

# grace notes

## October 2022

### *Fall, God the Sower and the Cycle of Life, Death and Resurrection*

It's been an interesting September. Never have I ever sent a kid off to college before. And yet, I have found it to be such a wonderful experience. Perhaps because she now attends my alma mater. As she talks to me from various parts of campus, my brain ignites with memories and warms my heart. There is also nothing like watching your college football game and seeing your kid jumping (around) in the end zone on tv. How fun! I have talked to my daughter more in the last three weeks, then I had in the past 6 weeks including the times when we lived under the same roof. I give thanks for phone calls and for kids taking risks and exploring new things.

I never imagined it would be so fun to be a parent sending a kid off to college. I know this is not the case for everyone because, while my own kid is, in my opinion thriving at college, I have friends who have kids who are struggling. Some kids are having panic attacks, others have deferred and come home, some are just wondering where they might fit in, and how in the world they can manage all of the academic and social stress together. Isn't this so true of life?



As we move into new steps, sometimes that new path is exactly the one we have been waiting to walk down for too long. For others it is a hard and rocky path filled with uncertainty, and for some they just immediately shrivel up and want to die. Perhaps this is another way to understand the Parable of the Sower. All the various grounds that God's seeds of love and grace fell upon. Did this new path lead us to rich soil, or are we finding ourselves stumbling or just withering. We just don't know if and when any stage of life will be rocky, or fertile, or sandy. And yet, God keeps showering us with seeds of love, claiming I'm here for you. I love

you. You are mine. Perhaps God throws out those seeds of love more abundantly on the places, people and grounds we least expect, because when we are in the hard places, we desperately need to hear it, over and over again.

I feel like the uncertain path of this fall keeps me giving thanks for the places of growth, and attuned to the places of grief. I am so thankful for Pastor Maria to be back with our staff. I am thankful for the new life and rejuvenation of our worships on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, and to see the commitment of our leaders to children and youth, and the desire to keep young and old growing in faith and in connection.

As I write this newsletter, I can see my beautiful red maple starting to change color in my back yard. I love the vibrancy and the chill of the fall air. It is a time of energy and new beginnings. But even as newness comes, it foreshadows the cold, bitterness of winter that will soon follow. Those bright colored leaves will inevitably fall. The ground will freeze. And like it or not, winter brings death and a time of dormancy.

Life, death and resurrection. It is around us all the time. It happens each year in the seasons. It happens in the cycles of our life. It happens in the church each year as new seasons begin, and changes happen to us and within us. Things that used to be are no longer and there is grief and loss, but there are also new opportunities on the horizon. In my first three years of ministry, we have experienced a lot of loss together. We have grieved. We have started things and ended things. It has been beautiful at times, lonely as well, and definitely hard. And yet, God has been faithful. Faithfully proclaiming the word to us. Faithfully reminding us of who we are: beloved, connected, and sent. God has been faithful in leading by example showing us how to listen, how to grow, and how to serve our neighbor. And how to live through the cycle of it all: life, death and resurrection.

My dad is packing up my childhood home this month. He will leave in mid-October for Arizona and when he comes back in the spring, the hope is to move into an apartment in a retirement community. All of the feelings, you can imagine have gone along with this process. Remembering as I have dug through my old school papers, laughter at letters written and notes shared ("Guess what?! Today Joanna didn't cry at all in school." Said a note written by my Kindergarten teacher.), crying as we have let go of beloved items that we won't have a space for, and a reorientation of things as some of the items of my parents' house are now in mine. It's weird. Life, death and resurrection. It's everywhere.

As you enter this new month, keep your eyes open how are you experiencing this cycle of life, death and resurrection. What things in your life are thriving, what have you let go of and how is God transforming you in it all? This is what the Gospel is all about, and not just the Easter story, but over and over, God is in the business of transforming us by helping us to live, allowing parts and places of life to die and promising new life that is beyond. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Joanna Mitchell

## Associate Pastor's Message



### Family Reunion

Every year we begin our program year on a tour through the Old Testament. This year especially, it feels a lot like a big ol' family reunion. We began with Adam (the earthling), and have already met Noah and his family, Abraham and his family, and Joseph and his family. I don't know if this year I am more in tune with recognizing these Old Testament families as "normal" families, but I see them full of dysfunction and family drama. Instead of just viewing them as HOLY families written about in our sacred book, the Bible, I see them as families presenting with the same joys, sorrows, and dysfunctions as we see today. Families who are trying to walk in faith in a world that challenges their ability to be faithful at every turn, and yet God works through them in tremendous ways! From what I have seen in The Chosen series and what I have heard from others who have watched more than I have, the thing they appreciate most is the depth the series brings to the Biblical characters. As you are introduced to the disciples, you are also introduced to their specific personalities. As you begin to watch, you think, huh? The disciples are just like us.

