



Bringing the Spirit of Grace to all People

**MAY 2018**



## **Worship Schedule**

Saturday, 5:00 pm and Sunday, 9:00 am

## **Mission Statement**



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Spirit of Grace  
Lutheran Church  
15820 W. Clearview Blvd.  
Surprise, AZ 85374

In the  of Sun City Grand

Phone: 623-977-6000

[www.spiritofgrace.com](http://www.spiritofgrace.com)

### Worship Hours

Saturday at 5:00 pm  
Sunday at 9:00 am

### Education Hour

Wednesday Bible Study,  
10:00 am

### Office Hours

8:30 to 4:00  
Monday—Thursday  
8:30—12:00 Friday

### Staff

Rev. Vern Anderson  
Senior Pastor  
[pastorvern@spiritofgrace.com](mailto:pastorvern@spiritofgrace.com)

Linda Stratman  
Director of Parish Life  
[linda@spiritofgrace.com](mailto:linda@spiritofgrace.com)

Gerry White  
Director of Finance  
& Administration  
[jerry@spiritofgrace.com](mailto:jerry@spiritofgrace.com)

Gil Korito, Bookkeeper  
[gkorito@spiritofgrace.com](mailto:gkorito@spiritofgrace.com)

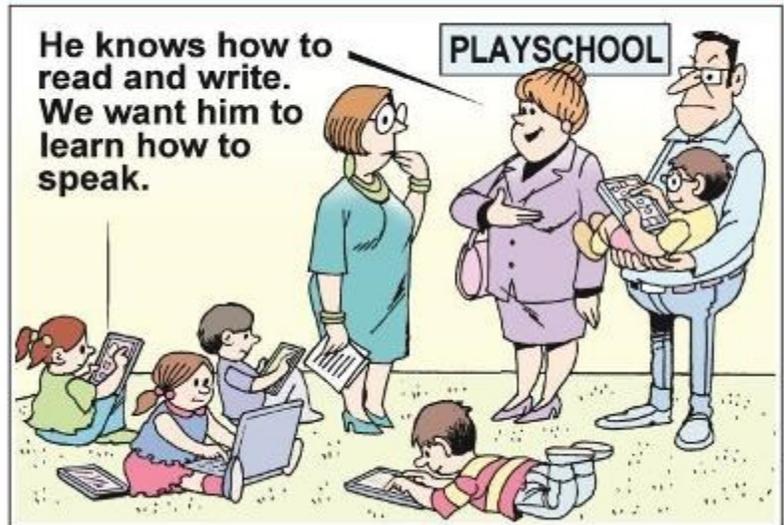
Sheila Marlow  
Secretary/Receptionist  
[sheila@spiritofgrace.com](mailto:sheila@spiritofgrace.com)

Fred Bornhoeft  
Director of Music

Ken Carnes  
Choir Director

iToons

Sunil Agarwal & Ajit Ninan



From Lynda Besonday

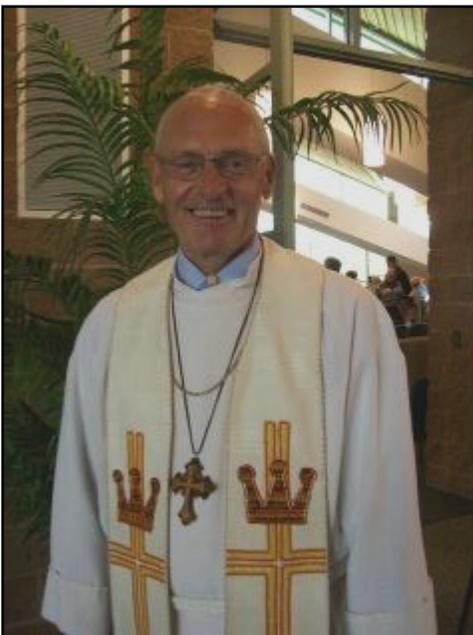




## **"I BELIEVE YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE HERE"**

When I graduated from Hamline University in 1975, I had five options I could pursue: A pilot in the Marine Corps, US Foreign Service, the Peace Corps, go to seminary, or take over my grandfather's farm. In mid-summer I decided to attend Luther Seminary. There was a problem--registrations for the fall had ended. In spite of this I went to the seminary office in person to see if there were any openings. I was told--no. Just then a woman seated at a desk stood up and came over. She said words that have become the key to my Calls in ministry--"I believe you are supposed to be here." She told me I had three days to get all the forms, recommendations, and essays completed and returned to her. Somehow I did it and became the last student admitted for the fall of 1975 class. Ironically, I was also the first person to get a Call from my class of 1979. I guess I had been there long enough!

