

August 2016 - May 2017

THE
GRACE AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Atlas

Welcome Home

from the Heart

WIDE AWAKE

REAL TIME FAITH

Live By the
Spirit

HERE.

There's More to the Story

Changing Currency

The Will of GOD



GRACE AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

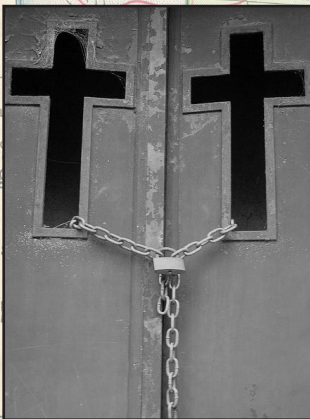
Aug. 20 - Sept. 4, 2016

Welcome Home

All created beings find their home in God. We believe God's grace provides our ultimate sense of home. This is the eternal and abundant living that is promised by Jesus the Christ. This has been the foundation of the ministry at Grace Avenue United Methodist Church where we believe that everyone needs a home. We live in a world in which homelessness is prevalent in so many ways beyond the basic need for physical shelter. We begin the journey of a new school year together, returning to this basic truth. God provides a homecoming for us all.



"Probably no word better summarizes the suffering of our time than the word 'homeless'. It reveals one of our deepest and most painful conditions, the condition of not having a sense of belonging, of not having a place where we can feel safe, cared for, protected and loved."
Henri Nouwen, *Lifesigns*





August 20/21
John 15:1-4 (MSG)
Welcome Home: A Spiritual Home

“Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can’t bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can’t bear fruit unless you are joined with me.”
John 15:4 (MSG)



August 27/28
John 15:5-10 (MSG)
Welcome Home: An Emotional Home

“I’ve loved you the way my Father has loved me.
Make yourselves at home in my love.”
John 15:9 (MSG)



September 3/4
John 15:11-17 (MSG)
Welcome Home: A Physical Home

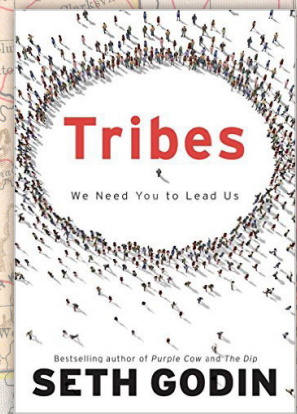
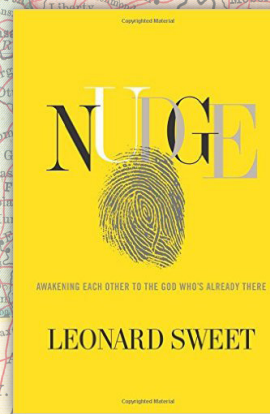
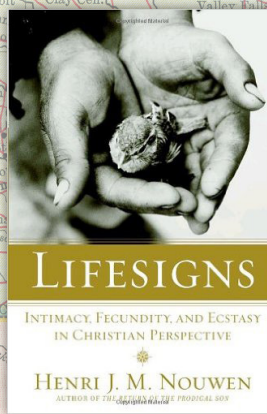
“I’ve told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to love.”
John 15:11 (MSG)

Suggested Resources & Reading

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

Nudge: Awakening Each Other to the God Who’s Already There
by Leonard Sweet

Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us
by Seth Godin



Sept. 17-Oct. 2, 2016

September 10/11

A Sad Truth...A New Spirit

Psalm 51:1-10

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the tragedy of 9/11/2001. We continue to remember the many heroic acts of faith and courage that emerged from those events. Many things have changed. Unfortunately far too many have not. Our defining moments are still often those of hatred, violence and terror. The Psalmist call us, not simply to a different mindset, but to a cleansing of the heart and a renewal of the spirit; God's Spirit.

Resources & Suggested Reading
Rising Strong by Brene Brown
Fear of the Other by William H. Willimon

HERE.

Can you really be two places at once? With technology and social media, it sometimes feels like people are in *many* different places at one time. A communal activity is now seen as a gathering where everyone can be on their respective devices while being in the same physical space. It is rare these days that anyone gets our undivided attention.

Yet, there is a certain Godly power to being fully present in any situation. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus addresses some of our most basic faith tenants related to being a person who is “**Here**”.

