



GRACE NOTES

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 46 WOODLAND STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06105 860-527-7792

April 2020

BEACON OF THE DAY: Woman walked miles through bushes to serve as school principal

[March 8, 2020](#)

Retired principal Gerline Wilks yesterday sat on her veranda at Top Hill district in the Lluidas Vale Division, St. Catherine, reflecting on an illustrious career that earned her the admiration of men and women in education.

“I stood out greater than some of the men,” she told **The Beacon**. “In those days, people looked up to male principals more; then it changed and they looked up to men and women. It depends on how you work and you impress people.”

Wilks, 88, said she impressed many people at Juan de-Bolas Primary School where she first worked as principal.

Her frequent trips between home and school were like a job in and of itself.

Wilks had to walk miles alone on a dirt track through bushes twice per day to reach a community called Pennington. From there, she climbed a mountain in the mornings to reach the school at Juan de-Bolas.

“When I went to Juan de-Bolas, things weren’t pretty there for the students,” she said. To change that, Wilks hosted extra classes for students and training sessions for teachers who were mainly probationers.

“I worked with those people and I turned out professionals... They changed my name from Gerline to Madam Principal. The parents – oh Lord; they were happy for me... That’s a school I will never forget. The children were hungry for education and I worked on them,” Wilks recounted with profound passion and nostalgia.



She added: “It was weeping and wailing when the people heard that I was going to leave Juan de-Bolas, but I spoke to them and they understood.”

After spending roughly a decade at Juan de-Bolas Primary, Wilks left for another school that was closer to her home and to her then ailing husband – Luther Wilks – who eventually died.

(continued on page 5)

Beacon of the Day— pages 1 & 5
Pastor’s Message — pages 2 & 5
Pope Francis—page 3
ELCA-CARES Act — pages 4 & 7
Coronavirus Prayer—page 6
Birthdays—page 7
Searching for God in all the Right Places pages 8,10 & 11
You’ve Heard About the Kitchen—page 9

PASTOR'S MESSAGE-THE GOSPEL (GOOD NEWS) – JOHN 8: 21-30

There are few times in our lives when we reflect so deeply, every day about our lives, our relationships and our faith. Nothing has been quite like this. Every living moment has been cherished and examined in my life these weeks and now months. Looking forward to Holy Week has us wondering in so many ways about what is before us. We will not gather together physically... we won't march with our palms this Sunday coming; we'll not wash each other's feet on Thursday, and we'll not process with seven churches carrying the cross.

In a real sense not doing these things makes them so much more at a time when they are so needed. It is our faith that calls to us the quarantined or those who are risking their very lives to save us. I have listened to and heard the music to "I Never Walk Alone" in my heart and in life over this time of trial and I am finding so many other ways to find God in all of this.

May this issue help you see from whence this hope and depth and love may root or reach out to us. For me, I have found our Presiding Bishop, our New England Synod Bishop, my brothers and sisters in ministry, old friends, my family, and you who may read this and who are in my heart as I look for ways to be safe and serve both at the same time. What I encourage is that you keep looking, too. Our Fifth Sunday in Lent included a Hebrew prayer. This document will include words from friends of mine, Pope Francis, some of you... and mostly words from people who deeply value our time together during this reach for love, practice of love and fear about that what threatens.

The front page story is one of life. The wondrous principal is Sonja Wellington's mother. The article written by a reporter from a Jamaican news paper.

One of these I drew from daily meditations shared with me by a Fresh Start leader to whom I share our daily meditations during Lent. What he sends me, daily, is that which comes from his alma mater... Notre Dame. As you take in that which is to be found in this issue, please understand that Christine's message in reflecting on the words of John say an awful lot to me. May they do the same to you. Please know that I love and care for each one of you... and if I can do something more or different, please show me the way.

Christine Derderian is a graduate of Notre Dame with a law degree from 2011:

The past few weeks have been filled with countless, fruitless searches – the quest for toilet paper, Lysol wipes and diapers to name a few, but also searches for answers to unanswerable questions– when will the world restart? If I become infected with COVID-19, will I recover? Has the market hit bottom? The irony is that, in this search for supplies, answers, and certainty, I consistently end up feeling less prepared, more unsure, and more panicked.

And now Jesus too adds uncertainty? Jesus tells the Jews he is going away. They will search for him but won't find him and they can't join him.