My first Call was to a two-point rural parish, St. Matthew & Bethany, in southwest Minnesota. Having grown up on a farm and a two-point parish, it was a wonderful match. The congregations were Danish Lutheran and lived with a theology of "Sure, why not try it." It was a great place to begin ministry. We added on to each church, built and paid for in three years a new parsonage, and I even produced a weekly radio program called "Good News for Today." I believe I was supposed to be there to build a solid foundation for my future ministry and to partner with such gracious and willing Christians.



"Would you consider trying a team ministry as a co-pastor?" Pastor Duane Semmler and I sat down and talked about our ministry strengths and how we would do a co-pastor call. We interviewed as a team and were called as a team. Peace Lutheran was, in our viewpoint, a sleeping giant. In our eight years we created an adult education ministry that totaled 200 people in our Sunday class, added a contemporary worship service, and doubled the size of the building with classrooms and gym. Membership and worship attendance reached new levels. I even served on the public school board when we built a \$14.5 million addition on the school. Again, I believe for Peace, the community and the school, I was supposed to be there.

*Continued on page 4*



*Continued from page 3*

It was a very difficult decision to leave Peace, move my family in the middle of school year and move to the Twin Cities. Arlington Hills definitely made me question if I was supposed to be here. While the Call Committee indicated they wanted change, both they and the congregation soon found making changes wasn't that comfortable or easy. But then Pastor Tong Hang walked in off the street into my office. He told me that God had led him here. He needed a place for his Hmong Mennonite congregation to worship and have Sunday School. A week later, Pastor Richard Pittman walked into my office and made the same request. He needed a location for his Church of God in Christ congregation. In spite of difficulties in making changes to itself, the leaders and members of Arlington Hills graciously welcomed both congregations. It was a wonderful partnership with the Gospel and remains a highlight of my ministry. When I left Arlington Hills, there were more people worshipping on Sunday than there had been for over 40 years, they weren't just Swedish Lutheran, but now Hmong Mennonites and African American Pentecostals. This experience transformed Arlington Hills in becoming a mission center to the east side of St. Paul. I absolutely believe I was supposed to be there.



My next call is probably one of the more unique calls the ELCA has ever extended. Bishop Mark Hanson called me to a specialized ministry working with Lutheran Brotherhood as its Director of Congregational Relations. My mission was to discover, create, and train leaders and sales staff to have better relations with congregations, pastors, and institutional leaders. Through my own experience, interviews with pastors, congregation leaders, synod leaders, and institutional leaders, I discovered three key areas where Lutheran Brotherhood fraternal resources could make a difference. These were stewardship, strategic planning, and leadership development. I worked pan Lutheran ELCA, LC-MS, WELS, Lutheran Brethren, and ELS. I researched, wrote, and trained the Life Discovery series on stewardship in everyday living and later did the Values Matter series for Thrivent Financial. I created and led leadership workshops for congregations and several synod staffs. I worked with a number of congregations on creating strategic plans for their ministry. The primary agencies I worked with in this relationship-building environment

*Continued on page 5*



*Continued from page 4*

I wanted to be back in parish ministry. Good Shepherd was a healthy, growing and welcoming congregation that my family and I had joined when I worked with Lutheran Brotherhood. I had helped out in worship, funerals, and weddings when the pastor was on vacation. Pastor Orval Osmundson asked me if I would be interested in doing a co-pastor at Good Shepherd like I had done at Peace. This would be different due to his having been at Good Shepherd over ten years. Yet, it worked very well. As at Peace, the key is self-confidence. The better Orv does, the better I do and vice versa. As a result, we had over 12 years enjoying doing ministry together and continued growth of the congregation. Our biggest challenge was helping the congregation move to new levels in worship, stewardship, and education when things were going so well the way they were. I believe I was also supposed to be there, but the call to a new challenge was soon to come from Arizona.



