



GRACE NOTES

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 46 WOODLAND STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06105

860-527-7792



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Advocate for the communities affected by Harvey, Irma, and Maria

“Loving God, we come to you trusting in your mercy and knowing that your steadfast love endures forever. Look with mercy on those who are harmed or displaced by flood waters. Give them your strength to meet the days ahead, your peace which passes all understanding and new hope in the resurrection. Move in those who are able to give aid, that we may be your hands and heart on earth.”

[\(Pastor Kay Braun, adapted\)](#)

Following natural disasters like Hurricane Harvey, Irma, and Maria, key lawmakers in Congress are now calling for an immediate disaster aid bill to help communities rebuild. Legislators hope to provide recently-hit regions like Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands with immediate recovery assistance, while also offering longer term aid for states like Texas and Florida. As churches involved firsthand in the recovery process, Lutheran congregants and ministries can offer a compelling public voice in support of a just aid package, and help ensure that federal assistance reaches the most vulnerable.

Lutheran ministries continue to offer help for those with few places to turn to: collecting donations, providing life-essential services, opening their doors for people in need of

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*This place of extraordinary natural beauty may be no more: photo taken before hurricanes destroyed much of the island. This is St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands.
(Pastor Rick photo)*



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Being 500

By Pastor Rick

Amidst a world struggling with the impact of technology (we can see and do more of everything, faster), people anxious, lonely and struggling to keep up, the wealthy getting wealthier and the bad news pouring on the masses, while the select few are in measureable ways immune to most of it. Money can do a lot in this world. And, it is right in the middle of all this that we Lutherans and Protestants take a moment to remember what happened in the world some 500 years ago. It's a wonder.

Of course Luther looking down at us would know that there are some benefits from technology. Without Gutenberg, could his writings spread his thoughts and concerns about faith and the church? Probably not! In many ways, looking back, it felt preordained. The church was acting in ways that for Luther and other reformers was not consistent with scripture or even the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Redeemer brought us salvation, not buying indulgences for those alive and fearful, or those even long dead.

Those of us who encountered Luther in a faith context when we were young might remember his life story. His struggles with himself. His fear of God. His belief that he could not meet the commands of God. He was failing at his faith; he couldn't make himself right, no matter what he tried. Wow! Perhaps some of you identified with that in your early years, I know I did. Trying to grasp what righteousness meant and then self-reflecting on just how "righteous" I actually was. Yet, there was comfort in knowing that someone who had changed the world, and the church, was struggling in ways that I was, too. No, I am not Martin Luther.... I am not suggesting that for a minute, but there were things that he said or did that touched me in a profound way.

My parents weren't with me at church. My brother and I were dropped off. I do remember throughout my life that when I did leave the church, I always made my way back to a Lutheran one. It was here that I felt understood, empowered, grateful and humble... all at the same time. As we give thanks for the reforming of the church, and the life of all those reformers, men and women, I give thanks and think as I did once in a seminary class... who is the Martin Luther of this time and place? A peculiar thought that passes through me is, perhaps a man named Francis. While he has his work cut out for him, he has been fearless, taking truth to power, and focusing on the poor, the suffering in a world that doesn't have time for them. I don't believe that Luther wanted to leave the church; he wanted to change it. I see that in Francis and pray that he has the staying power and influence to join in with us as we continue to call for Christian Unity, and have worked towards it for decades.

In undergraduate classes, more than fifty years ago I heard professors characterize Luther as one of the most brilliant men to have ever lived. His life and faith changed the world..., but, too, he was by no means perfect. Later in life he said things about Jews that have sickened me having read them. Even the historic bent of Christians at that time does not lessen the poison that came from his pen. Yes, Luther was a sinner and a saint, both at the same time.

My understanding of the Gospel and Jesus' teachings is that we are all to be working to create a better world, paying attention to those who are suffering most, loving (continued page 3)

Being 500

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each other with the fervor that Christ loves us and learning from our mistakes, repenting, and praying for direction and guidance. The Holy Spirit lives, Christ lives and our Triune God so well understood and interpreted by Luther is with each one of us, always. May the 500th be a special time of returning to our faith and understanding what it meant then, and what it still means now.