As I am making my return to Grace from medical leave, it is a lot like a family reunion! And I love that what we are studying on Sundays and Wednesdays in the Bible emphasizes family dynamics that mimic ours. Maybe you have felt like Grace is like a family reunion right now, the energy of people returning, seeing new faces and familiar ones, serving together, laughing, worshiping, grieving, and journeying with one another. I am so grateful to return to all of you, to serve alongside you, to learn alongside of you, to GROW! The thing I love about families and about the Bible is that neither shies away from the struggle from hard things, from challenges, from disagreements or differences in opinion. In fact, our faith requires that we love each other through all of that! So as we continue this program year may we hold fast to one another learning and growing all along the way! As Associate Pastor of Faith Formation, I would love to invite you to some of the programming opportunities we have available for you this fall, if you are interested or have any questions call me or email me!

- Ruth Circle, Women's study- 1st Monday of the Month 12:30-2:00 PM
- Graceful Seniors, senior study- 2nd Tuesday of the month 8:30-10:00 AM
- Women on Wednesdays -Wednesdays 9:30-11:15 AM
- Men's Connection- Saturday Baker Square, Tuesday BWW (Reach out for more information)
- Financial Peace University- Sunday Nights through November Registration required.
- The Chosen- Sunday Nights (Coming soon!)
- Inspired Adult Book Study- Wednesday night 6:00-7:00 PM
- Empty Nesters (or near empty) fellowship group for parents of independent children
- Green Ribbon Group- Mental Health support group for Parents of children struggling with mental health
- OK@Play- fellowship events for Old kids! (Near or recently retired folks.)
- Elementary kids- Sunday School (8:45am/10:30am), Children's Choir (Wednesday 5:45-6:00pm), Kids Night Out (Wednesday 6:00-7:00pm)
- Middle School- Catechism Wednesday night 6:00-7:00pm
- 9th Graders- Own Your Faith special events and mentor meet ups
- High Schoolers- Donuts and Dreams Sundays after worship (10:00am/11:45am)

This list skims the surface of some of the opportunities available to you! You are invited! Can't wait to see you there! Pastor Maria Markman

## Vision Board & Ministries



### Being God's Hands

We have just finished our "God's Work. Our Hands." annual event. As an individual, I ask "why do we only do this once a year?" We do not need a large, organized event to help our neighbor. We can do this on our own too. Why not use our hands for Gods work every day? Or at least when we see a need, offer our help then.

There are so many ways we can help our neighbor. Boy Scouts are known for helping the lady across the street, and their Slogan is "Do a good turn daily". In Luke Chapter 10, verses 25-37 we hear the story of the Good Samaritan. How would our community, or the whole world be, if we were all Good Samaritans? And when we are the one in need, I think it is only right to accept help from others and graciously acknowledge with sincere thanks. God has given us our hands, feet, eyes, ears, and mouth. Let's use those to help others.

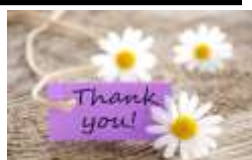
Most of us grew up with Mr. Rogers. He always thought of others first and I really like his thinking!

*"All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors—in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver." — Fred Rogers*

Joel Anderson  
Vision Board Member

### Thank You!!!

Members and Friends of Grace:  
Thank you again for coming down and getting my yard ready for winter. Sorry it's always such a mess. You and many others are all making it possible for me to stay in my house. The good Lord is ever so good to me. Thank you all for doing God's work so faithfully. It is so appreciated. You are forever in my heart.



Cathy Stoll

### Open Treasurer Position on Vision Board



The Vision Board is seeking candidates for the position of Treasurer. This is a volunteer position that will assist in financial matters of the congregation with responsibility to build in accountability, decrease risk and serve as a checks and balance. The Treasurer will meet with the Finance Committee and report to the Vision Board on a quarterly basis. The commitment is for a three year term. If you have a financial or accounting background and are interested, please contact Pastor Joanna at joannam@graceandover.org

### Red Cross Blood Drive



Red Cross Blood Drive coming to Grace Tuesday, October 25th, Noon-5:30pm. To sign up to donate blood, go to [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter Grace Andover. Your donation could save a life.



### Graceful Seniors

Graceful Seniors is a group of mostly retired folks who meet the second Tuesday of each month (October 11th) in the Fellowship Hall for breakfast and a Bible study (8:30-10:00am). October is Pastor Maria's first time back with the Graceful Seniors. At this meeting she will lead a Bible study and speak to her stroke experience. If you are a senior and interested in joining us on the second Tuesday of the month please call the church office so we can make sure we have coffee and a donut for you! We would love to have you join!