During 24 years of my ministry, I was also a Chaplain in the Minnesota Army National Guard. It all happened because of one of the worst blizzards in years in January of 1984. In a storm that cost several people their lives, a young lawyer, his wife, and baby somehow found the turn off for Evan. The bar owner called and said a young family needed a place to stay. They stayed for three days with my family while the storm continued. During that time, we visited and Dave related he was also a lawyer in the Minnesota National Guard. He encouraged me to check out being a Chaplain--he was supposed to be there. In October 1984 I was sworn in as a Chaplain. I never would have guessed I would do it for 24 years with the last six being the State Command Chaplain. It was such a complement and refreshing to my parish ministry. I received training and education for ministry through the US Army that no congregation could have afforded. I had the opportunity to have a vital ministry

with the 18- to 30-year olds that are often missing in the pew on Sunday morning. I learned how and loved to recruit pastors to be chaplains. I enjoyed creating monthly training schools and working with chaplains of all denominations. I also experienced the weight of sending all 32 chaplains under my command to war. Thankfully all returned safe and sound. They did such incredible ministry in such awful conditions. I am so proud of them! Again, even though I never became a Marine Corps pilot, I became in Army terms a "sky pilot." I absolutely believe I was supposed to be part of and lead this ministry.

*Continued on page 6*



*Continued from page 5*

In May of 2012 while at the Sr. Pastor's Conference of Large Lutheran Congregations, I was approached by Pastor Gary Benson of American Lutheran, Sun City. He said, "Vern, you should check out Spirit of Grace in Sun City Grand. I think you would be a good fit for them." He gave me a copy of the Congregational Profile. I read it and decided I really didn't need Arizona's extreme heat, scorpions, and rattlesnakes in my life. Then in January of 2013 he called me and asked what temperature it was in Minnesota. I replied, "Minus 30 degrees." He said, "It's 68 and sunny in Arizona and Spirit of Grace is still looking for a pastor. Think about it." I did, and thus began the Call process which ended with me being called as Sr. Pastor beginning October 2013.

My time at Spirit of Grace has been absolutely wonderful. You are a congregation of gifted, generous, and welcoming Christians. I am truly the one who has been blessed to be in your presence and have the opportunity to lead you in worship, education, and ministry in Jesus' name. The growth in worship attendance, stewardship, and Bible studies is nothing short of spectacular. Thank you! I could go on and on, but I know I was supposed to be here.

I now go where I have never gone before--retirement. You make retirement look so good and your continued active lives and faith are an inspiration to me. I never had to shovel sunshine here, but I suspect I will remember how to shovel snow again back in Minnesota. Thanks again for the honor and privilege of being your pastor. I have truly been blessed by you. Thank you!

*Pastor Vern*



**You Were Supposed to Be at Spirit of Grace!**



Attendance continues to be good. As you may have noticed, there are very few empty seats at the 10:00 service on most Sundays. The attendance during Holy Week was outstanding with over 2000 in attendance. Easter Sunday alone was over 1000. Our financial position continues to be strong. Thank you for your continued financial support.

The food contribution to St Mary's Food Bank the first weekend in April was over 1100 pounds. Your generosity as a congregation is outstanding. You have helped a lot of families—thank you!!

The Synod Assembly is June 14-16 in Oro Valley (Tucson) and we still need two lay delegates. If you are interested in being a delegate, please contact Pastor Vern or Bruce Belanger. The Synod will be electing a new Bishop which is a very interesting process.

At the Council meeting in May, we will be distributing gifts to local charities or organizations. If you have an organization that you would like us to consider, please speak to one of the Council members. We need the following information: the purpose of the organization, how many people it serves, and whether or not it receives funding from government programs.

By the time you receive this issue of *Grace Notes* you will have already received the letter from Pastor Vern informing us that he will be retiring from the ministry on June 3rd after 39 years as an ordained minister. The Council was informed of his decision at the council retreat on April 15th. We have been blessed by his ministry with Spirit of Grace for almost five years. His preaching has been inspirational, the Wednesday Bible Study sessions are outstanding, and who could forget our VBS. We are going to miss Pastor Vern and Jan, and we wish them well in retirement.

As we move forward, there will be some challenges and there will be opportunities for ministry. Your continuing support will be greatly appreciated. Please keep the Council and the Call Committee in your prayers as we begin the process of calling a new pastor.

