

Grace Notes

Volume 72, Number 10

October 2020

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Office Hours

Mon, Wed–Fri
8:30 am–5:00 pm
Tue
8:30 am–12:00 pm
507-373-6496

Worship Services

Sunday Morning 9:00 am
Inside or Online
until further notice.

GRACE NOTES

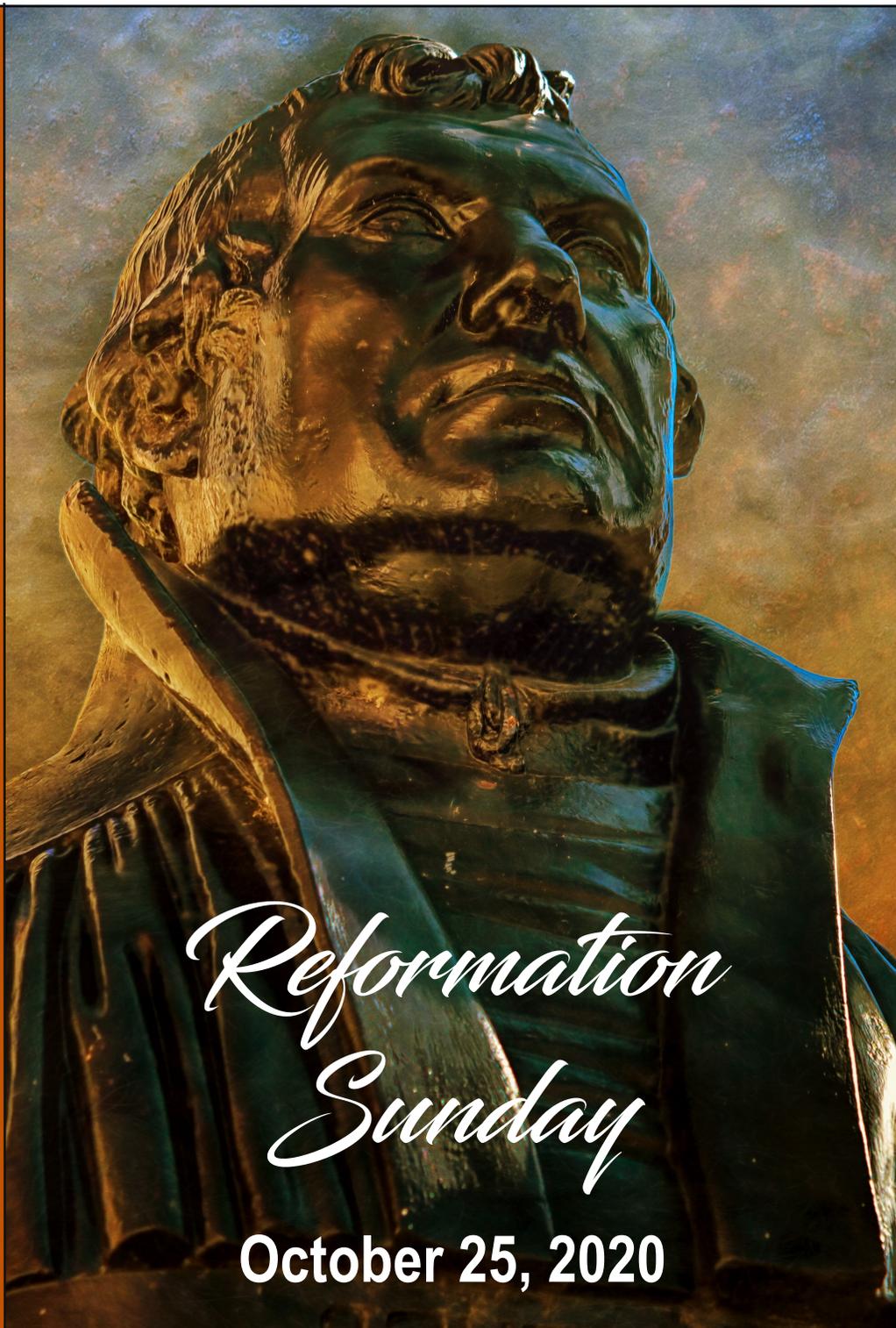
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*Grace Lutheran
Mission Statement:*

*Bringing People
Together and
Becoming Disciples
for Christ!*



*Reformation
Sunday*

October 25, 2020

The Pastor's Pen



Pastor Shane Koepke
Lead Pastor
pastorshane@gracealbertlea.org

“You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”

2 Corinthians 9.11

What does it mean for you to be rich? Was money the first thing that popped in your head? Probably, and mostly because we have been trained to think of riches in terms of cash, or stuff. But Paul, the writer of this verse, isn't talking about money. He never really seemed to care for it unless it moved him forward in the church. That is, he only used money as a Christian to create space for more churches and more believers. For Paul, the greatest wealth was the love of God in Jesus. This, he already had and so he considered himself the wealthiest of people. Rich in love, in assurance of heaven, of knowing that death wouldn't be the end of him. That truth, that wealth, set him free to be generous in all things, including his pocketbook. He no longer lived in fear of what was around the corner, but instead lifted his eyes to the needs in front of him. Paul started and encouraged new Christian congregations who became churches that became THE church we are part of today. It's amazing what can happen when we let go of fear of what might be and cling to the right now. How can I share my