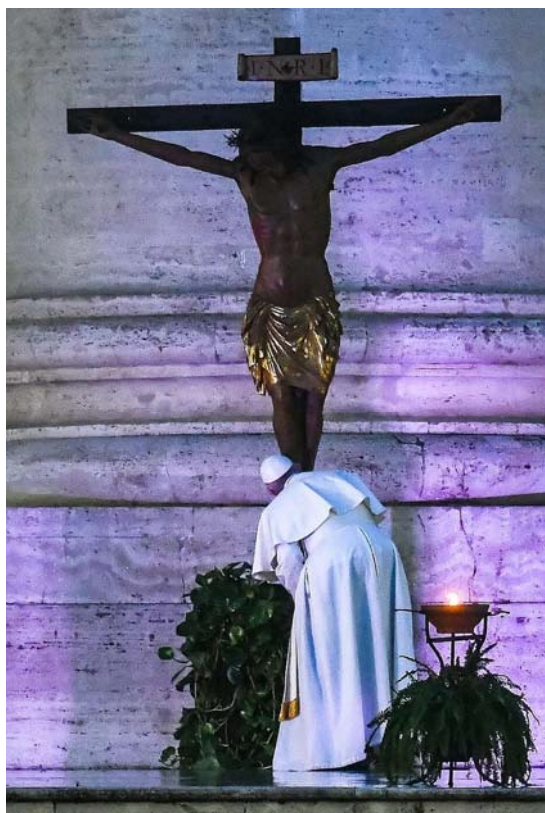
But that's not where the story ends, there is a qualifier. They cannot come with him (or find him) unless they believe. The same goes for us. When, and if, we believe—that Jesus was not just a man, but the Son of God who was sent to the world by the Father to save us from our sins and to give us new life, who died, but then rose—well, then, the whole calculus changes.

(continued on page 5)

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2020

“Embracing His cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the Holy Spirit.”

Pope Francis



Church Garden

Louisa is looking for low growing edging plants especially sedum and phlox. She needs lots for the front lawn area.





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



CARES Act inclusions and next steps in response to COVID-19

On March 27, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, H.R. 748 (CARES Act), a third economic aid package to help bring direct relief to families, reinforce struggling industries and the healthcare sector, and extend assistance to vital state and federal support programs.

Members of Congress and their staff worked intensely to deliver bipartisan initial response to the crisis, and we thank the many Lutherans who called their lawmakers to advocate for important faith-rooted principles and policies that support those of us at greatest risk in this pandemic. The first bill put \$8.3 billion towards healthcare, including funding for global response to the pandemic. The second bill strengthened nutrition assistance programs and unemployment benefits, allowed for free coronavirus testing predicated by kits availability, and also provided extra sick leave for millions of workers.

SOME ELEMENTS OF THE CARES ACT

[In the third relief package](#), Congress passed aid to people experiencing unemployment and economic uncertainty and relief to families and businesses, including several provisions consistent with ELCA Advocacy prioritization of faithful and timely attention to pressing concerns that affect our neighbor's well-being and the wholeness of creation.

- Unemployment insurance benefits expanded to people who have exhausted their state unemployment insurance and to people who do not qualify for the traditional state unemployment insurance, such as gig workers, self-employed people and contract workers;
- Housing assistance of \$7 billion offered, including targeted funding for those of us experiencing homelessness;
- State, tribal and local government support of \$150 billion for urgent needs and \$150 billion for healthcare system reinforcement designated;
- Child Care and Development Block Grants made available to states to provide immediate assistance to child care centers;
- Evictions moratorium for 120 days enabled for renters in homes covered by a federally backed mortgage;

(continued on page 7)

BEACON OF THE DAY: Woman walked miles through bushes to serve as school Principal

(continued from page 1)

She did her last stint as Principal at her alma mater – Top Hill Primary School, located less than a mile away from her home. In fact, that’s where she started her teaching career before she went to Arthur Seat Primary School as a teacher and Juan de-Bolas as principal.

Wilks said she is happy to have fulfilled her childhood dream of becoming a teacher, noting that children back then were far more disciplined than now.

“The teachers now are not getting any respect from the children, and I think the parents are behind it,” said the educator, who is a mother of five. “If parents stood up with the teachers, the children couldn’t come to school and behave the way they behave now.”

Wilks, who attended Moneague College, said the success of her students was her greatest motivation. They still warm her heart whenever she sees them.

Wilks said she also was motivated by the ‘hard’ work she did during childhood – helping her father on the farm and raising animals.

While now enjoying her retirement, she serves her Top Hill community as a Justice of the Peace.

“I would like to be remembered for the work I do in helping people to progress,” said Wilks, who worships at the Anglican church in her rural district.

By Horace Mills, Journalist



PASTOR’S MESSAGE-THE GOSPEL (GOOD NEWS) – JOHN 8: 21-30

(continued from page 2)

When we start looking for Jesus in the right places with the right perspective, then we will not only find him and be able to join him, but we can find an inner peace.

