limited operational support from Grace, including weekly use of the scanner.

Pastor Daniel and the Council are hopeful that this additional connection between Grace and ELM will further strengthen our already strong ties.

<http://www.elm.org/>



EXTRAORDINARY  
LUTHERAN  
MINISTRIES

### A Move for the ELM Chicago Office & Welcome to Marie!

Change is afoot in the ELM office in Chicago! We are going to be moving out of St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Logan Square at the end of month and we are adding a person to our team.

For the last eight years, our Chicago home has been at St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Logan Square. We moved there after many years at St. Francis Lutheran Church in San Francisco. St. Luke's Logan Square was the perfect place for our new home for so many reasons – they were the recipient of a 5-year ELM Mission Grant and they had recently called Pastor Erik Christensen, who at the time was serving as co-chair to ELM. A small group of committed donors and a grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation helped establish the office and the new Operations Coordinator position (previously held by Rachael Johnson, who now works for Eco-Faith Recovery, another former ELM Mission Grant recipient!).

Earlier this year, the congregation of St. Luke's made the difficult and courageous decision to sell their church building. Pastor Erik speaks beautifully about the decision in this interview ([click to read more](#)). While they are still in their building, we knew it was time for us to find a new home. For the time being, we are "on the move" as we look for a new landing place. However, we have found a temporary new home and team member at Grace Evanston Lutheran in Evanston, IL. Grace Evanston and Pastor Daniel Ruen have been long-time advo-

cates for the mission of ELM. When looking for a place and person who could help with our immediate need of support with ELM's mail and donations processing, we first turned to Grace and their parish administrator, Marie O'Brien. We are excited to welcome Marie, who began working four hours a week on Monday, March 30! And we are also happy to deepen our relationship with the people of Grace Evanston. For the time being, our mailing address will remain 2649 N. Francisco Ave, Chicago, IL 60647 and our mail will be forwarded to Grace.

Both St. Luke's Logan Square and ELM wanted to make time to mark this upcoming change in our relationship, so the people of St. Luke's held a festival Eucharist and service of celebration during their usual worship time at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 12. Pastor Erik Christensen presided and ELM Program Director Pastor Jen Rude served as Assisting Minister. ELM Executive Director Amalia Vagts preached.

Our move from St. Francis happened because they wanted to turn our office into a nursery. Our move from St. Luke's is the result of new directions for that community. Change is good! Thank you for your support and encouragement as we move through this change and growth in our own organization.

# May Calendar

Every Sunday 10:45 Worship followed by coffee hour

Sunday School during worship through May 17

May 3 ..... Annual Meeting, 8:30-10:30am  
May 9 ..... Percussion Workshop at Grace, 10am-2pm  
May 17 ..... Hospitality Center Collection; Harbinger Deadline  
Coffee Hour Discussion  
May 24 ..... Last Generations Class of the Session  
May 25 ..... Memorial Day (Grace office closed)  
May 29-30 ..... Synod Assembly in Tinley Park  
June 1 ..... Change to 10am Worship Time (through August)

## Grace Church Council

Les Inch, *Council President*

Taína Rodriguez Encarnación, Martha Fry, Jarrod Gaither,  
Nate Johnson, Dorothy Nagelbach, Holly O'Connor, Laura Wally



Find us at:

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# Grace

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