

Ephesians 1:1-4
To Begin With: Grace and Peace
Rev. Jonathan P. Cornell
9-15-19

Well good morning WPC, it is good to be in worship together with you. This is one of those rare and precious weeks where we are all in worship together. This is the Sunday when our wonderful children's program Godly Play takes a break for a week, and we get the opportunity to worship with our children. What an amazing gift that is!

Kids I want you to know that most weeks while you are over in the Education Building with Kari and Mike and our amazing team of volunteers, we are over here thinking about you and grateful for you. We love that you are learning about Jesus and his love and care for you and for our community and the world, and learning about your call to be people who have a special job to do in the world. So let me remind you, you are not—as some might say—the church of the future, but that you are the church of today. This space and this time are yours, so we want you to feel and know how welcome you always are in worship.

This is Celebration Sunday, it's something of a transition in our year when programs begin after taking some time off in summer, when transitions from one grade to the next take place, and where new ministries begin. There is a lot to be energized about around here to be sure. And this week as I was thinking and praying over what we might talk about, I thought what is a concise, memorable message that we all need to hear. And I recalled two words that are said almost every Sunday in this room, and we can all remember two words. Those words are Grace and Peace. Grace and Peace.

This morning we are going to read just 4 verses from Paul's letter to the Church in Ephesus.

**Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful^a in Christ Jesus:
²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ^b before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.**

Grace and Peace. Two words we hear a lot in places like this. And yet I wonder if we actually believe, or fathom what is being said to us? Well the good news is that whether we are alive today in the age of internet, social media, the 24 hour news cycle, and relentless pursuit of more. Or whether you were a first century believer living under the rule of the Roman Empire, there

Paul has a lot of guts saying

Grace

Getting what you deserve, justice (grounded for not picking up your room when that was your responsibility). Not getting what you deserve, mercy (getting an extra day to get your room cleaned up). Getting what you don't deserve, grace (getting a donut for not picking up your room).

Knowing that there was someone who has acted miraculously in your life when you weren't expecting it or knowing that you needed it

Chara greeting in

Getting what you don't deserve

Grace is the way God's love comes to us in surprising and undeserved unearned ways. A phone call or a word from a friend when you weren't expecting

Peace

Shalom

Peace with God walking in trust

John grew up, Jesus grew up, we need to grow up.