

# GRACE NOTES

News from and about Grace Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan Volume 3 # 1 January 2011

## News from Council

### NEW MEMBERS

#### Jason, Erin and Oliver Carrigan

Jason and Erin are going from Grace to Grace for they both grew up in the non-denominational Grace Community Church in Nashville, MI, where they got to know each other playing together in the youth worship band. Jason has an older sister in Vermontville, MI and an older brother who lives in the UP. Erin is the second of four girls. Jessica lives in Pittsburgh, PA, Kristen is a senior at WMU and Kaytlin is a freshman at Grand Valley. They have one son,



Oliver is their first, and is 6 months old. They wrote: what a blessing he has been to us and our family. Oliver's name means olive tree (surprise!) and our prayer is that wherever he goes in life he will offer up "oil that honors both God and man" Judges 9:9.

They see God at work in the way they have been led to Grace Church. After investing in inner-city youth San Jose, Costa Rica for 3 years, they moved back to Michigan with a great desire to continue serve youth in our cities. This led them to be hired as the Youth for Christ City Life directors for Grand Rapids. Near the same time this happened, Pastor Jack approached YFC with the desire to partner together to better reach teenagers in Southgate. The rest is history! They are excited to see how this partnership with Grace will unfold. We love that Grace is a diverse congregation in many ways (ethnically, economically, etc.). To us this reflects the unity in the body that Christ prayed for and is the kind of family that we want to be part of.

In addition their roles with YFC, they are both tutoring part time in Grand Rapids Public Schools for children of migrant worker families. In addition to speaking Spanish, they love spending time with family, going for walks, learning new things, and being part of the community!

#### Rick and Ida Diaz

Rick and Ida were invited to visit Grace Church by Pastor Jack and his wife Eileen. They have known Eileen since 1999 and she spoke often about Grace Church

Four years ago they moved to Grand Rapids from Dallas, Texas. When they came to town they



began worshipping at Calvary Baptist, which is a very large congregation on 28<sup>th</sup> Street. After awhile they wanted to find a smaller congregation.

Rick has two brothers and one sister. One brother lives in El Paso, Texas

and his other brother lives in Austin, Texas. His sister lives in Alexandria, Virginia. Ida has six brothers and one sister. Three of her brothers live in Farmington, New Mexico and three brothers live in El Paso, Texas. Ida's sister lives in Alamogordo, New Mexico. Rick and Ida have two children; Amanda 29 and Gabriel 25. Amanda and her family live in Dallas, Texas. Gabriel and his family live in Tacoma, Washington. Gabriel is a career Air Force man. They have six grandchildren. Amanda has a blended family, three of her own and two step children, all still living at home with Amanda and her husband. Gabriel and his wife have one three year old child.

Rick works with Eileen at the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative and Ida is a homemaker. Rick enjoys fishing and gardening. Ida enjoys gardening and reading.

#### Charles Debrie, sons Austin and Michael



Charles found out about Grace Church while he was in the program Alternative Directions, (AD). He always considered himself to be a believer, but really never

found a church where he was really comfortable. Pastor Jack, who works with AD, invited him to come and check out Grace Church. From the very beginning he felt good about attending and began growing. As a teenager he attended a Christian Reformed Church on the North East side of Grand Rapids, but in his later teens, decided that he didn't like

it, he always felt like an outcast. So he quit church and it wasn't until his mid-twenties, that he started looking for another church. He was introduced to Resurrection Life Church in Grandville. After a year attending that church he started to feel that that church really didn't present what he needed.

When he got out of A.D., he tried to go back to the church he grew up in. He did that because his Mom had begun to attend there. But Charles did not feel comfortable and his Mom quit going to that church. Charles has two younger brothers and a younger sister, none of them go to church. His youngest brother is in prison. Charles began to pray for the Lord's leading, what should he do?

All of that has brought him to Grace Church. His boys Austin and Michael love it here and that is really important to him. His oldest boy Austin was in foster care while Charles was in rehab. Now his mother and he share legal custody of him with one week with his Mother and one week with Charles. His younger son, Michael, who has a different mother, lives with her, and is able to go where he wants to. Thank God for agreements.

Charles is highly skilled in the mechanical field, has 20 years of experience and even owned his own repair shop. He is also skilled in maintenance/remodeling of homes. He likes to say: "if it is broke, let me look at it, and chances are that I can fix it! It does not really matter what it is either. I love helping others with their vehicle repairs, because I have been gifted with an ability that not everyone has. It would be wrong of me to turn a brother/sister down who is truly in need of help. That is what I believe. My father used to say that ALL the time." My father passed away from alcoholism on December 12, 2003. Charles has been sober now since July 19, 2008!!! and wants a better life for his children than what his father left for his kids. He states: "With God, and Grace Church,

good as it gets around here.

It is cold here in Kingsley, Michigan, the wind always blows here. I've never seen such a windy place, whatever the temperature is, the wind makes it 20 degrees colder.

Church service was special, we had a non-denominational minister and a singer. It was the best they could do, it being out in the middle of no where. Service was about an hour and a half, a good time was had by all who were there.

I miss you Grace Church and will look forward to returning some day.  
*David D. Kwiatkowski*

## Update on Shut-ins

### CATHY & JOYCE LING

Cathy Ling is home after a long stay at Spectrum Rehab. She lives with her cat, and good friend, Mia-Meow in a very nice, barrier-free apartment. She works two days a week for Hope Network and is Secretary of the ACTION group there. She continues physical therapy on a regular schedule for her shoulder and leg.

Cathy has returned to worship at Grace and found her way immediately into the Praise Team, in which she has sung for several years. She thanks God for her ability to return, worship, and participate.

Of deepest concern to her is the health of her Mother, Joyce Ling. She asks for our prayers for God's healing mercy for Joyce.

### PETER & KAREN WALKER

Peter Walker is presently living in a nursing home in Wayland. Peter is wrestling with dementia and the staff there are good coaches and trainers for this fight. And he is showing progress. He sends greetings to his friends at Grace, many of whose names he recalled. Peter says: "the people are friendly, the food is good, and he feels blessed to be there."

His address is: Laurels at Sandy Creek, 425 E Elm Room 117, Wayland, MI 49348

This has been a time of adjustment for Karen also. She is presently being capably assisted at home by her daughters; Jane and Nancy. Her life, however, has been changed considerably by Peter's situation. Karen and Peter need our prayers.

Cards for Peter and Karen Walker maybe send to:  
2475 Birchcrest SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

## BAPTISM OF JONATHAN RYAN SPEARS



Jonathan Bryan Spears was baptized on December 26, 2010 in the morning service. He was born in Ardmore Oklahoma on March 15, 2010 to his parents Ryan and Grace Spears

## An Open Letter

December 25, 2010

Merry Christmas Grace Church. I want to thank everyone for remembering your Christian brother while he does his bit for the State of Michigan. Even in this place God's flock needs tending and we can all use the support of our church family.

We had a special fair for lunch, a slice of beef roast, a dinner role, baked potato, corn and an apple. That is as

If you have news items for Grace Notes, please pass it on to Chris and Greta Overvoorde.

Call 616 956-7454 or email them at: [overcalvin.edu](mailto:overcalvin.edu).  
For previous issues of Grace Notes go the Church's website: [www.gracegr.org](http://www.gracegr.org)