

grace notes

August 2022

A Year of Change

2022 has been a year of change. So many changes have happened within my own life, and within the church. At the end of August, I will move my oldest daughter to college at the University of Wisconsin- Madison (Go Badgers!) and my youngest daughter will start high school. My dad just recently put a down-payment on an apartment under construction in Minnetonka and plans to list his house in Plymouth this fall. This is the house I grew up in and my parents built when I was 3 years old. These changes bring about many emotions. As I drove out of my parents' driveway today, I teared up thinking about leaving behind this home that had so wonderfully housed our family and contains so many memories. What will it feel like to no longer belong there? I can only imagine now, but soon enough I will be living this reality.

Loss and goodbyes have been a part of this year for me, but it doesn't make it easier. As much as I know the right thing for my dad is to live somewhere else, this change is still hard. I want the best for him.

I have similar thoughts about Grace. We have undergone a lot of change and a lot of loss as well. And even more change is on the horizon. On July 19th we sent out this notice in Grace at a Glance.



After much prayer, contemplation, and with the guidance of consultants, the Vision Board at Grace, along with Pastor Joanna Mitchell and the personnel team, have decided to change our staffing model. Churches across the nation are changing in response to the effects of the pandemic, which includes declined attendance and more people either worshipping online or not at all. Here at Grace, we have experienced these same changes. We have also noticed a disconnection from some of our children, youth, and their families and at the same time, having new families come to Grace and get involved in our programming.

To implement a new vision of ministry for children, youth, and family at Grace, we will be eliminating the position of Youth Director starting in August and will be hiring a Director of Children, Youth and Family (CYF) Ministry. This new position will create an opportunity to make connections and build relationships with families across all ages from three years old through high school. Our hope is to rebuild our CYF program by finding ways to integrate our families, encourage faith development, and spend time listening to the wants and needs of our young people. We recognize this change is hard, and along with the new vision, there is a loss of what was.

As a result of this change in our staffing and ministry approach, we will be saying goodbye to Kristi Larson on August 14th at our Sunday worship services. Kristi has faithfully served at Grace Lutheran for 7 years and has shaped and molded the faith of our young people in meaningful ways. She has led many mission trips, developed leaders and life-long servants through Summer Stretch, cared for our families through Green Ribbon, and made a mark on so many of us with her humor and faithfulness. I hope you will join me in celebrating Kristi's ministry, giving thanks for all that she has shared, and wishing her well as she moves into the next chapter in her career.

This change is a big one for us at Grace and I know that some of you might wonder about the timing. After COVID and with all the changes hitting us, we feel strongly that we need to take another look at our programming for our Children, Youth, and Family with fresh eyes and try something different. Our programming has been so meaningful to many families, and we are so grateful for the faithful leadership of Kristi and others throughout the years.

You might be wondering what will happen in between. We have already been in contact with an interim youth ministry company, who has presented to Vision Board. We will interview a candidate that they have recommended to lead our Children, Youth and Family this fall, while we also post the position and get ourselves ready to interview and find the right candidate. We have spent a lot of time planning for our children and youth this fall and will notice a change to some of our programming.

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Vision Board



Ready...Set...Go!

As I write this reflection, I have just attended my first meeting as a member of the Grace Vision Board. I have participated in several personal and professional committees and boards and they always begin with a period of orientation to the duties of the board members. One of the duties of Grace's Vision Board is to write a brief article for the Grace Notes newsletter, so I thought why not sign up the first month and jump right in with both feet (figuratively, as I am using my hands to write)?

A lesson that I have carried with me from my confirmation days is that God doesn't call the equipped. God equips those that are called to serve. I am excited to see where God will be leading Grace into the future and how I may be able to use my gifts in those endeavors. I am even more excited to see in what new ways God will be able to mold and shape me as one of His precious children. We will certainly have our work cut out for us with the challenges that lie ahead related to our building project, continued Covid-related concerns, the health and well-being of our gifted staff, budgets, and all the other day-in and day-out issues that arise. I am impressed by the diversity of skills and deep faith and dedication of each of the members of the Vision Board. And I eagerly await the leading of the Holy Spirit as this new season begins at Grace.

Humbly submitted, Holly Dodds



Summer does not equal lazy days though we try our best to find them amongst the busy days of our lives. Just like gardens and baseball seasons, many things just don't rest. The Building Task Force has been one of those organizations that hasn't rested.

In terms of importance per congregational surveys, the sanctuary has been noted as the number one concern for our transformational project. The ability to hear the spoken word and the full spectrum of music within the service, along with lighting and

Building Task Force

video to support the message, is the first call of the Task Force. To that, we have fully jumped in to the challenge.

To accomplish the expectations we need to address the audio equipment. Microphones and their optimal placements, speakers sized and spaced within the space and amplification to bring the sound forward. We have contacted experts in sound engineering to carry this load. The other aspect of improving the sound are the walls within the sanctuary "box". This box has been a real challenge to the Task Force. The architects have worked with sound engineers and have an initial series of renderings that will enhance the sound qualities, but choices have to be made to provide the most cost effective design that also provides that elusive sweet spot for sound. We are also working toward mitigating the sounds from Bunker Lake Boulevard traffic.

Another element mentioned earlier is the visual component of the worship experience. This too is supported by outside experts in cameras and screens and their recommendations will be incorporated into the final design.

Lighting is important in our quest for a welcoming space. Does that mean more windows on the north side of the facility or more and better lighting or some combination of all? Windows are also more 'transparent' to sound so additional windows may mean Bunker Lake mitigation has a bit more challenge to it. We are looking at all options from replacing fixtures on the ceiling to windows to light panels to wall sconce lighting.

