

GRACE NOTES

News from and about Grace Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Vol.7 num.10, DECEMBER, 2015

Andrew Cross 1910-2015

Andrew Cross was 40 years old when he became a member of Buckley Chapel which became Grace Church 12 years later in 1962. He and his wife, Viola, set records of faithfulness which are not likely to ever be broken. Viola was a member of the Priscilla Circle for study, fellowship and service for 45 years. Andrew served as a founding deacon and for uncounted terms as deacon and elder for 45 years until his health failed.

Andrew and Viola (Collins) were baptized as followers of Jesus Christ at young ages in Arkansas where they were married on January 17, 1932. They moved to Grand Rapids in 1943 with their first five children, Andrew Jr., Annette, Irma Jean, Milton and Bernice. The other five children were born when they lived within four blocks of Grace Church: Velma, Carolyn, Florence, Joyce and Francine. Their family was precious to them and their values were rooted in Christ. Weekly worship and daily prayer sustained their faith, hope and love.



Andrew was known as a worker. Beginning at age 9 he remembered learning how to pick cotton on the farm. He worked as a laborer at the C&O Railroad yard in Grand Rapids. When he "retired" from that job in 1975 he continued to work at many other jobs and was honored with a visit to

the White House for his model employment in 1996.

Those who knew Andrew even casually knew him for his praising the Lord no matter what the circumstances of his life. Those who knew him better as a brother in Christ could learn that his favorite hymn was: "Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me, and that thou bid'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

The best picture of Andrew's faith and life was seen at Grace Church on Sunday morning, January 31, 1994. Andrew and Viola were filled with gratitude and praise. Four generations of their family were there. Drew Weatherall, their great-grandson, was baptized. Drew's parents, Murry Jr. and Marcene professed

their faith in Christ and became Grace Church members. His parents Murry Sr. (Peter) and Joyce (Cross) were there for Murry Sr. and Drew's baptisms. Two baptisms, two professions of faith, and four generations celebrated God's covenantal grace.

For Andrew, that day called for loudest praise. Until today.

Rev. Roger Van Harn, Pastor Emeritus
December 22, 2015



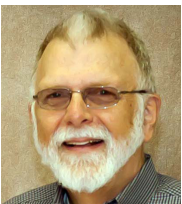
Grace CRC Small Groups What's Happening....



Men's Group: Encouraging each other on the journey as we talk and pray about what it means to be a Christian man in this society. Meets at church the first Saturday of the month from 8:00 - 9:30 am. Talk to pastors Kooreman, Bridgewater, or Westerhof, Jonathan Peereboom, or Paul Hart. Pastor Jack 581-2617; Pastor Karl 581-5592

I Am Hagar (for women): Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 7 pm at the home of Emily Helder, 1110 Giddings, SE. This group will focus on building one another in faith, prayer, and Bible study. The group will read together *I Am Hagar* by Kinita Kadnar Schripsema. (She'll be present December 3 to talk about her book.) Talk to Emily Helder or Manda Hart. (helder.emily@gmail.com) 901-5595; (manda@hartville.org) 402-5387

Belonging (for women): This group provides opportunities for women to share their stories, provide mutual support, and grow spiritually. Through discussion and prayer, the group will cultivate a sense of belonging and authentic connection in the midst of life's challenges and joys. Meets the second Friday of each month at 7:30 pm (December 2014 through May 2015) in leaders' homes. For more information and location specifics, please contact Edith McCreary (mccrearysj@aol.com) / 616-956-0684) or Irene Kraegel (irenekraegel@gmail.com) / 616-401-7319).



Renovare: This is a spiritual formation group shaped around the Renovare resource material of Richard Foster. If you are interested, an introductory meeting will be hosted by Karen DeVos at her home, December 10, 7 pm. Please talk to Karen if you are interested or have questions but cannot attend that evening. This first meeting will for all those who want to learn more, it does not assume

further commitment. (karendevos@comcast.net) 608-4829

Financial Peace: Sunday nights at 7 pm, Jan 10th to March 7th. Jon Helder will be leading 9-week video and discussion group on personal and family finances from a biblical perspective. Contact Jon at 616-901-5669 or jonathan.helder@gmail.com. The final day to commit is January 3rd.

Hoekwater Westerhof Group: This is a group of couples with kids; meeting

is 4:45 - 6:45 pm, the second Sunday of the month at Hoekwater's home. Purpose is fellowship, prayer, and discussion around a topic. Kids and childcare and a meal are included. This group is [full at this time](#).

Alice Menginga Richards Women's Group: This is a group for women from church and community that meets on Thursday evenings at Grace. This group is for fellowship and Bible study. Please contact Alice at 616 432-8756; tulipfox@mail2alicia.com

Stay at Home Dads:

Jon Helder and Ryan Schreiber host this group for members of Grace and other congregations as well. It meets at Mayfair CRC. Its membership is made up of Dads who stay at home and care for kids. Child care is included. Please contact Jon 616-901-5669 jonathan.helder@gmail.com Ryan (616) 994-2998; schreiber.ryan@gmail.com

Groups in the dreaming phase....

For Parents of new borns and older babies: Mallory Willenbring is interested in gathering a group of parents to talk about parenting the tiny ones. If you are interested, please talk to Karl Westerhof or Mallory Willenbring. Mallory's phone (815) 222-5677 (mallory.willenbring@gmail.com)

For Parents of 3-5 year olds: Greg Yoder is interested in gathering a group of parents to talk about parenting pre-schoolers. If you are interested, please talk to Greg Yoder or Karl Westerhof. Greg's phone is 443-1798 (gryoder@gmail.com)

Karl Westerhof, Pastor of Congregational Life
581-5592 (westerhof.karl@gmail.com)