*Bruce Belanger, President*

Robin Aguilar, Vice – President

Deborah Frusciano – Secretary

Vince Barone

Phyllis Borchardt

Don Cinnamon

Dick Lyda

Treedah Magee

Vicki McCarville

# HAPPENings

**ICE CREAM SUNDAES & TRIVIA** — Fun for everyone! Tables of eight will compete for gift card prizes—everyone at the table with the most correct answers wins! Get your table of trivia experts together or come and play with a “random” group. **Sunday, May 20th, at 6:30**; doors open at 6:15. Tickets are \$5 and are available for purchase after the worship services. We will play two rounds of Trivia, then have DIY ice cream sundaes, and then two more rounds. The best minds of the Fellowship Team have created some great questions—four opportunities to be a winner!



**TRIBUTE TO ELTON JOHN & BILLY JOEL** — 2 men 2 pianos 2 generations playing at **Arizona Broadway Theater** on **Monday, June 18th**. This exciting concert and a wonderful dinner is \$64 per person. Arrive at the theater at **5:30** to be seated to enjoy dinner with a 7:30 curtain. Our group price includes a standard starter of soup or salad, entrée, coffee or tea, basic gratuity, and the show. Cocktails, wine, appetizers, meal upgrades, and desserts are not included, but are available at an additional cost with your server. Please tip accordingly on anything extra you purchase. Tickets are available on our website.

**See page 10 for step-by-step instructions to buy your tickets online**

*Continued on page 9*



## Men's Breakfast

The May edition of the Men's Breakfast will take place on Tuesday, May 15th. While this is the third Tuesday of the month, it is almost a week earlier than normal. Please plan accordingly. Again, we need to emphasize that if you sign up to attend, then please attend as we base food preparation on the number of men who sign up.

Refer to the "Upcoming" section of the weekend bulletins for sign-up instructions and a hint at what the discussion focus will be. For additional information,

contact Bernie Ryan at 623-214-5777. We look forward to seeing you.

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

Income 3 months to the end of March 2018	\$230,042
Expenses 3 months to the end March 2018	\$167,469
Fixed Asset purchases 3 month to end of March 2018	\$51,768
Mortgage balance as at the end of March 2018	\$969,544

Members 839 Individuals  
521 Households



## HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS FROM THE SPIRIT OF GRACE WEBSITE

[www.spiritofgrace.com](http://www.spiritofgrace.com) our Home Page

At the very top of the webpage, you'll see **Piano Men: Generations** in bold print. Click on **Piano Men: Generations** which will bring up a new screen.

Scroll down and click on the Blue Button that says **Click Here for Tickets.**

This brings you to another screen where you fill out who is attending—same name that is on your credit or bank card—and how many tickets are desired. At the bottom of this page, click on the blue button that says **PURCHASE!**

This takes you to the next screen where you indicate credit card or bank account. For bank account, use the dropdown menu to indicate which bank account, checking or savings.

When entering the credit card number or the card expiration date or the CVG number, do not enter spaces or dashes.

When you've successfully completed the payment information, the amount charged will appear and as a last step, click the blue button **Purchase.** The final screen is the green Spirit of Grace logo which says, "You have successfully completed and submitted the form. Your payment in the amount of \$XX has been processed."

In a little while you should receive an email confirmation of your ticket purchase. Please print the email and bring that with you to the event.

Call or email Linda Stratman if you have any difficulty. It's just as easy as purchasing tickets for Grand events.

