

Grace Notes

Grace Lutheran Church
April 2021



John August Swanson writes in his notes: *"Peter and his friends have been fishing all night; they are tired and have not caught any fish. Someone on the beach calls out: 'Put down your nets one more time. Don't give up yet.' They put down their nets and they catch so many fish that the nets are almost breaking! The sunlight reflects on the clouds, the sail, and the faces of the fishermen. Over my life as an artist, I have created variations of this gospel. The story helps me to accept struggles and to appreciate the casting of my own 'net' into the waves, and the surprise of experiencing the fruit and abundance that are there. We are reminded, too, of the inexhaustible resources within each of us."*

Luke 5 was our Gospel text on January 24th, 2021. As we gathered for worship at church and in our homes, we heard Jesus' invitation to throw our nets back out into the sea, just a little deeper this time, and to trust. Trust that after all of our hard work has awarded us with nothing there is the possibility of abundance; trust that Jesus' promise will break us open like those nets, reminding us that indeed God is working in and through us, and God isn't done with us yet. It was later that evening I learned that Pastor Delwayne Hahn died on this day.

Pastor Hahn trusted the voice of Jesus for a long time and knew the power of the Gospel. He knew of the abundance that can come when you least expect, of the invitation to keep trusting even when it looks like there is no hope, to recognize that everything we do is not about us, but it is about reflecting the light and the love of God. I witnessed it in the year and a few months that I was privileged to work alongside Delwayne. For 51 years, Pastor Hahn served the church in ordained ministry and he trusted in the abundant life-giving promises of Jesus.

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Message from Pastor Maria Markman



Beginnings

By Pastor Maria Markman

This is the first section of the current study I am leading with the Graceful Seniors group. Ideas were made in collaboration with Jan and Jodi Anderson.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1

The Bible contains the origin stories of who we are as people, as God's people. Often used in comic books and other popular storytelling methods, origin stories attempt to answer questions audiences have about the story's main characters. Wikipedia says this:

"In entertainment, an origin story is an account or backstory revealing how a character or group of people become a protagonist or antagonist, and it adds to the overall interest and complexity of a narrative, often giving reasons for their intentions."

I like this definition because it points to the complexity of our human stories, humans being especially complex. And our origin story is rooted in God's overall story of salvation written throughout the Bible. When I teach children and youth about the Bible, I often say, it looks like a book, but really it is a library. The Bible is full of 66 different books, each with their own writing style and voice. Some books tell stories, some give laws or teachings, others are poetry, and some talk about the end times, and others are letters to specific people in specific places. Even though there are many different forms of literature, the story arch through this library of stories contains my story and your story too! You might gather from hearing sermons and reading devotions and just spending time with me, I am completely in awe of the Biblical story and how it's stories narrative and weave through our lives. And the story God is creating, it did not end when the Biblical canon stopped collecting, that might be our biggest misunderstanding. No, God's story continued and continues to be written in our lives. This is the impetus for our study: (RE)membering Faith through our stories. We will look at some biblical stories and then are invited to write our own. You can choose to share your stories with our group, with the church by submitting it to be one of our weekly devotions on our website, or you can choose to share what you have written with your family, stories that will be treasured for generations to come. This first session is about beginnings or origins. The whole Bible could be considered an origin text telling the backstory of the people of God, but there are origin stories within this larger whole.

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Discussion Questions

- The beginning of John's Gospel tells not of the cradle but of the cosmos. We are introduced to Jesus, the Word made flesh and lived among us. What do we learn about God from this passage?
- What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
- What does this passage reveal to us about ourselves?

Discovering your story

Not all origin stories look the same. Not only the stories we tell, but how we tell them is different. We could have chosen Genesis 1, or the more familiar Christmas story (Luke 2). We could have looked at Abraham's call (Genesis 12:1-3) or Moses' call (Exodus 3)? Or even the story of the first Christian church after Jesus' resurrection and ascension (Acts 2:37-47). These are all great examples of origin stories. Feel free to call upon these or others when you think about writing your own story.

Prompt

- Where I'm from? Think about your origins. Who are you from? Parents? Heritage? What place? When? What generation? Why? How? You need not include any of these questions in your story, they are merely there to bring a story forth.