The ELCA is a reforming church as it was before it was founded. Let’s not tell Luther about it – he would not be pleased! Let’s re-ignite our qualities of open study of scripture, active working with people of faith, whatever that faith may be, and let’s figure out how we can harness technology and faith to work together to enable God’s kingdom in this world.

Come see our Reformation 500 bookstore, and pick up a book or two and understand more fully what the work of reformers was like. Attend our joint Reformation 500 service on the 29th with our brothers and sisters from Trinity Episcopal Hartford, and attend other events that are planned throughout the area celebrating the good that was the Reformation.

Most of all, I thank God for the grace he bestowed on a church that was in trouble back then; we still are, in trouble that is, but we’ve learned some things, too. Thank you Martin and Katharina. We are glad that you lived and are thankful that we are beneficiaries of your courage and faith.

Amen.



Our church is having a Reformation 500 Bookstore!

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation is fast approaching! Do you want to learn more about Martin Luther, his writings, and their impact on Christianity? Do you want to reflect on the ongoing impact of the Reformation today? Stop by our Reformation 500 Bookstore to shop for engaging books on the Reformation for readers of all ages and interests! Save up to 50% plus receive free shipping on all Bookstore titles.

Our Bookstore is sponsored by Augsburg Fortress, the publishing ministry of the ELCA. The books include bestselling biographies like *Luther the Reformer* as well as an atlas of the European Reformations, a graphic novel for young readers, and primary sources from The Annotated Luther series.

Save the dates: Our bookstore will be available during

October 29 through November 11.

The books are on display in the Narthex now on Sundays and from 10 -2 in the office during the week.





New England Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

We received the following update from the New England Synod office and Bishop James Hazelwood concerning business discussed during the Synod Assembly in June of this year.

The New England Synod Council, consisting of 24 persons from around the New England states, is the governing body of the synod. The Council met the weekend of September 23rd and undertook a day of business on your behalf. Among the many topics reviewed, this email serves to highlight a few.

- *Follow up on the Sanctuary Resolution* that was approved by the assembly in June: As you will recall, I wrote a letter on June 30, 2017, clarifying this resolution, and indicating that the Synod Council would review it in the fall. On Saturday, the Synod Council decided to begin forming a task force to explore ways to move the resolution forward within our synod. In addition, the Council authorized the drafting of a letter to government representatives to seek a permanent resolution to the immigration situation in this country. In our discussion, we heard several initial responses of what is happening in our congregations, ranging from study groups, to workers' rights education, to sanctuary for individuals. This discussion spurred us to seek from congregations and other ministries a more complete picture. In that spirit, as we form this task force, I am inviting you to send any updates of how your congregation may be engaging this topic. Please send them to office@nesynod.org by October 31, 2017.
- The Council reviewed *plans and fees for the 2018 Synod Assembly*, to take place **June 7, 8 & 9** in Springfield, MA. *Due to increasing costs the Council voted to raise assembly rates to \$170 per person for the early bird discounted rate, \$195 for May 30 deadline, and \$235 for at the door registration.*

Please note these as you plan your 2018 congregational budget.

2018 Synod Assembly will include multiple elections including Synod Council, Church-wide Assembly voting members (for Milwaukee in August of 2019), as well as an election for Bishop.

Another Perspective on Kneeling (posted by John Stendahl in the ELCA Clergy Group on Facebook)

Maybe I, along with countless others, am just wasting time in fruitless outrage and now flogging yet another distraction. Still, I just wrote this in the hope that some others might find it thoughtworthy:

The act of kneeling during the National Anthem Rite at sports events has been described as immensely divisive and the man I'm compelled to acknowledge as president of my country now exploits that division and refers to any citizen making such a sign as a "son of a b***h."