Additionally, we are looking at the overall inviting qualities of the sanctuary. This includes the color palette, banner utilization, wall coverings and furnishings.

This all is to be completed within the budget we have set forth. We also believe this sanctuary work could be the first area of change in the overall project. The Building Task Force is excited to see this through and we truly believe that you, the congregation, will agree the effort was successful.

Additional forward progress has been made with the completed survey of the property, which will anchor the continuing design efforts.

Charlie Wold

Building Ministry



Grounds Ministry

Leader: Joe Jackson

Cell: 507-216-2919

Email: JoeJacksonMN@aol.com

Responsibilities

The grounds ministry team engages in small landscaping projects, rock bed maintenance, tree and stump removal, tree maintenance, grape vine maintenance and planting small patches of grass.

Schedule

The work sessions are scheduled as needed. Since there are no weekly scheduled work sessions, the work is often done in concert with the Garden Ministry team. A pruning work session is usually scheduled in late February or early March. A rock bed clean-up and preening work session is usually scheduled in early April, after the snow is gone.

Tasks

The tasks undertaken are pruning (think chainsaw, tree saw, or large nippers), blight marking and monitoring, feeding (think tree spikes), watering (especially river birch during droughts), pest monitoring and removal (think tent caterpillars), edging maintenance (rock beds), smaller stump removal, and mulching.

2022/2023 Challenges

Starting this year and continuing for the next couple years, our church's building plans will result in the displacement of most of our rock beds and some of our trees.

temperature will be either at 6:30 PM or 6:30 AM, yes AM! A pruning work session is usually scheduled in late February or early March and a preening work session is usually scheduled in early April, after the snow is gone.

Tasks

The tasks undertaken are planting, dead-heading, weeding, applying preen, spraying weeds, dividing plants, pruning, mulching, edging maintenance, trapping, and watering (including sprinkler head adjustments and replacements).

Challenges

Starting this year and continuing for the next couple years, our church's building plans will result in the displacement of most of our current flower beds and many of our shrubs. The perennial flowers and some smaller shrubs will need to be transplanted away from our church and then transplanted back by our church after construction is completed.

Needs

Larger pots for transplanting.

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday



God's Work. Or Hands.

September 18th at 9am-1pm

God invites us to love by serving and caring for our neighbors. On Sunday September 18th we will have one unified worship service followed by a morning of service events. Some activities will be at Grace, while other activities will have us travel around Anoka and Andover to partner organizations or the homes of neighbors. We will return to Grace at noon for a congregational meal.

If you would like to be a part of the leadership team, please contact Scott Christensen at scottc@nuaire.com

Garden Ministry

Leader: Joe Jackson – Cell: 507-216-2919 & Email: JoeJacksonMN@aol.com



Responsibilities

The garden ministry team engages in urn planting and maintenance, flower bed planting and maintenance, shrub maintenance, and ornamental tree maintenance.

Schedule

Weekly work sessions on Wednesdays run from May through September and depending on the

Music Ministry



Music Ministry

Music is alive and thriving here at Grace! There are changes ahead, but changes that will allow us to do so much more than we already are. It truly is exciting. We welcome anyone who wants to make music to praise God, join us!

GRACE CHOIR starts up again on **TUESDAY AUGUST 30 at 6:45pm**. The choir serves at our traditional service and sings 2-3 Sunday's a month. Rehearsals are on Tuesday evenings at 6:45pm in the sanctuary. There are always extra chairs for anyone who wants to join. Haven't sung in a choir before? No problem!

PRAISE TEAM continually rehearses and sings throughout the year. The team rehearses on **THURSDAY evenings at 6:30pm** in the Sanctuary for the Contemporary service on Sunday morning. It's a lot of good music, with a LOT of good musicians, and we are always looking for new singers/instrumentalists. Not just drums/bass/guitar either! Do you play a brass/woodwind/string instrument? All are welcome to come and make music together.

WEDNESDAY WORSHIP: Over the summer we officially began our Wednesday Night Worship service. A contemporary service similar in content to the Sunday contemporary service, but with just a little more music added in. We are always looking for musicians to join us in any group, and we know two different time commitments is tough. **Our Wednesday praise team rehearses at 6pm for 7pm worship.** One night, One service. If you're looking to get involved, but can't give a lot of time, this might be a good place to start!

Registration through Realm is requested for everyone interested and will be available in August.

WORSHIP TECH We are always looking for persons interested in assisting worship by running our technology. PowerPoint, YouTube Stream, or manning the soundboard. With a short training session, anyone can do it. However, our Worship Technology is changing! We are upgrading all of our equipment behind the booth and are looking for volunteers to learn the new system, and then run it during worship! When everything is said and done, we will have one computer that runs both the in-person slides, and the livestream to YouTube. (As well as a new soundboard) More information will come when we have everything installed and ready to go.

Grace Symphonic

Ensemble



Leader: Joe Jackson – Cell: 507-216-2919
Email: JoeJacksonMN@aol.com

Mission

The full ensemble or a subset of the ensemble will participate in worship providing instrumental pieces and/or instrumental accompaniment for choirs, small groups, or soloists.

Participation

Any age is welcome, but the instrumentalists should have at least one year with their instrument. All instruments are welcome. Participants can play and/or rehearse when available and don't have to participate in all performances. The bottom line is to play your instrument and have fun doing so!