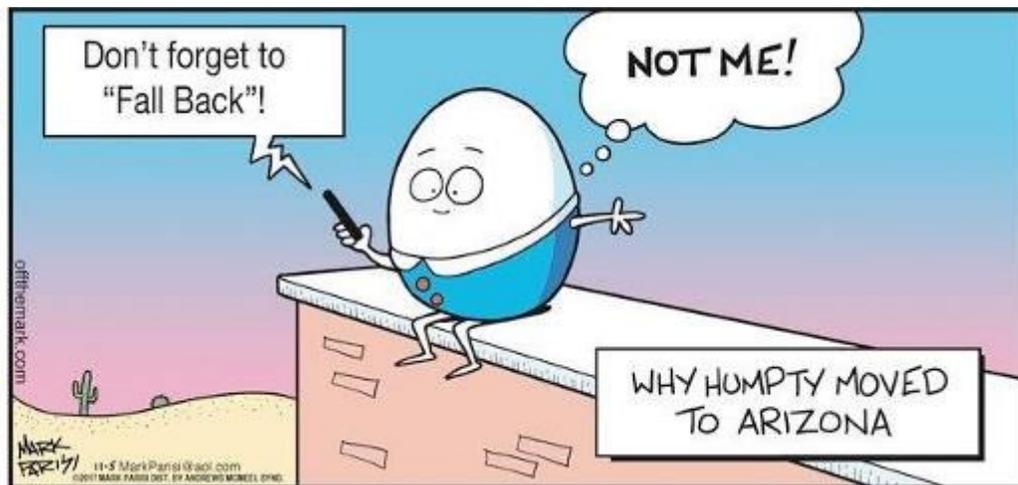
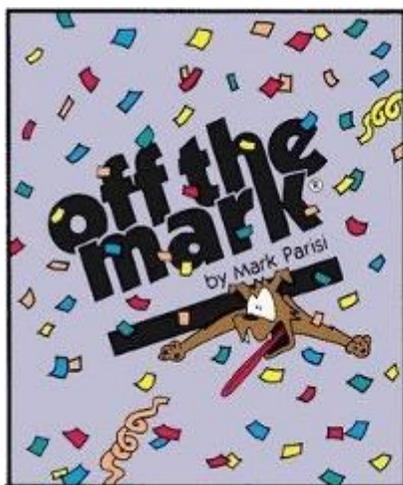


If you are new to Spirit of Grace, we invite you to attend a Welcome Session with Director of Parish Life Linda Stratman. You will meet other prospective members, learn more about the mission and vision of Spirit of Grace, and discover the various opportunities to serve and become involved in the life of the parish community. Everyone is invited to attend.



## New Member Welcome Session

Our next Welcome Session is **Tuesday, May 15th at 2:00**. Call the church office at 977-6000 to indicate your interest in Spirit of Grace. There is no obligation to join when you attend the Welcome Session.



We don't change our clocks, but we do change our worship times . . .

Starting May 6th, the first Sunday in May, there will be just one service on Sunday at 9:00.

Saturday afternoon worship remains at 5:00.



This symbol - with the cross, water and a white lily - identifies the women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God: baptized, forgiven, adopted into God's family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It is a reminder of the growth, beauty and vitality that rise out of that life-giving baptismal water. The symbol also reminds us of the mission of the Church to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **MATTHEW 28:19**

## **WOMEN OF SPIRIT OF GRACE      MAY 2018**

### **RACHEL'S DAY**

Spirit of Grace awesome generosity this year resulted in a wide selection of supplies, clothing and craft for the children. Our donations filled Debra's truck with children's clothing, craft and art supplies valued at nearly \$6,000 and cash and gift card donations of \$2,000 that will assist them with the remodeling of the bedrooms for the children in their care.



*Continued on page 13*



*Continued from page 12*

## **SPIRIT OF GRACE WOMEN'S CIRCLE MEETINGS**

**Martha**                      Monday, May 14, 9:30  
Bible Study Leader: Lynda Besonday  
Meets at: Fellowship Hall

**Mary**                         Monday, May 14, 1:00  
Bible Study Leader: Marilyn Belanger  
Meets at: Conference Room

Devotional for the May bible study is "All are Welcome" reflecting the hospitality of Jesus. Scriptures: Jeremiah 1:4-10, Genesis 12:1-5 and Genesis 18:1-15.

### **Rachel, Deborah and Elizabeth Circle Meetings will resume in November.**

Members staying for the summer months are invited to attend the May meetings of Martha or Mary circles and the combined bible study meetings in June, July, and September.

### **June Combined Bible Study, The Paradoxes of Prayer - I Samuel 12:16-23**

Fellowship Hall, Tuesday, June 12, 9:30

Called to pray, but for what purpose? Can we persuade God with prayer? Do we actually encounter God in prayer? Is the practice of prayer intended for the sake of the one praying or for the One to whom we pray? The Bible references all of these scenarios; however, each comes with biblical, theological, and practical questions. In this first session on prayer, we'll investigate the paradoxical truths of this spiritual practice.

### **July Combined Bible Study, The Practices of Prayer - Psalm 19:14**

Fellowship Hall, Tuesday, July 10, 9:30

Jesus taught us how to pray by way of the Lord's Prayer. But both in Scripture and in the Christian tradition, people of faith have developed a wide variety of ways to come before God. In this session, we'll look at different ways to pray, what each might offer and how knowing an array of prayer styles can enrich our devotional life.