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Another Perspective on Kneeling

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Just over a week ago churches across our land read from Romans 14 the words of another leader who was confronted with passionate division over conflicting practices and convictions. The issues in Saint Paul's community were somewhat different, having to do with such matters as permissible food and requirements of sabbath and feasts, but the sense of apocalyptic danger and the rhetoric of condemnation were as real among those new Christians as in the controversies that tear at our own land today.

Paul was certainly not without an opinion as to which positions in these arguments were the stronger ones for the mature of understanding. He indeed described some others in the community as "the weak" and "the immature" in the faith. Yet when he addresses these fervent divisions among his people it is not his own favored opinions and arguments that he presses forward. Instead he wrote, in the passage we read:

"Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand...."

"Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God."

"Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ... So then, each of us will be accountable to God."

To paraphrase a bit: Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who stand, stand to honor the land they love; those who kneel, kneel to call that land to the honor of its ideals. Whether they stand or whether they kneel, both give a witness of honor and love.

(In the Romans passage, Paul even riffs on to say that "whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.")

Paul could be opinionated and arrogant, but he knew from bitter experience what harm such qualities could wreak. Hence his wisdom and his good counsel here and elsewhere. Even if I were inclined to believe that kneeling, a traditional Christian sign of humility, prayer, and repentance, constitutes an act of contempt—and I am not so inclined—I would still owe Paul's contrary suggestion my serious consideration. Sadly, that seems very far from the Christianity espoused by our current president.

SAVE THE DATE



Reformation Sunday—October 29, 2017

We are continuing to work on preparations for our joint service with Trinity Episcopal Church. They will be joining us in celebrating Reformation Sunday on October 29 at 9:30 a.m. at Grace just as we gathered together at Trinity on Pentecost. Please join us as we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation!



New England Women of the ELCA - Reformation Celebration

On **Saturday, October 14th from 9:00 - 2:00** the New England Women of the ELCA invite you to attend their Reformation Celebration at Christ the King ELCA, 600 Central Street in Holliston, MA.

Featuring "Katie Luther" tells all...and an update on human trafficking in New England.

Registration fee is \$20 and includes a buffet lunch.

For additional information, contact Stacy McGhehey at stacym512@yahoo.com (704-756-3198) or Alice Carlson at alycarlson99@gmail.com (508-697-3445)

Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

On Sunday, October 29th at 4 p.m., there will be a service of Solemn Vespers to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. The event is sponsored by the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and hosted by Concordia Lutheran Church, 40 Pitkin Street, Manchester, CT.

Archbishop Leonard Blair of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Hartford and Bishop James Hazelwood of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will co-preside over the worship. Honored guests include Bishop Ian Douglas and Bishop Suffragan Laura Ahrens of the Episcopal Church in CT. A festive reception will follow in Concordia's Kaiser Hall.

For more information, contact The Rev. Douglas D. Barclay, Concordia Lutheran Church, 40 Pitkin Street, Manchester, CT 06040. pastor@concordiamanchester.org. (860) 649-5311

Thanksgiving Service

There will be an intimate Thanksgiving Day Service with Trinity Episcopal in our Forum Room. Watch Grace Notes for more information.



ELCA Advocacy

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shelter, and assisting the most vulnerable by restoring homes and lives. Lutherans have a deep history of responding to natural disasters, and can further their impact through advocacy.

Please contact your legislators today at the ELCA Action Center (https://secure2.convio.net/elca/site/Advocacy;jsessionid=00000000.app222b?page-name=homepage&page=UserAction&id=953&NONCE_TOKEN=4CDA18B840508E2AFAC5138B19812345), and encourage them to fund critical programs, ensure low-income neighborhoods receive assistance, and expedite the recovery process.



Some of Grace's Peace Poles



Hartford Men in Harmony Concert

David Eberly is a member of Hartford Men in Harmony and is singing at a concert on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at the Millard Auditorium, University of Hartford.

He will also be playing the piano prior to the concert at 7:00 p.m. and during the intermission.

