

August 2018 - May 2019

THE GRACE AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH *Atlas*

BELONGING

GRATEFUL

FULFILLMENT

ATTEND

JOY

EPIPHANY

RENEWAL

SERVICE

BOLDNESS

TRUST

FORGIVENESS

WITNESS

GRACE

Proverbs 25:11 reminds us that, “A word fitly communicated is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.” Unfortunately, we live in a world where words are far too often misused and become weapons used against others. Add to this the overwhelming amount of words used every day in normal communication (emails, texts, social media, phone conversations, etc.) and we find ourselves lost in the noise.

The 2018-2019 Grace Avenue Atlas attempts to guide us back to some basic words “fitly chosen”. These words of faith open us to infinite possibilities regarding our relationship with God. These words of hope return us to foundational doctrines and open us to dreaming of the church and people God has created us to be. These words of love are the essence of who we are as God’s people and what we can become as Christ’s followers.

Throughout the year we will move from series to series with the overwhelming joy and knowledge that God’s Word and our words can be a holy balm for a wounded world.



GRACE AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

August 11 - 25, 2018

BELONGING

A Look at John 15

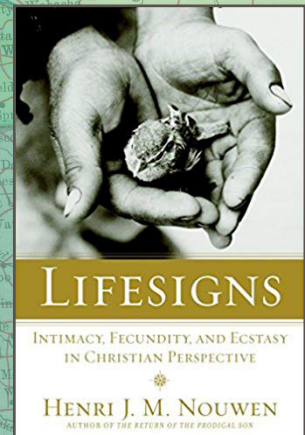
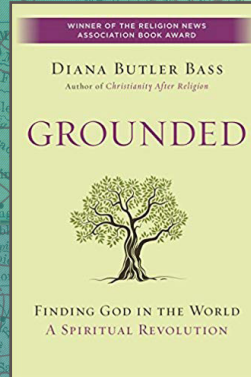
God made us to be together. After God created the first human being God realized, "It is not good that the human is alone" (Genesis 2:18). So God placed us in a web of relationships; families, tribes, groups, communities, etc. Finding our place in those relationships can sometimes be challenging.

We want to be in relationships that are authentic, caring and hopeful. We want to belong. In John 15 we are taught that in Christ we are connected as a branch is connected to a vine. Beyond the superficiality we so often experience, we can belong to one another and to Christ who is the "True Vine".

Aug. 11/12
"Why We Belong"
John 15: 1-8

Aug. 18/19
"How We Belong"
John 15: 9-17

Aug. 25/26
"Where We Belong"
John 15: 18-27



During August and September we are inviting everyone to be a part of the new Small Groups at Grace Avenue. Community is essential for thriving in life and in faith and being part of a small group helps deepen your sense of belonging as you grow in life and faith.

Look for registration on-line or contact Kristen Lane at klane@graceavenue.org with questions.

Suggested Resources & Reading

Lifesigns: Intimacy, Fecundity & Ecstasy in Christian Perspective by Henri Nouwen

Grounded, Finding God in the World, A Spiritual Revolution by Diana Butler Bass

Blueprint for Discipleship: Wesley's General Rules as a Guide for Christian Living by Kevin M. Watson

Lessons in Belonging from a Church-Going Commitment Phobe by Erin S. Lane

Living into Community, Cultivating Practices that Sustain Us by Christine Pohl

John: The Gospel of Light & Life by Adam Hamilton

September 8 - 30, 2018

GRATEFUL

Selections from the Psalms

In spite of all we have, we feel like something is missing. We feel uncertain and incomplete.

“There is a gap”, Diana Butler Bass argues, “between our desire to be grateful and our ability to behave gratefully—a divide that influences our understanding of morality, worship, and institutional religion itself”. The Psalmists remind us that gratitude returns us to a deep and abiding relationship with God. How different do our lives appear when we fill them with gratitude?