All women are invited to attend and/or join a circle. Extra copies of the Bible study lessons are in **Gather** Magazine and are available for check out in the church library.

*Continued on page 14*



Continued from page 13

## COMING EVENTS

Fall Kickoff	Tuesday, October 9	9:30	Fellowship Hall
Grand Canyon Synod Fall Gathering	Friday, November 9 - 11, Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel, Phoenix		
Fall Luncheon	Thursday, November 15	11:00	Fellowship Hall
Spring Luncheon	Thursday, February 14	11:00	Fellowship Hall

## RACHEL'S DAY HISTORY

I love the phrase "while it was still dark" in John's gospel **JOHN 20:1-9** describing the predicament the women found themselves in on the way to the tomb. Yet, without an answer to the question, "who will move the enormous stone" the women kept walking.

In 1994, on Chicago's west side, women at Bethel Lutheran Church asked the question, "Who will stop the gun violence that is causing children to lose their lives?" With the confidence that the question can and will be answered, the women began what would become Rachel's Day.

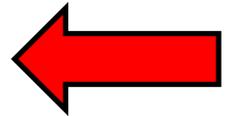
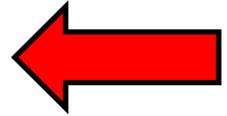
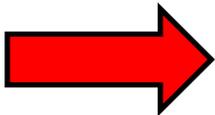
Rachel's Day turned into a Women of the ELCA awareness effort about gun violence against children and is observed the first Sunday in May each year. Rachel's Day is also a free resource based on Rachel who wept for her children and refused to be consoled after King Herod massacred the infants. **MATTHEW 2:16-18**

### Still an issue

***I am sure*** the women who gathered in 1994 never imagined that 24 years later ending gun violence against children would continue to be an issue. And, not only an issue but a pandemic.

But, ***I am sure*** Bethel Women are hopeful. They know Rachel's Day will be different this year after the February 14 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. It will be different because the work of Rachel's Day and other women's groups over these 24 years laid the foundation for children to find their voice and lead the effort to stop gun violence against children.

Information from the WELCA website: <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/>



At this writing, we do not know how long the #RedforEd protesters will be out of school. About 20% of Arizona’s school children are eligible and receive free breakfast and lunch at school, and in some cases, a bag or box of food to take home. When school is not in session, too many of Arizona’s kids are going hungry. We can help alleviate this problem by being extra generous so that food can be given to the kids at their schools while the schools are not in session.

*Linda Stratman*

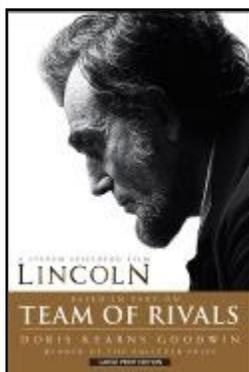
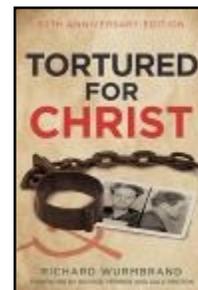
**FOOD INGATHERING**

**May 5 & 6**

*Always the first full weekend of the month*

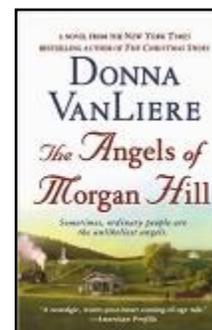
## NOTES FROM OUR LIBRARY FOR MAY

***Tortured for Christ***, by Richard Wurmbrand. Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, whose body bore the scars of 14 years of torture and suffering for Christ in a Communist prison, witnessed the indomitable courage and persistent faith of persecuted Christian believers. Following his release from prison, he devoted his life to being a voice for persecuted Christians so others in the body of Christ might serve them and be inspired by their examples of bold faith.



Are you a history buff? Then we have a new book in the library for you-- ***Lincoln – A Team of Rivals***, by Doris K. Goodwin. Acclaimed historian Doris Kearns Goodwin illuminates Lincoln's political genius in this highly original work, as the one-term congressman and prairie lawyer rises from obscurity to prevail over three gifted rivals of national reputation to become president. It was this capacity that enabled Lincoln as president to bring his disgruntled opponents together, create the most unusual cabinet in history, and marshal their talents to the task of preserving the Union and winning the war.