Suggested Resources & Reading

How to Be Here:
A Guide to Creating a Life Worth Living
by Rob Bell

Saving Civility:
52 Ways to Tame Rude, Crude & Attitude for a Polite Planet
by Sara Hacala

HOW
TO
BE
HERE
ROB
BELL

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF LOVE WINS

saving
civility
52 Ways to Tame
Rude, Crude & Attitude
for a
Polite Planet
Sara Hacala

Sept. 17/18
Matthew 6:33-34
“**Here: Trust**”

Sept. 24/25
Matthew 7:1-5
“**Here: Grace**”

Oct. 1/2
Matthew 7:6-12
“**Here: Communion**”

Instead, desire first and foremost God's kingdom and God's righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33

October 8/9, 2016

On the Way...

Luke 17:11-19

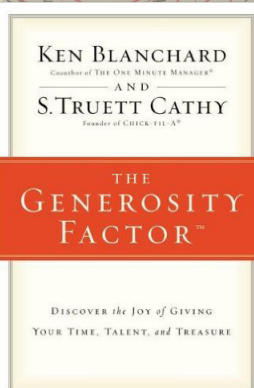
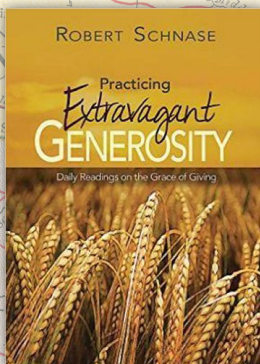
Ten are healed but only one returns to Jesus to give thanks. We are quick to criticize their ungratefulness until we recognize their story in our own.

Oct. 15 - Nov. 6, 2016

from the Heart

Giving helps us become what God wants us to be. One of the marks of the Christian life is generosity. When we are generous with our attitudes, our time and our monetary resources, we live with greater joy. When we start practicing "Extravagant Generosity," we tap into God's transforming love.

The key ingredient of generosity is that it comes from the heart. Generosity reveals the truth of Jesus' words: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).



Tell them to do good, to be rich in the good things they do, to be generous, and to share with others.

I Timothy 6:18

Oct. 15/16
I Timothy 6:17-19
"Outpouring of the Heart"

Oct. 22/23
Deuteronomy 6:4-9
"Matters of the Heart"

Oct. 29/30
Joel 2:27-29
"Inspirations of the Heart"

Nov. 5/6
John 3:1-17
"Declarations of the Heart"

Suggested Resources & Reading

Practicing Extravagant Generosity
by Robert Schnase

The Generosity Factor
by Ken Blanchard & S. Truett Cathy

Tithing: Test Me in This
from *The Ancient Spiritual Practices Series*
by Douglas LeBlanc

Nov. 12 - Nov. 20, 2016

There's More to the Story



With the election of a new president, our country now moves to a time of transition. Transitions are often complicated and even difficult. The heroes of the Bible were complex and often unruly characters.

They are a reminder that God can and will use anyone, including us, to accomplish God's purposes.

Our faith in the process of God requires that we choose to see the bigger picture of both where we have come from and where we are going.

So then let's also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let's throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, 2 and fix our eyes on Jesus, faith's pioneer and perfecter. He endured the cross, ignoring the shame, for the sake of the joy that was laid out in front of him, and sat down at the right side of God's throne.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Nov. 12/13

Hebrews 11:1-16

**"There's More to the Story:
Looking Back"**

Nov. 19/20

Hebrews 12:1-2

**"There's More to the Story:
Looking Forward"**

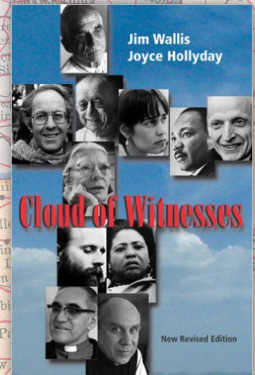
Diana Butler Bass

AUTHOR OF
Christianity for the 'Rest of Us'

A PEOPLE'S HISTORY of Christianity

The Other Side of the Story

"The writing here is deeply personal... What emerges is a persuasive argument that the real traditions of the church are faith, hope, and love, renewed."
—The Washington Post



Suggested Resources & Reading

Cloud of Witnesses
by Jim Wallis & Joyce Hollyday (editors)