In these times of uncertainty, Jesus is all around us. Let us feel his presence in the beauty of the sunset, the unexpected time together with family, void of much of the typical consumerism, the helpful neighbor delivering food to those who can’t go out, the healthcare workers and first responders showing up day in and day out, and the priests comforting the grieving. And let us find Jesus in prayer, deep within our hearts. For when we believe, when we search for Jesus instead of sanitation supplies, the world suddenly seems a lot more hopeful. Tranquility, even in times of uncertainty, begins to take hold.

Coronavirus prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ you traveled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness. At your command the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus may they regain their strength and health through quality medical care. Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another. Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim vulnerable to a disease that knows no borders.

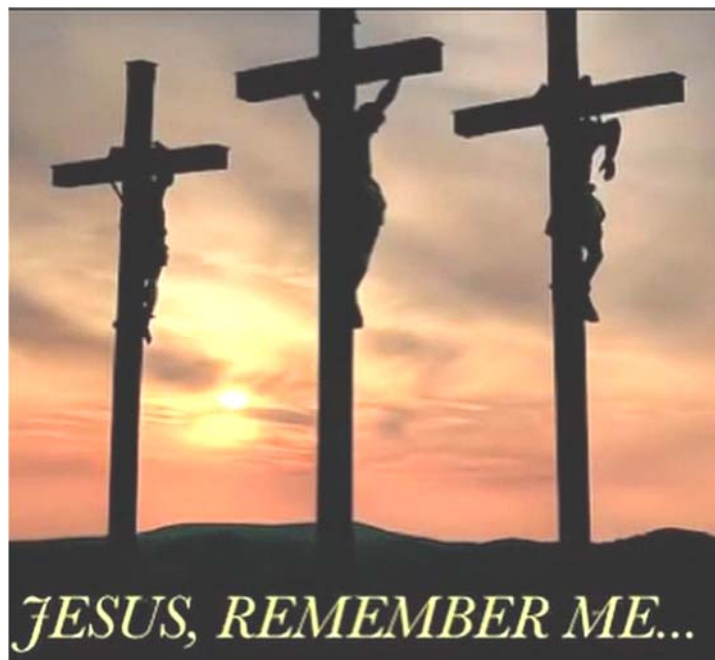
Lord Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace. Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve defend them from illness and despair.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process may they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations, give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them wisdom to invest in long term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks.

May they know your peace as they work together to achieve it on earth, whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Lord Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare, in place of our anxiety give us your peace. Lord Jesus, heal us.

Amen.



CARES Act inclusions and next steps in response to COVID-19 (continued on page 4)

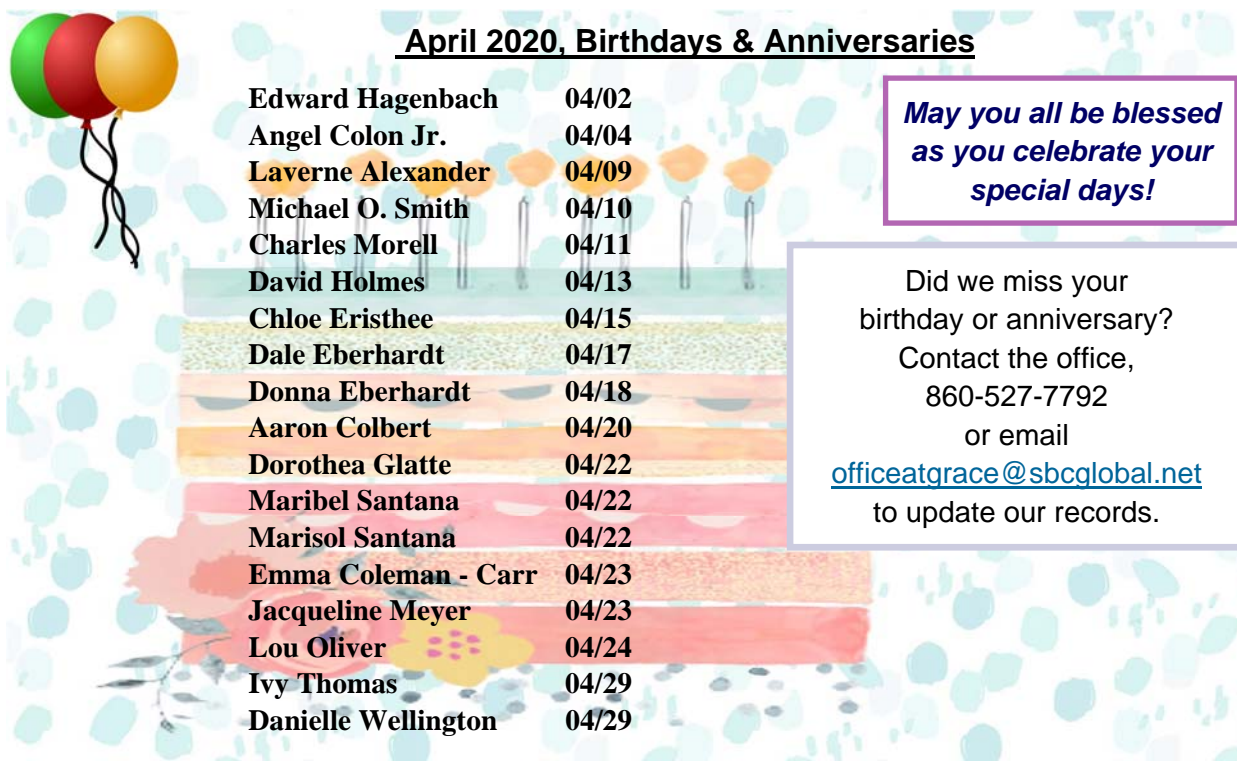
- International COVID-19 response increase allotted of \$1 billion, including support for repatriation of U.S. government personnel and American citizens, for displaced populations and for global disease detection.