David Eberly (Center) with "fans" Nina Kretschmer (Left) and Janet Dudek (Right) -- Pastor Rick Kremer photo

PRAISE IS IN THE HOUSE!

We are participating in a combined service on Sunday, December 10, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. with the following churches here at Grace:

Temple of Praise, Waterbury (where Walter Scott's mother worships) and First Calvary Baptist Church

We plan on holding a pot luck lunch following the service

More details will be available in future issues of Grace Notes.

A Pretty Lady in a Beautiful Prayer Shawl

By Pastor Rick

Our dear Janet Dudek is dealing with some serious medical unknowns, and has been on our prayer list for weeks. Barbara Ruhe knows well that there is nothing better than a prayer shawl to bring comfort to one who is struggling. We all love Janet and want her to be comforted by that caring and to know that the Healer is with her all of the time. Send your love to Janet and keep her in your prayers!

Also, it should be noted that this particular shawl was crocheted by a very famous Grace artisan, Irene Kirshner!



Janet Dudek

Hartford Notes of Interest

- **Saturday, October 14—Hartford Marathon:**
The area surrounding Grace will be inaccessible between the hours of 7:30 a.m.—2 p.m.
- **Election Day, November 7:**
Grace is serving as a polling place between the hours of 6 a.m. through 8 p.m.
Remember to VOTE!

October Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

Mavis Smith	October 3
Sherri Brown	October 5
Gladys Hairston	October 8
Ty-rese Merrill	October 8
Cathy Tomlinson	October 10
Cynthia Jones	October 13
Miles Edward Abrom	October 15
Pastor Rick Kremer	October 21
Gretchen Unfried	October 22
Jocelyn Hill	October 24
Ryan Wellington	October 25
Akeva Koulla	October 26

Wedding Anniversaries

Catherine and Jerrold Abrom

October 10: Eight Years



Herbert & Anne Reiher

October 12: Thirty-two Years

May you all be blessed as you celebrate your special days!

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? Contact Dawn at the office, 860-527-7792 or email officeatgrace@sbcglobal.net to update our records.

FRESH START IS BLESSED WITH 2 GRADUATE STUDENTS AND 6 UNDERGRADUATES FROM BARNEY SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

Among five start-up companies, Fresh Start was selected and is the only Social Enterprise in the mix. Pastor Rick and Dennis Del’Accio of Fresh Start attended the graduate class on a Wednesday night and met the two graduate students to be working with us. They are already doing a thorough study of market potential and prices. They will deliver a 360 degree assessment of our business by the end of November.

An undergraduate professor at the Barney School whose course, Social Enterprise, was also in attendance. When we met with our two graduate students, she joined us, too. She has deep experience with social enterprises and suggested that we connect with other like organizations as they often link to help each other. Below is some information about a fabulously successful business, Greyston, that has been operating for 34 years and is making the kind of difference that we hope to make over time.

Please note their CEO’s comments about inclusion. We subscribe to the very same belief system and could well reach out to them. What an exciting possibility that is!

This article was shared with us about Greyston, a Social Enterprise from Fred Miller. The premise of this company is very similar to the ideals for Fresh Start Pallet Products.

Hi All,: A very good community-organization doing Great Work!! The link is worth a read. Ben & Jerry’s commitment to buying their brownies was instrumental to their start-up and being successful. See the statement from Mike Brady President & CEO January 2017 {Very, very Powerful!!!] <http://greyston.com/about-greyston/reentry-inclusion/>

National Reentry Month

70 Million Americans have a criminal record, limiting access to jobs, education and housing.

“Any hope and new identity found while behind bars can be quickly lost upon release when faced with the ‘second prison’—the more than 48,000 documented social stigmas and legal restrictions that inhibit building full, productive lives after paying a debt to society.” – Emily Green, Prison Fellowship

It’s time for businesses to invest to bring people in, rather than spend to screen people out. Join Us.

**Statement from Mike Brady
President & CEO
January 2017**

On Inclusion – Are we to be a more inclusive or more exclusive society?