Sept. 8/9

“Feeling Grateful”
Psalm 138

Sept. 15/16

“Habits of Gratitude”
Psalm 33

Sept. 22/23

“Grateful Together”
Psalm 133

Sept. 29/30

“Circles of Gratitude”
Psalm 107: 1-9, 31-33

**“I give thanks to
you with all my heart,
Lord. I sing your
praise before all
other gods.”**

Psalm 138:1

Suggested Resources & Reading

Grateful: The Transformative Power of Giving Thanks by Diana Butler Bass

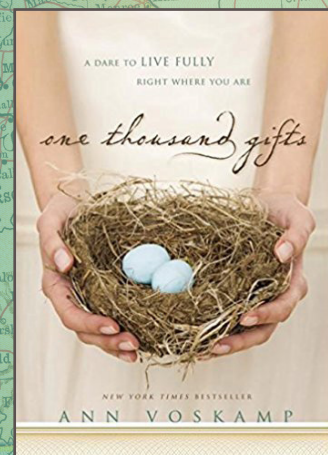
Turning Gripping into Gratitude: A Study in the Psalms by Ron Lavin

Gratitude, A Journal
by Catherine Price

One Thousand Gifts
by Ann Voskamp

The Gift of the Red Bird
by Paula D'Arcy

DIANA
BUTLER BASS
AUTHOR OF *Grounded*
Grateful
THE
TRANSFORMATIVE POWER
OF GIVING THANKS



October 13 - November 11, 2018

FULFILLMENT

Found Through Proverbs

In a world constantly striving for more, we often find ourselves feeling the opposite; empty. We attempt to fill our lives with things that are temporary. The clutter leaves things in our lives even more complex. God teaches us that fulfillment comes through wisdom not through acquisition. God's wisdom teaches us that we live in a world of abundance not scarcity.

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Movement, found fulfillment in a simple formula; Earn, Save, Give.

Oct. 13/14
"Wisdom"
Proverbs 3:13-14

Oct. 20/21
"Earn"
Proverbs 10:16

Oct. 27/28
"Save"
Proverbs 13:11

Nov. 3/4
"Give"
Proverbs 11:25

Nov. 10/11
"Commit"
Proverbs 3:5-6

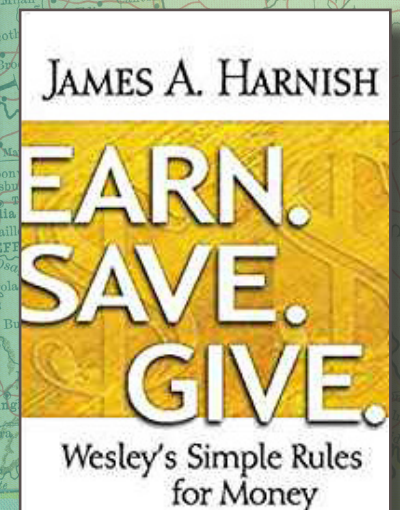
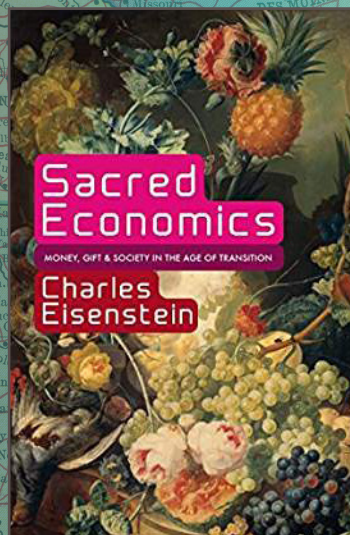
Suggested Resources & Reading

Earn. Save. Give. Wesley's Simple Rules for Money by James Harnish

More or Less: Choosing a Lifestyle of Excessive Generosity by Jeff Shinabarger

Sacred Economics: Money, Gift & Society in the Age of Transition
by Charles Einstein

The Search for Fulfillment
by Susan Krauss Whitbourne



November 17 - 25, 2018

ATTEND

A Verb to Live By

Attention is a noun. Attend is verb. It means so much more than simply showing up or being in attendance. In a spiritual sense it is the intentional awareness of God's presence and power in our lives. With so much "noise" in the world today, it easy to miss

God's goodness all around us. Such attentiveness requires that we search not just for the right answers but for the correct questions. Gracious change happens when we focus to discern what God is already doing in our lives. Such mindfulness is at the heart of all Thanksgiving.