In addition to this overview, refer to the companion [ELCA Advocacy blog post](#) for additional information about what's coming in a fourth package as well as links to connect eligible individuals seeking assistance with sources of aid.

YOUR ADVOCACY MATTERS

The initial draft of the CARES Act proposed that people too poor to pay income taxes would get smaller cash payments than people with higher incomes. Your advocacy made a difference in removing that inequity in the final version – thank you! We will also need your voice in the time ahead to advocate with populations not guaranteed automatic cash stimulus payments, such as recipients of Social Security or Supplemental Security Income. There is more to do.

As Congress will likely adjourn for several weeks, we encourage you and other advocates to watch for possible tele-conference town halls and other forums to connect with your lawmakers while they are in-district. The ELCA Advocacy resource, "[August Recess Guide](#)," contains some tips for in-district opportunities. Express both your thanks for their action and share your specific concerns and community needs as we live aware of our role doing "God's work. Our hands." in this uncharted time.



April 2020, Birthdays & Anniversaries

Edward Hagenbach	04/02
Angel Colon Jr.	04/04
Laverne Alexander	04/09
Michael O. Smith	04/10
Charles Morell	04/11
David Holmes	04/13
Chloe Eristhee	04/15
Dale Eberhardt	04/17
Donna Eberhardt	04/18
Aaron Colbert	04/20
Dorothea Glatte	04/22
Maribel Santana	04/22
Marisol Santana	04/22
Emma Coleman - Carr	04/23
Jacqueline Meyer	04/23
Lou Oliver	04/24
Ivy Thomas	04/29
Danielle Wellington	04/29

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

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

SEARCHING FOR GOD IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

As all of us try to follow the very clear and prescriptive advice or instruction of those responsible for our safety and that of our communities, our state and the country, we may look around us in a very different way as our whole way of life seems to be up for grabs or at least for new interpretation. I have found and want to share with you, some remarkable and so very special things all around me. May you find them, too.

I have witnessed our food ministry in joyful acceptance of new kitchen equipment, a shiny (like new) Community Room floor and a group of volunteers who just won't quit. Louisa, Nancy and Sue discovering how to continue our Friday nights without risking lives, but also by respecting them and caring for them. The whole Friday Gathering concept is upside down and still meaning something very special. You can see it the eyes and the nods, and the prayerful thanks of our guests. They are hungry, access to food has grown even more difficult and yet they still come. And so, too, do William, Gladys, Loos, Emmanuella, Doreen, Margaret, Peter, Pastor Alba, Walter, Peter and so many others.

Other churches have come to know that we are continuing our food ministry. They have offered to provide money, food, supplies, anything we need or want.... Particularly around Holy Week. Can we use these, how can we spread this generosity to those who need it most? What does God want us to do, right now?

Mark Jones has become a dear Email friend sharing his own take on things as he is reading the *Imitation of Christ* occasioned by a trip to Jamaica that Sonja made to care for her mother. Her looking for that book led to the purchase and distribution of dozens of them to members. Mark has taken that very seriously. Here is his latest reflection:

Pastor:

Today's entries reminded me of the recent meditation regarding Truth and Freedom:

Book Three

Fourth Chapter WE MUST WALK HUMBLY BEFORE GO IN HUMILITY AND TRUTH

The Voice of Christ

My Child, walk before Me in truth, and seek me always in the simplicity of your heart. He who walks before Me in truth shall be defended from the attacks of evil, and the truth shall free him from seducers and from the danders of wicked men. For if the truth has made you free, then you shall be free indeed, and you shall not care for the vain words of men.