Pastor's Message Continued

Continued from Page 1

We purchased "The Great Catch" by John August Swanson, in memory of Pastor Hahn and in thanksgiving for his life and for his ministry. It is now hanging in our narthex as a reminder of him and the abundant love of God that comes from Jesus' call to each of us. I hope that you will stop by and see it when you get a chance.

This Easter, I hope that you too can feel the fruit and abundance of God that comes to us in our struggles, that gives us strength as we cast our nets into the waves, and remember that it is God who gives you inexhaustible resources that help you go on, even after the longest and darkest night, and will surprise you with a great catch and an empty tomb.

Blessings,
Pastor Joanna Mitchell

To read more about the artist visit his website: www.johnaugustswanson.com



Celebrating God's Creations

By Brook VanderLeest

As I sit here writing this with my windows open listening to the birds sing, the thoughts of that cold and dark winter fade from my mind.

As the temperature warms so does my desire to get outside.

To feel the warm sun, smell the earth, hear nature, and interact with neighbors I've only been able to wave at for the last few months.

Spring and early summer have a magical feel to them. It's a time for new things, a time for rebirth and a time for planting.

Vision Board

It's a time to feel all the joy in our hearts.

It truly is a time to celebrate God's creations.

So what guidance can we get from the Bible you ask?

(Psalm 24:1) says the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, and all who live in it.

(Genesis 2:15) states the Lord God took man and put him in the garden to work and care for it.

It can be seen as the environment is a gift from God that belongs to all, and we should be called to take care of it just as we are called to serve others.

Being environmentally friendly doesn't have to go to the extreme of becoming political.

But simple easy steps we can all take part in such as being more mindful of what we throw out, to reading the back of the fertilizer bags to help keep excess run off out of our waterways.

Of course, if you are so moved, you can definitely start composting or organizing a clean up project. There are countless ways we can show our love to God by being good stewards of His gift.

The idea is to remember and try to follow through as a way of life.

As another earth day approaches it would behoove all of us to remember this is a Christian value, and try to be more involved at whatever your comfort level is.

Looking forward to seeing you outside.

God's Blessings,
Brook VanderLeest
Vision Board Member



Lawnmowers

Needed

to Mow at Grace

By Kris Miller

Spring is right around the corner and with spring comes lawn maintenance. We are in need of people to commit to mowing the church lawn a couple of times during the summer. Zero turn lawn mowers and training are provided. If you are willing to help, contact Kris Miller at 763-421-6520 or krism@graceandover.org

Ministries



Social Devotions- "Sing for Joy"

By Stacy Surratt

The Women's Retreat Team is excited to be hosting another "Social Devotions" in the month of April. "Social Devotions" is a monthly virtual Zoom Gathering for ALL Grace Women. Because of COVID-19, the Women's Retreat Team wanted to connect and encourage every woman at Grace Lutheran Church during these trying times.

So feel free to *Virtually* swing by to get a "Spiritual Nugget" and Socialize with the Women at Grace on a monthly Zoom Call. Each month's call will have a different theme and is meant to uplift and provide a few spiritual truths for you to apply to your daily lives.

April's **Social Devotion** will be on Sunday evening April 18, 2021 from 7pm-7:45pm. **The Zoom Link will be available for you on Grace at a Glance as well as on the GLC website under Church Online - Zoom Meetings. There is no need to RSVP** - just pop on each month and enjoy seeing our Grace Women and hearing how God can impact our lives!

Our theme this month is "Sing for Joy". Songs bring joy into our lives and help us get through some tough times. Let's share that joy and comfort with each other on April 18th. Please bring a list of songs that make you smile, give you comfort or inspiration. We will share them with each other on the call and then make a "playlist" for the future.

Below are the Monthly Themes and Dates:

April 18, 2021- Sing for Joy
May 16, 2021 - You are Not Alone

Please look for an email in April that will remind you of this fun and encouraging event! If you have any questions contact Stacy Surratt at 317-506-6362 or stacysurratt@yahoo.com



Grace Quilters 1

By Low Jackson

Grace Quilters 1 will meet each Monday morning beginning April 5th from 9:00 am to Noon. Masks are required and social distancing will be practiced. Questions - contact Low Jackson at 763-762-6151 or lowjackson@aol.com.



OK@PLAY is proud to present via ZOOM:

SUNDAY FUNday On A THURSDAY!

April 8th at 6:30 pm - 8 pm

By Ann Lange

Zoom on in for 90 minutes of laughter, tears, and fountains of fun!