From Boston Harbor to the Statue of Liberty, from the Gateway Arch to the Mexican Border, the arc of history bends toward inclusion, not exclusion. It is inclusion (continued on page 10)

Reentry and Inclusion

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that has made our nation great. Access and mobility, the freedom to chase a dream, the urge to innovate, the opportunity to take risks in order to succeed, the right to become part of the American tapestry; this is the America that we celebrate every single day at Greyston.

At Greyston, inclusion is the core of our Open Hiring™ Model. Open Hiring™ creates opportunities for everyone: women, men, people of color, people of all faiths and sexual orientations, immigrants and refugees, the economically disadvantaged, the formerly incarcerated and all others who may have been excluded — blocked from contributing to the health and strength of our society. Because no one willing to work should be denied the dignity of a job.

Open Hiring™ is not a hand-out or give-away. It is built on mutual respect, opportunity, a fair chance. It is about communities, jobs, families. It is about responsibility, hard work, commitment, achievement, and the intrinsic worth of every human being. And we've been doing it for 34 years. What began as a modest bakery on the edge of New York City with the moniker that “we don't hire people to bake brownies, we bake brownies to hire people,” has emerged today as a globally recognized brand with an innovative business model and value proposition.

Open Hiring™ is not just a job but a pathway forward – providing career training and life skills. Jobs are fundamental and yet insufficient. Open Hiring™ connects jobs to families and childcare – so parents can work to support their families. Open Hiring™ supports parks, gardens, and healthy eating. Open Hiring™ generates community housing and economic development.

What we do is first and foremost about people – and about systems, changing and creating new systems that meet social, environmental, and financial needs. It upends traditional hiring practices that focus on spending to **screen people out** and instead makes an **investment to include** people and support their success.

We envision a world where responsible businesses collaborate with communities to create inclusive economies. We envision a world where businesses compete to attract and retain citizens who have done their time and want to start a new life. We envision a world where business assets are deployed more effectively to generate a social return on investment that benefits the company, its employees and its community. We envision a world where tax benefits are extended to mission-driven companies that demonstrate consistent returns on mission that reduce government obligations. We envision a world where we recognize that everyone – from CEOs to day laborers – needs support to succeed on the job and also be a responsible family and community member.

Greyston is a community that celebrates the art of what is possible, that believes everyone can contribute, and that puts faith in the power of core American values: opportunity, fairness, respect, and equity. And, we measure success every day — and over the long-term. Success for Greyston is not a trade-off where we short the next generation to make outsized profits today. We must not sacrifice our children's future to satisfy our near-term desires. We are a mission-driven company that generates strong returns for all stakeholders, a hybrid enterprise with nonprofit operations alongside a commercial business.

Our signature initiatives weave together business innovation and social justice to create thriving and inclusive communities:

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- The Center for Open Hiring™ at Greyston, a collaborative learning space facilitating the widespread adoption of Open Hiring™ and supporting innovation in the delivery of community programs for employees and neighbors;
 - Development of new financial models to support mission-driven, hybrid organizations;
 - Public policy engagement to create a level playing field for benefit corporations;
 - Design of social return on investment (SROI) vehicles that bring transparency and rigor to measuring impact;
 - Creation of the Association for Open Hiring™ to collaboratively set standards and best practices for Open Hiring™;
 - Leveraging the purchasing power of global supply chains to support Open Hiring™;
 - Alignment with business schools to prepare new leaders ready to manage for social, financial and environmental success; and
 - Preparation of the Open Hiring™ toolkit and guidelines for innovative HR leaders.
- We are a modest bakery with a great, big, disruptive idea. And we've been perfecting it for three decades. We are "Bakers on a Mission." Work with us: Inclusion@Greyston.com



Some examples of Dale's photography: upper left: changing leaves against the blue sky; upper right: bee pollinating a flower; lower left: feather resting against yellow blossoms; lower right: leaves casting shadows in the late afternoon.



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