The Disciple

O Lord, it is true. I ask that it be with me as You say. Let your truth teach me. Let it guard me, and keep me safe to the end. Let it free me from all evil affection and badly ordered love, and I shall walk with You in great freedom of the heart.

[Imitation of Christ, p. 48]

mark

(continued on page 10)

You've heard about the kitchen, Now you CAN SEE IT!

Our new kitchen is getting good use - and safe use both at the same time. Enjoy these pictures (particularly the one with smoke pouring; out of the dishwasher) yes, that is our Walter!



Pope Francis reached out to the World Council of Churches and our Presiding Bishop joined with faith leaders all over the world in encouraging us to say the Lord's Prayer on last Tuesday at noon. I was home at that time and I sat with my son, David and we prayed. I felt Christ with us. David smiled.

You see, David is with us as he was furloughed, Special Olympics shut down, and his church has been closed, too. He was living alone in his condo in Massachusetts. We picked him up and he now lives with us. Had he not been with us, we would not have been able to pray together. We love having David home with us.

The invitation to pray together as Christians was shared with me by our Presiding Bishop. I took advantage of the offer made in the material to sign up for a daily devotion offered by Pope Francis. You will find a sample in this issue.

I received the following Email from a colleague going back more than 35 years. Our only contact since then has been through Christmas cards. He lives in Colorado. Look what I got from him this week:

This is A Keeper

I grew up with practical parents. A mother, God love her, who washed aluminum foil after she cooked in it, then reused it. She was the original recycle queen before they had a name for it. A father who was happier getting old shoes fixed than buying new ones.

Their marriage was good, their dreams focused. Their best friends lived barely a wave away.

I can see them now, Dad in trousers, tee shirt and a hat and Mom in a house dress, lawn mower in one hand, and dishtowel in the other. It was the time for fixing things. A curtain rod, the kitchen radio, screen door, the oven door, the hem in a dress. Things we keep.

It was a way of life, and sometimes it made me crazy. All that re-fixing, eating, renewing, I wanted just once to be wasteful. Waste meant affluence. Throwing things away meant you knew there'd always be more.

But then my mother died, and on that clear summer's night, in the warmth of the hospital room, I was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn't any more.

Sometimes, what we care about most gets all used up and goes away ... never to return. So ... While we have it ... it's best we love it ... And care for it ... And fix it when it's broken ... And heal it when it's sick.

This is true. For marriage ... And old cars ... And children with bad report cards ... And dogs with bad hips ... And aging parents .. And grandparents. We keep them because they are worth it, because we are worth it. Some things we keep. Like a best friend that moved away or a classmate we grew up with.

(continued on page 11)

*There are just some things that make life important, like people we know who are special ...
And so, we keep them close!*

*I received this from someone who thinks I am a 'keeper', so I've sent it to the people I think of
in the same way ... Now it's your turn to send this to those people that are "keepers" in your
life. Good friends are like stars ... You don't always see them, but you know they are always
there. Keep them close!*

I invite all of you to take Gary Olinger's words and send them to someone in your life that makes or made a difference for you. What a blessing! And, now, we have the time to do such things.

Dale is a latent photographer, or perhaps had been one in his heart all of his life. His pictures shared here bring us so close to nature we can see, and almost hear and smell it. I love his photography which we often share with you in this medium. Enjoy these, they are very recent... even as the virus has taken and will take its toll.

Speaking of nature, Nina Kretchmer shared some of her poetry with me:

“Like a rose planted
by the River Jordan

Like a rose planted
by the stream

Plant in my heart
with blessings

Peace and understanding

Like a rose”
Jesus died for me





Grace Lutheran Church
46 Woodland Street
Hartford, CT 06105



Our Staff and Council Leadership

The Rev. Rick Kremer, Pastor
rickkremer@aol.com

Nilda Bolorin, Parish Administrator
officeatgrace@sbcglobal.net

Dorothea Glatte, Lay Minister

Lloyd Smith, Lay Minister

Louisa Barton-Duguay, Religious Worker
Artist in Residence for Outreach

Barbara Ruhe, President

Barbara Calogero, Secretary

Dale Eberhardt, Treasurer

Janice Potter, Financial Assistant

Dale Eberhardt, Organist

Walter Scott, Sexton

New Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Closed on Wednesdays.

www.graceistheplace.org