COMEDY CLUB will include jokes, riddles, funny stories, a glance at gag gifts, and a super attempt at playing Scattagories as a group!

(COMEDY CLUB during COVID-19 would be more fun without the COVID-19, but we aren't in charge of that!)



Please bring riddles, jokes (even those with a bit of Dad humor), hilarious stories (fact or fiction), funny gifts, etc. to the event.

Everyone will have a chance to be a COMEDY CLUB co-median for a few minutes! See you in April!

Questions? Contact Vickie Mead [763.712.0496](tel:763.712.0496) or Deb Stang [763.427.3252](tel:763.427.3252)



Continuing our Conversations on Race

By Pastor Maria Markman

Join Adult Ed, Wednesday April 21st at 7 PM on ZOOM. We will be continuing our Conversations on Race.

At this session in particular, Pastor Maria and members of our Adult Education Team will facilitate a conversation on what the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), our churchwide governing body, has to say on the topic of racial justice. If you would like to take a look at some of the documents the ELCA provides on race and the documents we plan to address in our gathering, you can access them on our Grace Website on the Conversations on Race Event page, or Under the more tab by scrolling down and clicking on ELCA Racial Justice Statement. Can't join us this time? Join us in May where we will be addressing current discrimination toward people of Asian descent in our country.

Ministries



Graceful Seniors is back!

By Pastor Maria Markman

Join Pastor Maria at Grace Tuesday April 13th for breakfast and fellowship 8:30-9:00 am and a study 9:00-10:00 am.

Pastor Maria is working on finalizing the details of the grand return of Graceful Seniors. But 2021 will be all about stories of faith, stories from the Bible and your stories. Pastor Maria and Jan Anderson have partnered together to create a Bible Study curriculum that will help us grow in faith and relationship with one another and leave a lasting legacy for our families and loved ones.

Curious? Come and join us April 13th.

There is a suggested donation of \$2.00 for coffee, donuts, and to go into the funeral flower and card funds. Many are now vaccinated, but it is still mandatory practice at Grace to wear your mask and maintain social distancing. We will eat first in the fellowship hall before moving to the worship center for the program. You may pick up program booklets from the Grace office during business hours, or get one mailed to you upon special request. If this is something you require, please contact Kris Miller. If you are uncomfortable eating together, join us for the program only in the worship center. We will also send a recording of our program session to those who wish to participate from home. Got questions? Email Pastor Maria mariam@graceandover.org or give her a call 507-330-2471.



FAMILY TABLE NEWS

By Lynda Wilde

We are so proud of the success of our Family Table "take-out meals" that we serve on the 3rd Sunday of each month. And we're thankful for all of you who help make it happen! Every month we're able serve so many grateful people.

We would like to extend an invitation to Grace members, to identify any neighbors or friends who might be in need of our meals, but who are unable, for whatever reason, to pick up the meals themselves. If you would like to reserve a few meals and are willing to deliver them to the people you've identified, please contact Lynda Wilde at lrwilde@comcast.net or Debbie Jorgens at debbiej@graceandover.org and we will be sure to have extras on hand. What a great way to be the hands and feet of Jesus and serve those in our community!

If you're interested in helping with Family Table on April 18th – whether it's providing a food item, packing meals, or bringing the meals out to our guests, please let us know by signing up. On our website, simply click on "Ministries" on the top right, then "Outreach Ministries," and finally, "Feed the Hungry." You'll find the information on Family Table right there.



May is National Mental Health Awareness Month

By Debbie Jorgens

Mental illness affects millions of Americans and their families. Since 1949, the month of May has been designated "National Mental Health Awareness Month" to call attention to mental illness, the stigma surrounding it, and the need to support those affected by it. Because education is a critical component to eliminating this stigma and supporting all who struggle with mental health, you are invited to the following upcoming events, both presented by Chris Shaw of The Heart and Mind Connection:

Mental Health 101 – Sunday, April 25, 1:00-2:30 PM in the sanctuary

Most of us experience ups and downs related to our mental health, just as we do our physical health. What's "normal?" When is it time to seek help? This presentation will help address such questions as:

- What's the difference between feeling "anxious" and having an "anxiety disorder?"
- How do I know if a loved one is just feeling "down" or is truly "depressed?"
- What signs or symptoms should tell me that I (or a loved one) needs help?