Rehearsals

The ensemble rehearses weekly between Sunday services in the righthand side of Portable 1 typically 4 to 6 weeks before participating in worship. For example, in preparation for this year's September 11 "Rally Sunday" worship services, rehearsals will start on August 14 and continue through September 4.

2022/2023 Schedule

During the 2022/2023 school year, the plan is for the full ensemble to play on Rally Day, Reformation, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. Subsets of the ensemble will be encouraged to play upon request or desire.

Long Range Goal

To have different ensemble members provide instrumental music at worship at least once a month.

Needs

More instrumentalists are needed and it would be wonderful to have a volunteer director.

Children's Ministries



Sunday School

This year we are using a new curriculum, "Grow." We are super excited about the wonderful content and the ability to help grow our kids in faith and life.

Blast off with us this September as we kick off the Sunday School year with a four week lesson on Spiritual habits.

September Schedule

- Join us on Sunday, September 11th for registration and games at 8:45am and 10:30am
- On Sunday, September 18th we will have a large group learning time.
- Large and small group Sunday school will officially begin on Sunday, September 25th at 8:45am and 10:30am

Our Sunday School is for children from 3 years old to 5th grade. Kids begin in worship and are dismissed after the Children's Message and go to their classrooms.

Please register on Realm.

We are also looking for Sunday School teachers and helpers. Please contact Pastor Joanna Mitchell at joannam@graceandover.org.

Children's Ministry

Volunteers



There are many ways that you can volunteer to grow our kids in faith. You can volunteer in our nursery and care for our youngest members and attenders. You can be a helper or a teacher at Sunday School or a co-teacher and guide them in biblical lessons, crafts and games or you can lead a small group for Catechism on Wednesday nights. If working with middle school kids is your jam this is the spot for you. Our youth need caring adult leaders. Prayerfully consider if this might be a gift you have to share with Grace. Or perhaps you are better behind the scenes or for one time events. We need your help with lock-ins, retreats and other Children, Youth and Family activities.

On September 7th at 5:30pm we will be gathering for a Volunteer Kick off. This is for both Catechism and Sunday School and Kids Night Out helpers. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30pm and then break out into groups at 6pm for more specified instructions pertaining to various age groups. Mark your calendars and join us with this wonderful opportunity to grow our kids in faith. Please contact Pastor Joanna Mitchell with any questions or sign up on Realm.

Jan. 1 to June 30, 2022

Current & Capital Offerings \$427,906.00
Other Income \$23,993.05
Expenses \$463,339.81
Building Project Offerings \$29,7541.80
Dedicated Offerings \$35,590.77
Dedicated Funds in Balance Sheet \$92,888.88

Jan. 1 to June 30, 2021

Current & Capital Offerings \$428,651.85
Other Income \$63,317.04
Expenses \$511,234.15
Building Project Offerings \$0
Dedicated Offerings \$86,216.67
Dedicated Funds in Balance Sheet \$98,718.68



Youth Ministries



Own Your Faith

Mark your Calendars for **Own Your Faith** Orientation on August 21st at 11:15am or August 24th at 5:30pm in the Fellowship Hall

9th Graders and guardians, we hope you can join us for an overview and orientation for your final year of Catechism at Grace Lutheran Church. After 3 years participating in small groups and events at Grace on Wednesday nights, our 9th Graders final year of catechism is to work one-on-one with a mentor. Together they will be discussing questions of identity and faith and doubt. These one-on-one conversations happen on your own time, and we provide all the materials you need to have these important conversations.

This year we are starting something new and inviting our Own Your Faith students to gather once a month for a shared event where we can have a time of fellowship and connection. We are very excited about the upcoming year and all that it will bring. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Joanna Mitchell at joannam@graceadover.org

Catechism

Attention 6th Graders and Families. On September 7th at 5:30pm, we are hosting an open house and overview of our Catechism program. We hope you will come and join with us as we share calendars, events and the vision behind our program.

6th-8th Graders:

Catechism will officially kick off on **September 14th at 6pm**. Large group, small group and worship will run from 6pm-8pm. We encourage parents/guardians and siblings to join us for Wednesday night worship that begins at 7pm. This worship does count for worship attendance in order to fulfill Catechism requirements. It is also created with youth in mind.

Save The Date: November 11th-13th for 6th-8th graders

Grace Youth are going back to Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp this November for their "All In! Retreat!". At the "All In" recharge, campers will join an eccentric expedition team seeking a treasure worth more than gold. Campers will walk away with practical tools on how to keep God at the center of everything they do. Stewardship is often a word associated with money, but it is so much more than that. Everything you have is from God, and is God's. How can you take care of it and invest it for His Kingdom and His glory? You can use your time, talents, treasure, and so much more. Are you "all in" for God? Camp costs are \$99 plus travel. We have 30 spots reserved. Sign-up while you can. We will depart after school on Friday and return Sunday evening. We will also be looking for adult volunteers to drive and participate. Please consider if you might go to this faith filled event.

Contact Pastor Joanna Mitchell at joannam@graceandover.org for more details. Please register your child on Realm so that we can plan for this upcoming year.



High School Ministry

Starting September 25th! Calling all High School youth: Join us this fall on Sunday Mornings with donuts and dreams in the youth room. We will gather at 10am in the youth room for a half hour time of connection and planning for our upcoming year. We want to hear your opinions about service projects, fun social events, upcoming summer trips, retreats, lock-ins and more.