A People's History of Christianity
by Diana Butler Bass

Nov. 26 - Dec. 25, 2016

WIDE AWAKE

Nov. 26/27

Romans 13:11-14

“Wide Awake to Wonder”

Dec. 3/4

Romans 15:1-13

“Wide Awake to Imagination”

Dec. 10/11

Matthew 1:18-25

“Wide Awake to Salvation”

Dec. 17/18

“Wide Awake to the Music of the Season”

Dec. 24

Luke 2:1-10

“Wide Awake to Joy”

Dec. 25

“Wide Awake to Christmas”

Christmas time is a feast for the senses. There is much to stimulate us in the music we hear, the foods we smell and taste, the lights we see and even the embraces we receive. But if we are over stimulated, we can quickly become dull to the essential elements that Christmas offers.

Advent gives us the opportunity to prepare and sort through what is essential and what is clutter so that we may be wide awake in the joy of the Christ child's arrival.

Suggested Resources & Reading

*Because of Bethlehem:
Love is Born, Hope is Here*
by Max Lucado

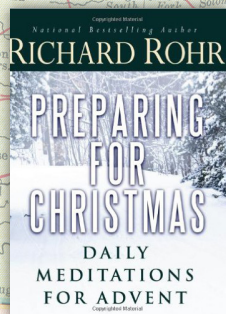
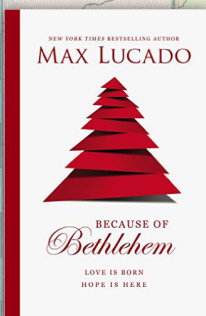
*The First Christmas:
What the Gospels Really Teach Us About Jesus' Birth*
by Marcus J. Borg & John Dominic Crossan

*Preparing for Christmas:
Daily Meditation for Advent*
by Richard Rohr

*All I Want for Christmas:
Opening the Gifts of God's Grace*
by James Moore

As you do all this, you know what time it is. The hour has already come for you to wake up from your sleep. Now our salvation is nearer than when we first had faith.

Romans 13:11



Jan. 14 - Jan 29, 2017

Changing Currency

We like it when everything matches up. When the values of faith, society and culture are all perfectly aligned, we feel secure and content. The problem is, we more often feel disconnected and disjointed. We are unsure who we should listen to and who we should be our influences. The world is often changing faster than we can accommodate.

The New Testament case study of this issue is the Book of *First Corinthians* where the Apostle Paul and an early Christian community wrestled with distractions, divisions and dramatic culture shifts.

Suggested Resources & Reading

Hamilton: The Revolution
by Lin-Manuel Miranda

Falling Upward:
A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life
by Richard Rohr

Invisible Influence:
The Hidden Forces that Shape Behavior
by Jonah Berger

You are NOT Special...
and Other Encouragements
by David McCullough, Jr.

A Failure of Nerve:
Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix
by Edwin H. Friedman

Invisible Influence

The Hidden Forces That Shape Behavior

Jonah Berger
Bestselling author of *Contagious*

FALLING UPWARD

A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life

RICHARD ROHR
Author of *The Naked Now*

HAMILTON
THE REVOLUTION

This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

I Corinthians 1:25

Feb. 4 - Feb. 26, 2017

REAL TIME FAITH

Suggested Resources & Reading

*Sabbath in the Suburbs:
A Family's Experiment with Holy Time*
by Rev. MaryAnn McKibben Dana

*Sabbath as Resistance:
Saying No to the Culture of Now*
by Walter Brueggemann

*True When Whispered:
Hearing God's Voice in a Noisy World*
by Paul L. Escamilla

Sabbath: The Ancient Practices
by Dan Allender

The Sabbath
by Abraham Joshua Heschel

“Those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles...” These are the promising words that conclude the 40th chapter of the Book of Isaiah.

As inspiring as they are, these words stand in sharp contrast to our daily existence which is often marred by stress, anxiety and fear. We need a different rhythm of life in which we are not so easily overwhelmed.

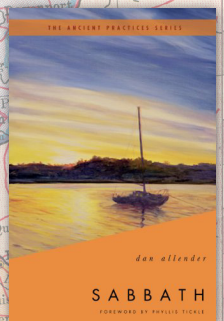
God provides such a rhythm. It includes the provision of Sabbath where rest and renewal become part of living in the moment; living for today.