Suicide Prevention (QPR) – Sunday, May 2, 1:00-2:30 PM in the sanctuary

QPR – Question, Persuade, and Refer – are the three steps anyone can take to help prevent a suicide. Just like CPR, QPR is an emergency response to someone in crisis and can save lives. QPR is the most widely taught "gatekeeper training" program in the United States. (Gatekeeper training teaches people to identify individuals who are showing signs of suicide risk and help them get the services they need.) This 90-minute class is for anyone *over the age of 16* who wants to learn best practices in suicide prevention.

We hope you'll consider joining us for one or both of these important presentations. A link to registration will be included in Grace-at-a-Glance as we get closer to the events.

Children's Ministry



Children's Ministry 2021 Spring Schedule

By Pastor Maria Markman

Sunday, April 4	No Sunday School; Easter Sunday
Sunday, April 11 9:30-10:20 AM	In-person Sunday School
Thurs., April 15 6:30 PM	Children's Ministry Team Meeting
Sunday, April 18 9:30-10:20 AM	In-person Sunday School
Sunday, April 25 9:30-10:20 AM	In-person Sunday School
Sunday, May 2 9:30-10:20 AM	In-person Sunday School
Sunday, May 9 9:30-10:20 AM	In-person Sunday School
Sunday, May 16 9:30-10:20 AM	Last Day of Sunday School Celebration!
Thurs., May 20 6:30 PM	Children's Ministry Team Meeting



By Pastor Maria Markman

We've had a blast this year!
Join Sunday School for our
year end party! May 16th
9:20-10:30 AM. Wear bright
colors! And join us for crafts
and games and a lesson on
what we learned this year!



By Pastor Maria Markman

SAVE THE DATE

Summer Vacation Children's
Ministry Programming

June 13-17 from 6:00-7:30 PM

Save June 18th in case of rain.

Youth Ministry



Green Ribbon Meeting

By Kristi Larson

Our next Green Ribbon Meeting is on Monday, April 12th at 6:30 in person in the Fellowship Hall! Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers of children with mental illness are invited to join us to share and listen with empathy and grace. You are not alone! This is an open group for parents in and outside of Grace. Please contact Kristi Larson at KristiL@graceandover.org.

Green Ribbon typically meets the first Monday of each month at 6:30. (In April we are meeting a week late due to Easter.). Our May meeting will be May 3rd.

Meetings are open to anyone that has a child, grandchild or is a caregiver for a young person that is struggling with mental health. Parents do not need to attend Grace to join us. All are welcome.



Anoka County Brotherhood Council

Food Shelf & Clothing

Youth Volunteering at ACBC Every Week!

By Kristi Larson

High School Students interested in volunteering at ACBC food shelf on student's independent learning days (generally Mondays or Fridays) from 12:00-2:00 pm please contact Kristi at KristiL@graceandover.org. Not in the Anoka-Hennepin District but still interested in volunteering a different day? Contact Kristi and let's set something up!



High School Youth Night

By Kristi Larson

High School Youth night is every Tuesday from 6:30-8:00 pm at church. We play games, spend time together and have a discussion/devotion. All 9th - 12th grade students are welcome to join us!

Haven't been to church or youth group in a while? WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU BACK! Now is a great time to try our youth group at Grace. Questions? Please email Kristi at KristiL@graceandover.org



High School Trip to Montana

By Kristi Larson

After needing to stay home last summer, our current 8th - 12th grade students will be traveling together this summer to beautiful Southern Montana and staying at Christikon Lutheran Church Camp. The dates of the trip are July 17th - 25th. If you are in 8th - 12th grade and interested in joining us, please go to www.graceandover.org and go to "summer activities" under Youth Ministries.



COVID-19 Safety

By Kristi Larson

COVID-19 Safety at all youth group events: At youth night, masks will need to be worn the entire time and there will be no outside food or drinks allowed. It is also important that we respect others by not standing or sitting closer than they are comfortable. While social distancing will not be strictly enforced, there will be room to spread out. Those who don't feel well, are awaiting COVID-19 test results or have someone in their home that has tested positive in the last 2 weeks or is awaiting results are asked to stay home for a week or two, but we do hope you will join us in the future!



Grace Lutheran Church

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Grace Lutheran Church Worship

*Saturdays 5:00 pm**

Sundays 8:45 am & 10:30 am**

**Reservations are required please see our website at www.graceandover.org.*