Outreach Ministries



Grace's Partnership with Sand Creek Elementary

- Sand Creek Monthly Meetings and Sharing Grace Food Bags-We meet the first Thursday at 3:45pm for our meeting and then packing our monthly Sharing Grace Food Bags during the school year.
- School Supplies will be collected and delivered to Sand Creek the first week of school, Sept. 6th-9th. Posting of the school needs and collecting the school supply donations will be the weekends of August 21st, August 28th, and Sept 4th. Donations should be brought to the narthex and then the team will deliver them to Sand Creek.
- Warm mittens/gloves and hats donations will be held during the months of October/November and delivered to Sand Creek as we accumulate enough for delivery and their needs.
- Christmas Adopt-A-Family-This event begins mid-November, prior to Black Friday shopping on Nov 25th, for the Grace "Adopters" to sign up for the families. The collection of gifts and/or gift cards will be Dec 11th/18th for delivery to SC on Dec 22nd.

Holiday Food Boxes Packing—These are approximate packing dates according to the holiday dates. We usually pack from 8-9:00 a.m.

- Thanksgiving Nov 24th, 2022-Packing and delivery on Nov 22nd in the morning to SC. We will be asking for 10-14lb. frozen turkey donations during the two weeks prior Nov. 6th and 13th.
- Christmas Dec 24-25, 2022-Packing and delivery on Dec 22nd in the morning to SC. We may be asking for Simek's frozen lasagna donations during the two weeks prior Dec 11th and 18th.
- Spring Break/No school-March 10th-20th, 2023 - Packing and delivery on March 9th in the morning to SC. We usually get Thrivent Action Dollars to pay for this event.
- Easter April 9, 2023- No packing needed, we give gift cards to be delivered April 6th to SC. We may ask for \$25 gift cards for Cub or Walmart two weeks prior to this date 3/26 and 4/2.
- Throughout the school year we also take specific healthy snack donations for children in need.

Stepping Stone Emergency Housing



- Throughout the year, the Grace team picks up and delivers food every Friday from the Andover Pizza Ranch and delivers it to Stepping Stone.
- Christmas Gifts of Grace - This may be gift cards or the (Target) Bags event, or the tote bin for Christmas gift giving for the Stepping Stone residents from the list they provide. We would put out the Target bags or totes with lists of suggested items from Stepping Stone in the narthex beginning Nov 16th and 20th before black Friday shopping if possible and continue till gift donations are returned for delivery to Stepping Stone till the deadline around Dec 14th.

Grace4Rakai



Ministry Team

The Grace4Rakai Ministry Team is excited to be highlighting **Sunday November 13 and Wednesday November 16, 2022** at Grace Lutheran Church to lift up our friends and colleagues at **ACT (African Children Today)** who live in Uganda, Rakai. Many of us in this congregation sponsor children there, and we want to continue to provide updates and critical support for ACT's outreach efforts. During this weekend at Grace, we will provide you with updates on our sponsor children and the ACT Junior School; have an opportunity to purchase items made by the Hope Again Women from Rakai and learn more about what amazing and exciting things are happening there. We will provide updates on the ACT Junior School and the new High-school, the Medical Clinic, the Amazing Grace Bakery, the Milling Operation and much more. We will also highlight the scholarship fund that the Grace4Rakai Ministry Team has established to provide financial support as needed for children sponsored by the Grace community. Also stick around between services on Sunday morning, November 13, as we will be hosting another "Live From Rakai" event from the Grace Worship Center. During this event, Ann Hill and Richard Mutaawe, Director of ACT, will bring us up to date with the various ministries over in Rakai and take your questions! We want to celebrate the generosity that the Grace community has provided over this past year so please plan to join us. We look forward to seeing you. It will be an exciting event, so please plan to be a part of it. If you have any questions regarding this event please reach out to anyone on the Grace4Rakai Team—led by Stacy Surratt & Scott Christensen.

Outreach Ministries

Grace4Rakai Ministry Team (Continued)



The Grace4Rakai Ministry Team would like to invite **EVERYONE** to the **Celebration Luncheon on Sunday September 25** after the 10:30 service in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited – from ACT child sponsors to those who just want to know more about our wonderful Ministry Team and what we are doing in Rakai, Uganda.

This will be a time to gather as a church community to do 3 things:

SHARE stories, pictures and updates of our outreach ministries in Rakai, Uganda

CELEBRATE how God is doing “immeasurably more” in and thru us as a congregation at Grace Lutheran Church

DREAM about future possibilities for African Children Today (ACT)

We will begin our Celebration Luncheon at 11:30am (after the 10:30 service concludes) in the Fellowship Hall where everyone is welcome. We will begin with a free pasta and dessert lunch followed by a time of sharing stories, pictures, celebrating the partnership with ACT and the Grace4Rakai Ministry Team and discuss opportunities and dreams for the future. The Team will provide the meal free of charge, so please simply come and enjoy the day of celebrating all the ways God’s Grace is stretching across the ocean from our faith community to the people in Uganda.

If you currently sponsor a child(ren) in Rakai, we welcome you to bring and share stories, letters and pictures of your sponsored child(ren) to the luncheon. If you have any questions regarding what our Ministry Team does or would like to sponsor a child yourself, please attend this luncheon – it is for you!

Contact Stacy Surratt at stacysurratt@yahoo.com or Scott Christensen at scottc@nuaire.com – Co-leaders of the Grace4Rakai Ministry Team if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday September 25th!