Here is a Christian fiction book, ***The Angels of Morgan Hill***, by Donna VanLiere. Jane Gable thinks 1947 will be like every other year in Morgan Hill, Tennessee, but it's the year everything changes. Jane first lays eyes on young Milo Turner the day that her abusive, alcoholic father is buried in the Morgan Hill cemetery. The Turners are the first black family ever to move into the area, and while their presence challenges the comfort of many in the small, tight-knit community, Jane and her brother, John, have found new friends.



*LindaLu Miller, Librarian*

**Dawn Frojelin** went home to our Lord following a short illness April 3rd. Her service was held at Spirit of Grace on April 10th. Our sympathy goes out to her husband Erland and members of their family. The Frojelins have been members of Spirit of Grace for 12 years.

**Jo Ann Capron** entered life eternal on April 6th; her service was held at Camino del Sol Funeral Home on April 10th. Jo Ann was a member of Spirit of Grace for 16 years.



*Our  
Condolences*

Rick Jaeger's 92-year old mother Jeanne passed away April 20th in Mankato, Minnesota.



**ROBIN CHRISTIANSON & DAVID WEEKS** – Robin was born in Las Vegas but considers herself a native Californian; and David is originally from New Jersey, but upon completion of computer training, he moved to California to become part of the computer industry. Prior to retirement, Robin was a legal secretary. Their religious background is quite varied and interesting. Robin had an interest in God and religion from the time she was five years old. She considers herself a spiritual seeker and even went to



Thailand and Indonesia to study Eastern religions. David was baptized into a Catholic family, was born again as an adult, and has studied Buddhism. He says he prays to both Jesus and Buddha. They had planned to visit other churches since moving to Sun City Grand five months ago. However, on their first visit to Spirit of Grace, they met another potential member who had visited several local churches and told Robin and David they didn't need to look any further. Robin is interested in spiritual reading, gardening, and ceramics. David likes cars, motorcycles, buying and repairing them to resell, planes, and auctions of all kinds.



**BETTIE LONG** – is from Woodstock in the Chicago area and is a life-long Lutheran. Bettie is interested in genealogy and wants to research and build her family tree for her grandchildren.

**NANCY NEWMAN** – hails from Kearney, Nebraska. Nancy worked for Baldwin Filters where she earned her six Sigma Master Black Belt in process improvement. She has a Missouri Synod Lutheran background and was invited to sing with our choir by Dorothy Carnes. In her spare time she enjoys singing in other groups as well and RV travel especially with her granddaughters when they can come along.



# REFLECTIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS

by Dan Olson, author of  
"African Sand in My Sandals"

## A REFLECTION OF SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The rising sun casts a glow on the trees and bushes we view from the balcony of our apartment as we enjoy our morning coffee. This has become a special place to view the beginning of the day. The music of Cat Stevens' "Morning Has Broken" sets the mood. Barbara's favorite for this spot is "Surely The Presence of the Lord Is in This Place." The long lonely blast of the horn of a BNSF engine at a nearby crossing cuts through the quiet morning and fills us with nostalgia.

The courtyard of our complex forms a wide circle of trees and bushes—some of which are familiar and some are not familiar to a boy who grew up in Minnesota farm country. Mexican Bird of Paradise, Turpentine Plant, Giant Hesperalo, Canary Island Palm, Fern Pine, Baberry Cactus, Fern of St. Desert, Totem Pole Cactus—all new, unique, and beautiful—fill our sights.

The sight of the rising sun from our balcony as well as the sight of the setting sun from a west-facing driveway prompt me to reflect on a beautiful old song.

*I see trees of green, red roses too  
I see them bloom for me and you  
And I think to myself what a wonderful world.  
I see skies of blue and clouds of white  
The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night  
And I think to myself what a wonderful world.  
The colors of the rainbow so pretty in the sky  
Are also on the faces of people going by  
I see friends shaking hands saying how do you do  
They're really saying I love you.  
I hear babies crying, I watch them grow  
They'll learn much more than I'll never know  
And I think to myself what a wonderful world!*



*Songwriters: George Douglas / George David Weiss / Bob Thiele  
What a Wonderful World lyrics © Carlin America Inc, BMG Rights Management US, LLC, Imagem Music Inc*

**Yes--I think to myself what a wonderful world!**