Nov. 17/18

"You Called for Me?"
1 Samuel 3: 1-10

Nov. 24/25

"What is Truth?"
John 18: 33-38

**"... My kingdom
doesn't
originate from
this world."**

John 18:36

RICHARD ROHR

new for
summer
2018

**just
this**

prompts and
practices for
contemplation

AMY G. ODEN

Foreword by Marjorie L. Thompson

**Right Here
Right Now**

The Practice of Christian Mindfulness

Suggested Resources & Reading

Just This by Richard Rohr

*Right Here Right Now, The Practice of
Christian Mindfulness* by Amy G. Oden

JOY

Luke's Version of Jesus' Birth

The characters at the beginning of Luke's Gospel are not without their problems. Elizabeth suffered from infertility. Zechariah was incapable of speaking for nine months. Mary & Joseph are not yet married when Mary discovers she is pregnant. The birth of their child takes place away from home in a town where they were conscripted to go for tax registration. Proper lodging and maternity care was nowhere to be found. Poor and disenfranchised shepherds have their watch interrupted by an angel chorus.

In spite of the external circumstances of difficulty the story of Jesus' birth is the anchor of joy in our faith. It is a reminder that joy comes from inside us as a fruit of the Spirit.

The external trappings of the Christmas season are no match for the miraculous work of God, and when joy arrives, it cannot be contained, only shared.

Dec. 1/2

"Unspeakable Joy"
Luke 1: 5-25

Dec. 8/9

"Jumping for Joy"
Luke 1: 26-45

Dec. 15/16

"Singing for Joy"
(Music Weekend)

Dec. 22/23

"Magnificent Joy"
Luke 1: 46-55

Dec. 24

"Joy With The World"
Luke 2: 1-20

Dec. 29/30

"Realized Joy"
Luke 2: 25-38

Suggested Resources & Reading

Pauses for Advent: Words of Wonder
by Trevor Hudson

The Dawning of Indestructible Joy
by John Piper

Preparing for Jesus: Meditations on the Coming of Christ, Advent, Christmas and the Kingdom by Walter Wangerin

January 5 - 13, 2019

EPIPHANY & RENEWAL

New Covenants for a New Year

The New Year begins with the reminder that
Christ is revealed over and over again.

This manifestation is the bright light of God
shining in our lives and burning in our hearts.

From this we are called to renew our baptismal
faith and make to commitments in our
covenant with God.

Jan. 5/6
"Epiphany"
Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 12/13
"Renewal"
Luke 3: 15-18, 21-22

January 19 - February 10, 2019

SERVICE

A Study of I Corinthians 12 & 13

In a world that seems more and more divided,
the followers of Christ are called to unity.

The visible representation of the Body of
Christ is found through service. We all have
different gifts but they are intended to be used
for serving, not self-gain. We forget that the
beautiful words of I Corinthians 13 were written
to a community that was not experiencing
or expressing love, but division. We
recapture the wholeness of God by first
seeking to serve like Jesus.

Jan. 19/20
"Common Good"
I Corinthians 12:4-11

Jan. 26/27
"One Body"
I Corinthians 12:12-27

Feb. 2/3
"Love Never Fails"
I Corinthians 13:1-13

Feb. 9/10
"A Community of Love"
I Corinthians 13:1-13

Suggested Resources & Reading

Strength to Love by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Loving and Serving Others: The Practice of
Risk-Taking Mission and Service* by Robert Schnase

*The Greatness Principle: Finding Significance and
Joy by Serving Others* by Nelson Searcy

Love Wins: At the Heart of Life's Big Questions by Rob Bell

February 16 - March 3, 2019

BOLDNESS

Luke's version of the Great Sermon

In Luke's Gospel Jesus descends to a level place (Luke 6:17) to deliver some of his most important teachings about living as his followers. Jesus proclaims with boldness the nature of the Kingdom of God. His instructions to us are radical and uncompromising. They are intended to transform the world. It is a calling to live out God's love with boldness and courage.

During this series a called General Conference of the United Methodist Church will be held in St. Louis, MO. Delegates from around the world will gather to determine what kind of church we will be going forward especially as it relates to issues of human sexuality and our witness as the followers of Christ. We will gather in faith, not fear, to pray, listen, remember and worship that God is greater than anything that could divide us. Whatever the result we will pledge to live into God's future design with boldness.