Grace 2 Haiti Update and Upcoming Mission Trip

As most of us know, in July of 2021, Haiti’s President was assassinated in his home. Since that time Haiti has been plagued by unrest and violence. The country is largely run by gangs at this time. Kidnappings and ransom demands are commonplace. Many Haitians are leaving Port Au Prince, where the conditions are the worst, and fleeing to the countryside. The villages where Grace 2 Haiti have been active, Luly and Williamson, are swelling with people coming in from Port Au Prince. Many of the Haitian staff and community members that we have gotten to know over the years are now hosting additional family members in their meager homes.

Because of the unsafe conditions, we must delay any trips to Haiti until the conditions on the ground become safe. We still have a love for Haiti and for the Haitian people, along with a desire to serve them. It is important to note that the programs on the ground that we are supporting are still active. World Wide Village is supporting and operating schools. The Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies program is thriving. The wells that we helped dig are providing 56,000 gallons of clean, safe drinking water every month. There are also 25 students sponsored in the sewing program by the Robin’s Nest Foundation that was set up by the Zupon’s and other members of Grace. The programs that we support are not just continuing, but even growing and serving more Haitians. If you would like more information or to provide support for these important programs during these critical times, please visit, <https://worldwidevillage.org/>.

Even though we are unable to go to Haiti, we still feel it is important to provide in-person outreach on an international level through our church. We have identified another organization, Bold Hope, which we will be partnering with for our 2023 mission trip. Haiti also holds a special place in the hearts of members of the Bold Hope organization. Bold Hope started their mission work in Haiti in 2010 and expanded into other countries starting in 2019. This is one of the reasons why we feel Bold Hope is a good fit for us to continue our mission work.

We will be traveling to Belize with Bold Hope from March 11th to the 17th. We will be working and staying in an ocean side village and assisting with the construction of a community center and spending time with the children in school. The specific details of our activities will be finalized as we work together to prepare for the trip. This mission trip is multi-generational, and we would love to have you join us on this new endeavor. We will be having an informational meeting about this trip at 6:00PM on Wed., August 10th. Feel free to also visit BoldHope.org or contact Greg and Lori Ackerson or Anna Welle for more information.

Outreach Ministries



Grace's Partnership With HOPE 4 Youth

For over nine years Grace has been in partnership with HOPE 4 Youth, one of the few organizations in the North Metro Area dedicated to helping young people, especially ages 16-24, find pathways out of homelessness. No matter the reasons for their situations, HOPE 4 Youth provides free meals, a place to shower and wash clothes, computer access for studying or looking for job applications, but most of all, it provides mentors to listen to the youths' needs and steer them on the right track. And the need keeps increasing. This year has seen a 52% increase in youth attendance, with 50 new youth this last month alone.

Besides the Center, HOPE also operates a 12 apartment housing facility called HOPE Place in Coon Rapids, which is not only full, but has a waiting list.

Sometimes, it's simply listening to what a young person needs and providing information regarding resources, such as one young man who was struggling with chemical dependency, who not only met his goals of sobriety, but managed to secure stable housing and employment. He later called his case manager to thank her for believing in him.

Recently, the Center expanded its kitchen facilities to allow for some food preparation on site. Consequently, the Grace H4Y Committee decided to expand its commitment to the Center and bring in a meal at least once a month. It would only require about 4 volunteers at a time. Possibilities also involve supplying some non-perishable food items as well as clothing. See the HOPE 4 Youth website for a more detailed list.

Watch for further announcements, and if you are interested in being part of the team to help this local organization combat youth homelessness, contact Lynda Wilde at lwilde@comcast.net, or call/text 612.418.6444. Also contact Jan Anderson at jmanders79@gmail.com or call 763-712-7415.

As Jeremiah 29:11 says, *"For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* Volunteer with us today to provide these young people with hope and a future.

Family Promise



Family Promise appreciates your continued commitment to work with us throughout all the challenges and changes due to the pandemic. When the pandemic began, it was a fearful time and we all faced difficulties. We were all told to stay home to stay safe. Many workplaces transitioned to work-from-home. School took place virtually from home as well. But imagine being told to stay home and stay safe when you don't have a home. That was the reality for many families throughout our community.

In March of 2020, due to Covid 19, Family Promise had to end the rotational shelter program that had served so well for nearly 10 years. But the problem of homelessness hadn't gone away. We had to find creative, new ways to serve families with no safe place to go. For the past two years, we have been housing families in extended stay hotels, thanks to assistance from the county and the state, while congregations like ours have continued to provide hospitality and support to the families.

Throughout the last two years, Family Promise has also added new programming to serve more families, helping them avoid the trauma of homelessness. Our new Prevention programming helps people before they lose their housing find a way to keep it or move to a new, sustainable home. Stabilization programming helps ensure families who have moved out of shelter and into housing are able to keep it sustainably. These programs mean that Family Promise is now serving twice as many families as it did before. We've learned a lot in the past two years and despite the chaos of the pandemic we were provided the opportunity to reimagine how we can best serve families in our community. As we look toward the future, we have big plans to create a more sustainable, trauma-informed shelter program.

Our vision is to create a guest house, where our families could have the security and consistency of being able to stay in one place instead of rotating from place to place, giving more opportunities for parents to work and a more "normal" feeling experience for children.