## Ministries



### Fall Transitions & Strategies

by Nancy Jenkins

When our daughters were younger, the start of the school year was a time of transition not only for our kids but also for me as a stay-at-home mom. Our summer routines had to be set aside and a whole new pattern established in our household. This fall marks our second year without any kids attending Anoka-Hennepin schools, and yet I sense the same annual rhythm of change. Typically, I don't think much about Christmas until mid-November but this year with my mom's passing in March, our daughter's wedding in June, and another daughter living in Italy, I am already noticing some anxiousness about the upcoming holidays. So I want to acknowledge and affirm others who may be having similar feelings and share the following highlights from a helpful article I read recently. North Jersey Health & Wellness offered these six tips for maintaining our mental wellness in the fall:

- 1.) DON'T LET COOLER TEMPERATURES STOP YOU FROM GETTING OUTSIDE** - Even if it's a quick walk around the block, spending time outside to get some fresh air can do wonders for our mental wellness.
- 2.) GET IN THOSE ZZZ'S!** - Create a sleep schedule and stick to it because getting enough sleep helps regulate hormones in the brain that affect our emotions, cognitive abilities, appetite and more.
- 3.) MOVE YOUR BODY!** - Even 30 minutes of light or moderate activity can help improve our mood, reduce stress and anxiety, alleviate symptoms of depression, and strengthen the immune system.
- 4.) MAINTAIN A WELL-BALANCED, NUTRITIOUS DIET** - Did you know that what we eat can influence our mental health? Eating a balanced diet may offer a mood boost and help one feel more grounded and less stressed.
- 5.) SET BOUNDARIES FOR YOURSELF AND STICK TO THEM** - It is important to set boundaries so that you can focus giving your energy on what is most important and to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- 6.) SET "NO PHONE ZONE" TIMES** - A little technology is okay, and the goal should be to moderate the amount of time you spend with it. Family dinners and coffee with friends are examples of when our phones should be sidelined. Source: North Jersey Health & Wellness <https://njhwllc.com/maintaining-mental-wellness-in-the-fall/> August 25, 2021



You are invited to an OK@Play  
**Autumn Bonfire**

Potluck – "Trick or Treat" Trail –  
Outdoor Movie – Conversation

**TRICK OR TREAT**

When: Thursday, October 27, 2022  
Time: Any time after 6:00 PM  
Where: Joel & Becky Anderson's  
16622 Sycamore St NW, Andover 55304  
(Becky) 612-723-3415 or (Joel) 612-723-9120





Please bring a potluck item to share...  
Hot and Cold beverages provided along with S'mores!

*We will be collecting items for our Grace food shelf, please donate -- Thanks!*



### 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 event is on Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Ministries

### Love of Grace Bazaar



Saturday, 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 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 at [ann.lange@comcast.net](mailto:ann.lange@comcast.net) or 763-438-6868 for information.



### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Lynda Wilde at [lwilde@comcast.net](mailto:lwilde@comcast.net) or call/text 612.418.6444.

### Spring Forest Qigong Practice Group



Spring Forest Qigong practice group led by Randy Sparer meets at Grace the 1st & 3rd Mondays of each month at 2:30pm. Through gentle, yet powerful healing movements and meditations, you will learn how to heal yourself. Questions, contact Randy Sparer 612-812-2392.

### New Church Directory Coming Soon!



Mark your calendars and plan to have your family photo taken for our new Church Directory. Photography dates are October 27, 28 & 29 as well as November 17, 18 & 19. Set up your photography appointment today! Thanks to Deb Stang, Deb Corey, and Debie Brink who have agreed to be our Volunteer Directory Coordinators.

### Flu/Covid Shot Clinic

Flu/Covid Shot Clinic sponsored by Hy-Vee Pharmacy happening at Grace on Sunday, October 2, 9:30am-12:30 pm. No need to sign up, just come to Worship, then get your Flu and Covid shots on your way out in the Fellowship Hall. Its FREE with insurance, just bring your insurance card.



## Ministries & Finances



### 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 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.

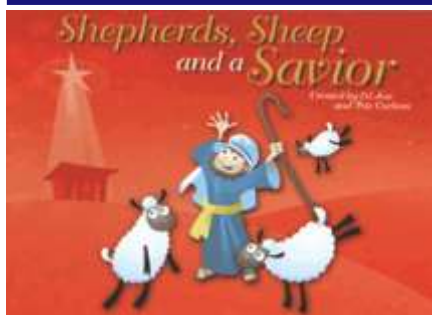


**Due to software issues, finances were not available at the time of publication.**





## Children's Ministries



### Children's Ministry Christmas Program: *Shepherds, Sheep, and a Savior*

During Dec. 18th Worships at 8:45am & 10:30am

First Rehearsal and Informational Meeting

Sunday October 30th at 12:00pm - Lunch will be provided.