Feb. 16/17
"All Means All"
Luke 6: 27-31

Feb. 23/24
"No Matter What"
Luke 6: 32-36

March 2/3
"God is Still God"
Luke 6: 37-42

Suggested Resources & Reading

A Bigger Table, Building Messy, Authentic, and Hopeful Spiritual Community by John Palovitz

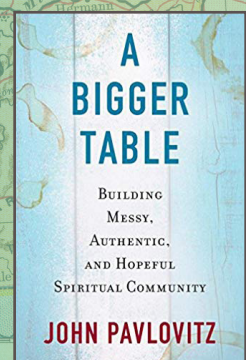
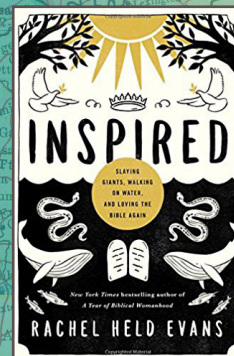
Bid Our Jarring Conflicts Cease: A Wesleyan Theology and Praxis of Church Unity
by David N. Field

The Marks of Hope: Where the Spirit Is Moving by Matt Rawle, Juan Huertas,
Katie McKay Simpson

Our Purpose is to Love: The Wesleyan Way to be the Church by David N. Field

Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again by Rachel Held Evans

Commission on A Way Forward Final Report



March 9 - March 17, 2019

TRUST

A Time in the Wilderness

The season of Lent begins in the wilderness.

The 40 days of Lent correspond to other places in the Bible where 40 is mentioned; the time on the Ark, the years the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, the days Jesus spent following his baptism in wilderness of temptation. The wilderness reminds us of the importance of trusting God. When everything else we depend on is stripped away, we experience what matters most.

March 9/10
In the Wilderness
Luke 4: 1-13

March 16/17
During Temptation
Luke 4: 1-13

“Jesus answered, “It’s been said, Don’t test the Lord your God.” After finishing every temptation, the devil departed from him until the next opportunity.”

Luke 4:12-13

CHRIST in the WILDERNESS



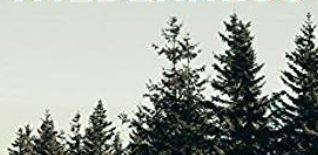
Stephen Cottrell

Reflecting on the paintings by **Stanley Spencer**

#1 New York Times bestselling author
BRENÉ BROWN
PhD, UMSW

The Quest for True Belonging
and the Courage to Stand Alone

BRAVING THE WILDERNESS



Suggested Resources & Reading

Christ in the Wilderness: Reflecting on the Paintings of Stanley Spencer
by Stephen Cottrell

Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to stand Alone
by Brené Brown

March 23 - April 14, 2019

FORGIVENESS

A Lenten Journey

Central to our faith is the experience of forgiveness. Jesus commands us to forgive others in the same fashion God forgives us (Matthew 6:14-15) but the reality of forgiveness seems much more difficult.

When we are at fault we have a hard time forgiving ourselves. When others hurt us we lose energy and focus by withholding forgiveness. The transformation which comes through forgiveness is on full display in Christ's suffering and passion. From the Cross he declares: "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). We cannot truly be who God created us to be without forgiveness.

Suggested Resources & Reading

The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World
by Desmond Tutu & Mpho Tutu

Forgiveness, A Lenten Study
by Marjorie J. Thompson

When Sorry Isn't Enough: Making Things Right with Those You Love
by Gary Chapman & Jennifer Thomas

Forgiveness: Finding Peace through Letting Go
by Adam Hamilton

March 23/24

"Understanding Forgiveness"
Genesis 50:15-21

March 30/31

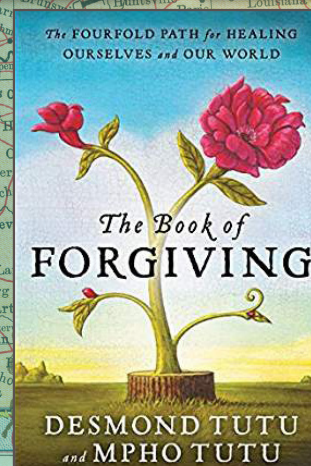
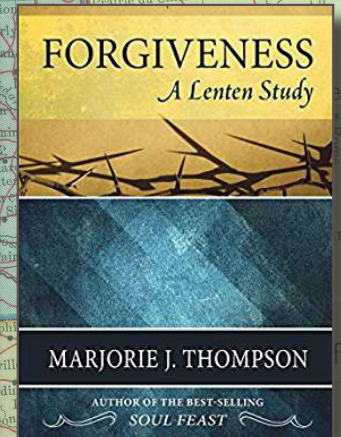
"The Path to Forgiveness"
Luke 15:11-31