I close with a passage from 1 John, Chapter 3. *"¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."*

Grace Lutheran has seen the need and lives out this calling through the work you do in the community. Thank you for partnering with Family Promise to put God's love into action as we work together to help families experiencing housing insecurity build a foundation of lasting independence. Tom Miller has recently assumed the role of Family Promise Coordinator at Grace. Please extend the same support, cooperation and patience you have given me over the years. Gods Blessings to you all, Alden Riley

Adult Ministries



Empty Nesters/ Parents of Independent Children

Are you looking to add some fun to your life because your teenage and twenty-something kids have their own social lives? If so, the "Empty Nesters" is a group of middle aged folks who like to have fun conversations and build connections. Our next two events will be:

- Thursday, September 22nd at 6:30pm at Acapulco's Restaurant in Andover.
- Thursday, October 27th at 6:30pm– Bon fire at Doug and Angie Hanson's. Drinks provided. Bring your own snacks.

If you have any questions about whether this group is for you, please reach out to either Nancy Jenkins or Sandy Schmoll.

Love of Grace Bazaar



The second Saturday of November 12, 2022 from 9:00am to 3:00pm. This event is open to vendors within our congregation and outside in our community, all are invited to register. We accept registrations from all vendors on a first come basis.

We are currently in the process of recruiting and confirming people who are willing to be part of the bazaar team. We will be communicating the information to our vendors as soon as possible. We will be asking our Grace people to sign up for donations of food and supplies for the bazaar breakfast and lunch we serve. We will also need man power to move furniture, set up tables, chairs, etc. in the late afternoon/evenings of Thursday and Friday Nov. 10-11. Vendors begin their set up on Fri. Nov. 11 from 7:00-8:30pm or Sat. morning prior to the event. Sat afternoon after the bazaar, we will need help to take down and get everything set back up in the sanctuary, narthex and classrooms for Sunday morning. Contact Ann Lange for information.

Graceful Seniors



Graceful Seniors is a group of mostly retired folks that meet the second Tuesday of each month starting at 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall. We begin with a donut and coffee breakfast and at 9am we continue with Bible Study and a presentation and/or discussion of a topic that is of interest to our senior citizens.

On Tuesday, September 13th Kay King from NAMI MN (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will be presenting on the topic of Anxiety. For more information, please contact Kris Miller in the church office.



OK@PLAY presents

SPEND SOME TIME IN

STILLWATER TOGETHER!

Wednesday, August 17th

Join us as we spend a leisurely day in Stillwater on the banks of the mighty St. Croix. We have no specific agenda, except we will leave the church parking lot at 9:30am to carpool. You choose how to spend the day...trolley tour, lunch, shopping, ice cream, watching life go by on the river...you decide what YOU want to do! Trolley rides are at 11am, 2pm and 3pm for \$13.00 senior price; the 11am may be the best time to go as a group if you are interested in doing so. If you should choose not to carpool, meet at the Trolley area at 10:30am, but please still RSVP.

Please RSVP to:

Ann Lange (ann.lange@comcast.net or 763.438.5623) OR

Deb Stang (DebOdellStang@gmail.com or 763.427.3252)

We hope you are able to join us as we enjoy another beautiful Minnesota summer day!



OK@Play

Meets when events are scheduled throughout the year within the church or outside. The next events coming up are:

- August 17 - Stillwater outing, trolley ride, lunch, shopping, etc. Meet at the church at 9:30am to carpool if you wish. More details to come.
- October - Date TBD - Halloween potluck and bonfire at Joel and Becky Anderson's.
- December 16 - Sing Along Christmas Carols at Heart of the City Music Factory in Anoka. More details to come.

Adult Ministries



Financial Peace University Course Will Be Offered at Grace This Fall

Tell your money where to go instead of wondering where it went! *Financial Peace University* is a nine-lesson class designed to help you build a budget, dump debt, grow your wealth, and leave money stress behind. Each lesson is based on biblical wisdom and common sense.

The class is taught using videos, small group discussions, a helpful workbook, and leveraging many other tools provided by FPU. Doug and Angie Hanson will facilitate the class through the 9 week journey. We took the same course through Grace around 5 years ago and we are so excited to share this great program with others.

There is a fee for the class. You can choose from three options. The fee will provide you access to materials needed for the class, online budgeting and tracking tools, free group coaching with FPU professionals and access to more courses.

3 month access for \$59.99

6 months access for \$99.99

12 months access for \$139.99

When we took the class, we paid off so much debt that the fee was well worth it. It also gave us a common financial goal and taught us how to work together to reach it.

Sign up for this class and start your 14-day free trial of Financial Peace at fpu.com/1152048. Class starts **Sunday, September 18, 2022** and will go for 9 weeks and will be held at the church.

Woman's Retreat



The Women's Retreat Ministry team wants you to **plan ahead** for an amazing, fun-filled event that is happening in February 2023. This event is our over-night weekend **Winter Retreat at Luther Point Bible Camp on Friday February 24 thru Sunday February 26, 2023**. We invite **ALL Grace Women** and their friends to come. At this fun event, you will meet and get to know more women at our church, laugh a lot, and **RELAX**. This will be our 6th year for this incredible retreat and we hope you can join us. We have everything planned and provided for you except your over-night bag – The team will provide all your meals, daily devotion sessions, carpooling, lots of free time, a field trip to a creamery, outdoor hiking (if you so choose), snacks and wonderful women fellowship that you can only get at a Women's Retreat. Our goal for this retreat is to grow in relationship with one another and God; provide tangible spiritual take-aways to apply to your daily life and have **LOTS OF FUN AND LAUGHTER**. This Women's Retreat is also a safe and encouraging environment where **EVERYONE** is invited to come. Space is limited so registration will be required for this event- be on the look out to register on Realm in the Fall. More details on cost, packing list and car-pooling will be included as well. Can't wait to see all you Fabulous Women this Fall!