No need to audition. Parts will be assigned at the first rehearsal and informational meeting on October 30th. Sign up on Realm to participate. All children will learn the music in Sunday School and will be performing in the program December 18th. They will perform at their regular Sunday School time, unless they sing with the Children's Choir or have a speaking role, then they will perform at both 8:45am and 10:30am worship services. Children's choir rehearses Wednesday evenings 5:45-6:00 PM. Speaking Role rehearsals will be on Wednesdays and Sundays depending on discussion at our 1st rehearsal informational meeting. Questions, or if you are unable to attend the first rehearsal, email Pastor Maria at [mariam@graceandover.org](mailto:mariam@graceandover.org).

## Green Ribbon Group

My name is Jeff Anderson, and I am happy to be a part of the Green Ribbon group at Grace. Together with Dan Brascaglia, we will continue the good work started by Kristi Larson to help support families dealing with their children's mental health issues. In my involvement, I've found the group to be a confidential, non-judgmental, safe space to talk about struggles others may not understand. While I am not a mental health expert, I have team-taught Sunday School, was a small group leader for Catechism and a mentor at Hope4Youth. My wife Carolyn and I live in Anoka, we have three young adult children and run a support group for parents of gender nonconforming children called trans\*parents.



Hi, I am Dan Brascaglia. I'm a husband and father of two great atypical kids. Life is a journey, and Green Ribbon Group is a good place to share and care about that journey. "If the house isn't on fire, I'm going to bed". Green Ribbon Group meets the first Monday of the month from 6:30-8:00pm. Our first meeting of the school year will be on October 3, 2022.



## Children's Ministries



Children's Ministry Event:  
Trunk or Treat & Trick Shots and Treats  
Wednesday, October 26th 5:00-7:00PM  
ALL ARE WELCOME

Now collecting candy and Halloween trinket donations through  
October 19.

**Trunks check-in: 4:30 PM (Parking lot)**

*Sign up on Realm to reserve your spot in our trunk line up and to receive information about trunks and volunteering.*

**Trunk or Treat: 5:00-6:00 PM (Parking lot)**

*Trick or Treat through decorated vehicle trunks. Candy and trinkets available at each trunk. Bags for holding treats provided at check in by the giant pumpkin at the welcome kids door. Costumes encouraged. There will be voting and an award for best trunk.*

**Community Meal: 5:00-6:30 PM (Outside)**

*Vision Board provides Hot dogs, Brats, Root Beer, Chips (vegetarian options available)*

**Bingo: 6:00-7:00 PM (Fellowship Hall)**

**Trick Shots and Treats: 6:00-7:00 PM (Education wing classrooms)**

*Start practicing those bottle flips, ping pong ball bounces, and signature tricks! Trick Shots & Treats is going to be a legendary event! Think carnival, minute to win it, and "Dude Perfect."*

**Worship: 7:00 PM (Sanctuary)**





## Youth Ministries

### Own Your Faith

#### We are excited to get things going for OYF in October!

On October 16th we have a service project in the works after worship and a fun afternoon spent at a Corn Maze (1:30-4:30pm) with our Grace family! Watch for more details soon as things are confirmed with our partners in ministry.

And on October 30th we will host the OYF Retreat here at Grace from 12-5pm with Lunch provided! It is going to be an afternoon filled with fun, connection and growth!



### Catechism Retreat

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? We have 30 spots reserved. Sign-up on Realm 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. As with almost everything in the world right now, costs have increased, and the cost of the retreat this year is \$200. However, we do not want cost to be a barrier, so if assistance is needed, please contact Pastor Joanna. Registration closes October 10th.

### Youth Ministry Dream Team

If you did not already know, we have a great group of dedicated adults on the Youth Ministry Team serving as volunteers, Small Group Leaders, and the core ministry team (committee/board) that make things happen. But we would love additional members to create larger small group leader teams-so everyone gets a break now and then. Also to help with special events, and be members of the core team. If you have ever considered joining, we would love to have you, and if you are curious what all is involved and want to check us out first, just let me know! I would love to chat with you! Molly Schroeder (mollys@gracelutheran.org).



### Donuts and Dreams

We are SUPER excited to connect with our High Schoolers! Come as you are, when you can and be a part of shaping High School Ministry! Please join us on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> at 10-10:45<sup>am</sup> or 11:45<sup>am</sup>-12:15<sup>pm</sup>. Questions?

Contact Molly (MollyS@graceandover.org).



## Grace Lutheran Church

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