Feb. 4/5
Isaiah 40:1-5
“Real Time Faith: Preparation”

Feb. 11/12
Isaiah 40:6-11
“Real Time Faith: Prayer”

Feb. 18/19
Isaiah 40:12-25
“Real Time Faith: Play”

Feb. 25/26
Isaiah 40:26-31
“Real Time Faith: Passion”



Look up at the sky and consider:
Who created these?
The one who brings out their attendants one by one, summoning each of them by name.
Because of God's great strength and mighty power, not one is missing.
Isaiah 40:26

March 4 - April 9, 2017

The Will of God

Does God have a will for my life, and if so, what is it?
How do we understand and make sense of tragedy?
We as human beings yearn for the meaning and purpose of our lives. In the sacrifice and passion of Jesus Christ, we discover God's response.

One classic treatment of this subject was written by Dr. Leslie Weatherhead at the close of World War II. His book, *The Will of God*, examines God's purpose in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The season of Lent also invites us on this journey to the cross and beyond.

Suggested Resources & Reading

The Will of God
by Leslie Weatherhead

When Bad Things Happen to Good People
by Harold S. Kushner

Jesus Speaks: Learning to Recognize and Respond to the Lord's Voice
by Leonard Sweet & Frank Viola

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life."

John 4:13-14

March 4/5

Matthew 4:1-11

"Why O' Why"

March 11/12

John 3:1-17

"God's Intentional Will"

March 18/19

John 9:1-7

"God's Circumstantial Will"

March 25/26

John 4:5-26

"God's Ultimate Will"

April 1/2

John 11:17-45

"God's Saving Will"

April 8/9

Matthew 21:1-11

"God's Will on Display"

April 16, 2017 (Easter)

Unguarded Easter

Matthew 28:1-10

The Easter narrative from the Gospel of Matthew is a powerful story which includes earthquakes, lightning, angels and feats of un-human strength. Like the resurrection itself, the story's details catch us off guard. There is Good News in letting our defenses down and allowing God's saving act of new life to come in.

Resources & Suggested Reading

Resurrecting Easter: Meditations for the Great 50 Days
by Kate Moorehead

April 22 - May 21, 2017

Live By the Spirit

The Apostle Paul says there are direct bi-products of the new life we receive in Jesus Christ. He calls these bi-products, The Fruits of the Spirit. The nine “fruits” show up on almost everyone’s list of what they hope and desire for the world.

They, however, do not show up in isolation. They are produced in people living in faith day by day.

Life On The Vine

Cultivating
the Fruit
of the Spirit
in CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY

PHILIP D. KENNESON

ACCIDENTAL SAINTS

FINDING GOD IN ALL
THE WRONG PLACES

Suggested Resources & Reading

Life on the Vine: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community
by Philip D. Kenneson

Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong Places
by Nadia Bolz-Weber

If we live by the Spirit, let's follow the Spirit.
Galatians 5:25

April 22/23

Galatians 5:22-25

“Live by the Spirit: Love & Joy”

April 29/30

Galatians 5:22-25

“Live by the Spirit: Peace & Patience”

May 6/7

Galatians 5:22-25

“Live by the Spirit: Kindness & Goodness”

May 13/14

Galatians 5:22-25

**“Live by the Spirit:
Faithfulness & Gentleness”**

May 20/21

Galatians 5:22-25

“Live by the Spirit: Self-Control”

May 27/28, 2017

The Resurrection Outlook

Matthew 28: 16-20

The Great Commission is given on a mountain by the resurrected Christ. In spite of some confusion and doubt, Jesus is direct in his instructions to those who would dare to be his disciples in this new era of God’s Kingdom. That forecast has now come all the way to us.



For more information about programs,
mission and ministries at Grace Avenue
log on to our website at
www.GraceAvenue.org
or find us on Social Media!

Be sure to Check-in
on Facebook!



Worship Times

You can find us each weekend at one
of our 6 worship opportunities:

Saturday

Sabbath Worship: 5:30pm

Sunday

Communion: 8:30am

Traditional: 9:45 & 11:00am
(in the Sanctuary)

Contemporary: 9:45 & 11:00am
(in the Worship Center)



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