Ruth's Circle

Monthly Bible Study

The first Monday of each month from 12:30PM to 2PM a group of women gather around a table at Grace to engage in bible study from Gather, Women of the ELCA magazine, with Pastor Joanna or Pastor Maria. Ruth Circle meets in room 105/107 for fellowship and study. If you wish, come join some of the women at noon with your bag lunch before the study begins. Come check us out and the magazine has some great articles, too! Questions/Inquiries – Low Jackson, 763-762-6151

Funeral Committee



This leadership committee of three are Low Jackson, Nancy Jenkins and Ann Lange. Our service is supplied as needed for food and beverages following a Celebration of Life service at Grace per request.

Adult Ministries



Grace Quilters

Looking to help others? There are many opportunities to assist in making quilts for our neighbors, near and far.

- Create quilt tops – We have fabric to choose from and cutting tools.
- We can loan you one of two sewing machines to create quilt tops at home or church.
- Donate cotton or flannel fabric.
- Donate clean, gently used cotton sheets or yardage for quilt backs
- Hand baste and tie quilts on Monday mornings 9 AM – Noon. (We take a break for fellowship, too.)

We'd enjoy teaching anyone who'd like to learn how to make quilts for homeless veterans and their families, Anoka Foster Care, homeless people in Anoka County, community members in need and so many others. The need is great. Will you be part of Christ's love wrap?

Questions/interest contact Low Jackson, leader Grace Quilters, 763-762-6151

"What Are These 12 Step Programs All About?"



A users personal experience and observations with Q and A. How do they work with biblical principles? Open to all: dependents, codependents, friends, family members etc.

This will be hosted by Mike Fiala with details to come regarding dates and times.



Adult Wednesday

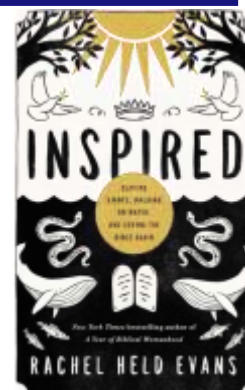
Evening Book

Discussion: Starting

Wednesday

September 14th in

Room 105/107



If the Bible isn't a science book or an instruction manual, then what is it? What do people mean when they say the Bible is inspired? When Rachel Held Evans found herself asking these questions, she began a quest to better understand what the Bible is and how it is meant to be read. What she discovered changed her and it will change you too.

Drawing on the best in recent scholarship and using her well honed literary expertise, Evans examines some of our favorite Bible stories and possible interpretations, retelling them through memoir, original poetry, short stories, soliloquies, and even a short screenplay. Undaunted by the Bible's most difficult passages, Evans wrestles through the process of doubting, imagining, and debating Scripture's mysteries. The Bible, she discovers, is not a static work but is a living, breathing, captivating, and confounding book that is able to equip us to join God's loving and redemptive work in the world. – taken from amazon.com

Join us on Wednesday evenings from 6-6:50pm in which we will discuss Rachel Held Evans' book Inspired. We will have copies on hand to use and purchase. Discussion will be led by Pastor Joanna Mitchell or Pastor Maria Markman. No prep work will be required. Come ready to learn and ask questions. Sign up on Realm today!

Adult Ministries



WOW 2022

Women On Wednesday (WOW) has been a ministry of Grace for many years. Its format brings women the opportunity to laugh, study and pray together. Every year is fresh and new. WOW might be for you if:

- You are newly retired and you could use some social time and some stimulating conversation.
- You are a full time mother of young children and you might be blessed by time spent with women of all ages and diverse experiences, women who hold decades of wisdom in the care of children and family. Childcare is even provided!
- You are a quilter and find your Wednesday mornings free.
- You are working from home now and you suddenly have the option of meeting with a group of women.
- You have a friend or neighbor that you would love to get to know better who might just need that invitation to join a group.
- You find yourself seeking to deepen your understanding of the Bible or to deepen your relationship with your Creator and your sisters in faith.

You are invited to join WOW starting September 14th at 9:30am-11:15am at the church. As groups are formed, according to the level of interest, there may be Zoom groups as well as in person groups. Our calendar year goes along with Anoka Hennepin School District schedule. We hope to see you there. For more information please contact Anne Weikle at weikle3@msn.com.



Feed My Starving Children

This fall, members of Grace Lutheran will once again be invited to do a food challenge packing of life saving meals to alleviate hunger for children and families around the world. Two fun filled hours of your time has never passed so quickly, nor has been so significant in improving the lives of so many people. Please watch for information on up-coming "pack" dates!

Centering Prayer



While Centering Prayer is done privately most of the time, a weekly sharing of the experience in a small group has proven to be very supportive, as well as a means of continuing education. The weekly meeting also serves as a means of accountability. Just knowing that one's support group is meeting together each week is an enormous encouragement to keep praying, and an invitation to return to the practice of Centering Prayer if circumstances such as illness, business, family problems, or urgent duties have prevented one from carrying out one's commitment to daily practice for a time. A small group meets weekly in the worship center at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday mornings. This group is open to beginners and people who have been practicing Centering Prayer for a long time. Please join us to deepen your prayer experience. If you have questions, please email Anne Weikle at weikle3@msn.com

Family Table



Imagine coming home and finding no food to prepare dinner for your family. Imagine being alone and never having friends to share a meal with. Imagine how you would feel and what you would do. Family Table is an outreach program sponsored by several churches in the area including Grace. It is an opportunity for us to help our neighbors, if even for only one meal. On the 3rd Sunday of each month, we are privileged to put together meals for our guests. As gas prices rise and inflation goes up, we see our numbers ticking up also. And for the first time since COVID, we have opened our doors so friends can grab their meal and share good conversation. If you are looking for a way to help, please check out the Sign Up Genius link. The calendar is posted thru December so you can do some planning. We know summer is a tough time, but imagine if you had no food on your table? Come help us help others! You are such an important part of our outreach programs! If you have questions, you can contact Linda Wilde at lrwilde@comcast.net or call/text 612.418.6444.