April 6/7

"All Can Be Forgiven"
Revelation 21:1-6

April 13/14

"Leading to Forgiveness"
Luke 19: 29-44, 23:32-34



April 21 - May 5, 2019

WITNESS

Living an Easter Faith

How does one know the resurrection is real?

It comes through the testimony of faithful followers of Christ. The testimony is not simply words but actions that reveal the living Christ to others. Otherwise, as the Apostle Paul asserts: "If Christ hasn't been raised, then our preaching is useless and your faith is useless" (1 Corinthians 15:14). In other words, Easter is dependent on witnesses. Do we witness to the resurrection with boldness and conviction or hesitation and uncertainty?

April 21

"Eyewitness"

Luke 24: 1-12

April 27/28

"Expert Witness"

Luke 24: 13-35

May 4/5

"Character Witness"

Luke 24: 36-49

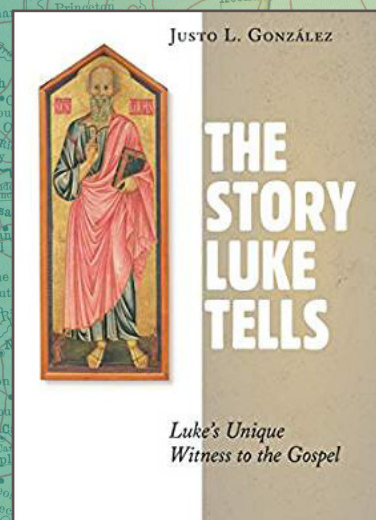
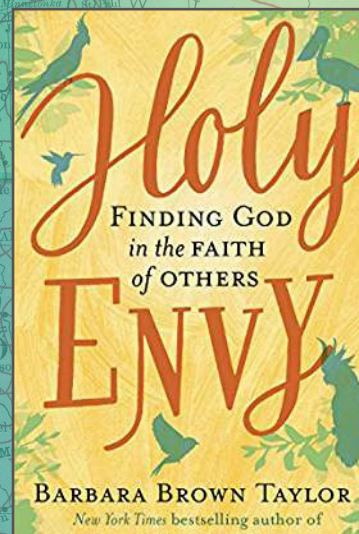
Suggested Resources & Reading

Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others
by Barbara Brown Taylor

*11 indispensable relationships you
can't be without* by Leonard Sweet

Church in the Inventive Age
by Doug Pagitt

*The Story Luke Tells: Luke's
Unique Witness to the Gospel*
by Justo Gonzalez



May 11-26, 2019

GRACE

The Heart of Who We Are

The heart of our theology is God's grace. This unearned love and unmerited favor is always fresh and refreshing. John Wesley laid it out so that we would know that God's grace encompasses every step of our lifelong spiritual journey. It is with the grace of God that we live in covenant with others. Nothing could be more basic or extraordinary.

Suggested Resources & Reading

On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gratitude and Getting Old by Parker Palmer

Grace: More than We Deserve, Greater than We Imagine by Max Lucado

Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life by Tish Harrison Warren

Restored: Finding Redemption in our Mess by Tom Berlin

May 11/12
Prevenient Grace
1 John 4: 7-21

May 18/19
Justifying Grace
2 Corinthians 5: 16-19

May 25/26
Sanctifying Grace
Philippians 2: 12-18

PARKER J. PALMER

Author of Let Your Life Speak

ON the BRINK of EVERYTHING

Grace, Gravity & Getting Old

Foreword by Andy Crouch



liturgy of the ordinary



sacred practices
in everyday life

Tish Harrison Warren



GRACE AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

3521 MAIN ST | FRISCO, TX 75034
972-335-2882 | WWW.GRACEAVENUE.ORG