Adult Ministries



Our Saviour's Ministry Update

Grace Lutheran has had a long partnership with Our Saviour's housing ministry in Minneapolis. For close to thirty years, on the first Monday of the month, every month, the people who were sheltered in the transitional housing space were served a meal by a group of people from Grace. Many volunteers from church have been blessed by preparing a meal and then sharing a meal with people whose journey has led them to this place of shelter. Because Grace has been a community of outreach minded people, more ministry opportunities were added to our volunteer base, and eventually, Grace changed its commitment to Our Saviour's to every other month. After much thought and prayer, Grace as a congregation, will no longer be providing a meal on a regular basis. First, a whole hearted THANK YOU, to Pete and Anne Wickle who initiated, co-coordinated, and animated this ministry in two separate periods of time. Their dedication totaling nearly twenty years! Also, a huge THANK YOU, to every WOW group, catechism group, men's group, Bible study group, family group, and individual participants who have helped in any way with this ministry. For those of you who have been blessed by this ministry and feel called to participate, please consider contacting Our Saviour's directly. Our Saviour's provides transitional housing for up to 24 men and women. A few beds are reserved for people who have medical conditions and require extra support before finding permanent housing. The organization fills an important role in Minneapolis and has multiple opportunities to serve. To learn more please visit: <https://oscs-mn.org/our-saviours-housing>. Again, thank you, and may the Grace community, with one heart, continue to pray for and offer support to our brothers and sisters, as Jesus has called us to do.

Global Health Ministries



Volunteers from Grace are invited to bring their hands and feet to this local ministry which sorts medical supply donations, then forwards these needed supplies to Lutheran hospitals and medical missionaries around the world. Volunteers help roll bandages, sort medical supplies, and load supplies into a semi-trucks. For further information or to volunteer, please contact Scott Lien at 763.586.9590 or email at scott@ghm.org.

A Year of Change

Continued from Page 1

I really want your feedback about the needs of our young families and your hopes, dreams, and desires for our ministries at Grace. This is a year for us to continue to work through hard changes while also believing that God is doing important work under the surface to strengthen and grow our ministry.

Speaking of growing our ministry, this is our theme for this year: *Growing in Grace*. Our mission statement is that we are a congregation united by God's love to listen, grow, and serve so that all might experience grace. We will continue to *listen* to the needs of our members and neighbors and of course keep our ears open to God, and we will focus on *growing* in faith. Growth happens in a variety of ways. We grow upwards toward God. We can grow outward toward our neighbor, and we can grow downward as we strengthen our faith and deepen our roots. Our theme verse for the year is from Matthew 5 verse 48 from the Message. Jesus said, "Grow up! You're kingdom people. Now live like it! Live out your God created identity, live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you." How might we live into this God given identity. How might we grow in generosity and grace? How might God be at work as we all grow together?

There are so many great opportunities in this fall preview about ways to grow. Growing through bible study and small group connections, growing as a volunteer, growing through worship. During all these changes, I believe that we will be challenged, and we will grow as we trust God to lead us forward in love and grace.

Blessings,
Pastor Joanna Mitchell

Worship Ministries



Altar Guild

An Altar Guild volunteer sets up, resets and cleans up on Communion Sundays. It only takes about 20-30 minutes and is a wonderful way to help with Worship behind the scenes. Training is provided on how to set up and clean up the special service elements. Families and adults are welcome (there must be someone over 21 years old dispensing the wine) to join this essential and sacred element of worship. Please contact Ann Lange.

Projection And Streaming



We are in search of volunteers to help on Sunday mornings, and Wednesday evenings with our projection and streaming. It is not a large commitment, nor is it difficult to learn. One Sunday or Wednesday evening a month! Volunteers will go through a short training session, and then be able to assist. If you are interested, or have questions, please contact David Phelps. (It really is not that hard, and there are detailed instructions for every step of the way.)



Communion Servers

Communion Servers are needed for all Worship times. It is a simple, yet powerful way to be involved during Worship and takes only 10 minutes! What a fulfilling and quick way to help out at Grace. Training will be provided. Please contact the Church Office.

Ushers



Worship Ushers are needed each and every Sunday and Wednesday! Ushers help by greeting people, helping people get what they need for worship, control traffic flow during communion and other times, make sure that the welcome table is clean and tidy, and that coffee is available for Sunday Fellowship. All you need to do is come a bit early to worship and stay a bit later. Training will be provided. Please contact the Church Office.



Worship Nursery Helpers

Do you like playing with little children (infant to three years old)? Volunteer in the nursery during worship on Sunday! Volunteers must be high school students or adults. Middle School students are welcome to help with an adult volunteer. Interested? Reach out to Pastor Joanna Mitchell at joannam@graceandover.org



Assisting Minister

Assist the Pastor with Prayers of the Church, occasionally Communion and Liturgy. It is a fulfilling, and powerful way to be involved during Worship! Training will be provided. Please contact the Church Office.





Grace Lutheran Church

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