PASTORAL CARE

To assist Pastor Shane and Pastor Jennifer in providing pastoral care for those hospitalized or homebound, please notify them of pending surgeries, overnight hospital stays, or individuals who would like a call. Hospital personnel do not always notify our church of our members who are in the hospital.

wealth now? Not just your pocketbook, but also your faith, your hope, your skills in a way that brings life to others. I promise that by making others better, you won't somehow lose your power. You won't, by making room, for the “other” somehow become an outsider. That's fear talking when we believe it will. Instead, cling to the wealth of Christ's love, Jesus promise of life, and go. Go and live.



A LESSON IN APPRECIATION

During a church anniversary celebration, a pastor overheard a group discussing various congregational leaders over the years. Her ears perked up when an older member said, “Whenever someone asks which of our pastors I liked best, my answer is always, ‘The one we have at any given time is my favorite.’”

What a relief for the pastor to hear — and what a great lesson for Pastor Appreciation Month. God sends each shepherd to us with a specific set of spiritual gifts and then works through those gifts to bless us.

PASTOR APPRECIATION SUNDAY
October 11, 2020

The Associate Pastor's Corner



Pastor Jennifer Gonsalves,
Associate Pastor
Associatepastor@gracealbertlea.org

Several weeks ago, I mentioned in a sermon that I was in the process of becoming a licensed foster parent. Well, after a year of working toward that goal, I have been approved and that I will receive my license sometime in October. Since this means I could be welcoming children into my home this month, I thought to use this space to answer some common questions:

When will you get kids? I don't know. It could be days, weeks, or months before a child is living in my home.

What ages/gender and how many kids will you care for? I don't know. I am licensed for 1-3 kids between the ages of 0-17. My preference is for children between the ages of 5-13.

How long will the kids stay? Again, I don't know. It could be days, weeks, months or even years. When a child is taken into care, their parents have up to 12-18 months to complete their case plan.

Will you adopt? The goal of foster care is reunification. So, while the child(ren) are in care, the parents work on themselves so that they, the kids, can go back home. If the kids can't go home, the goal is for them to live with another family member. If neither of those things can happen, then adoption is an option and something I am open to, but if I haven't announced that I'm adopting the kids I'm caring for then that means the plan is for them to go home.

Why are the kids in your home in foster care? I won't be able to tell you that. Their stories are private and personal. What I can tell you, is that the child is never at fault or a bad kid for being in foster care. They are in care because of actions of their parents or other family members caring for them.

Why did you decide to do this? One, because I love kids and I have always wanted to be a mother, and I didn't want to wait for a marriage that may or may not ever happen. Two, I believe I can help. There is a huge need for foster parents, and the more I read and research, the more I felt called to help. I believe that I have the gifts to welcome children, help them heal, let them know that they are loved, and then let them go when it was time for them to go home.

How will this affect your job as a pastor at Grace? I am your pastor, and that will not change just because I have become a foster parent. I am grateful for the flexibility this job offers, and I plan on taking advantage of that, but I will still fulfill the same duties and responsibilities I have been doing all along.

I hope this answers some of the questions you all have. If you have more questions or want to chat about foster care, I'd love to talk.

Peace, Pastor Jennifer

PASTORAL ACTS FOR SEPTEMBER WEDDING

Tyler & Courtney (Williamson) Thumma

GIVE+Church

Supporting our fall ministries and mission is only a click away. We offer convenient online giving so you never have to worry about having left your cash or checkbook at home. You can make a one-time contribution or set up recurring gifts – a great option for members who are busy with Fall schedules. Get started by visiting our online donation page at <https://gracealbertlea.org/discipleship/giving/>

Musings



Deacon Robert Tewes,
Director of Worship and Music
music@gracealbertlea.org

The fall season of the music ministry has launched, even in this age of caution about virus transmission.

Necessarily, some of our practices have had to be adjusted to help facilitate the goal of keeping everyone as safe as possible in these times.

The youth choirs have been gathering in the outdoors, where breezes help keep them safe as they learn new songs and engage in rhythmic activities.

The handbell choir is rehearsing in the Fellowship Hall, where, with the ceiling fans on and with generous spacing, good airflow helps to keep the air recycled.

The Adult choir is the ensemble that is most effected by the COVID protocols. We have gathered and agreed to work in small groups, solos, duets, or quartets, to prepare and share special music for worship. Additionally, we will gather, from time-to-time, and record bigger pieces, section by section,

which will be edited and then shared in both live worship and in our online presentations.

If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer to provide special music for our services, please be in touch with me so that I can add your name to our list of participants.

As our worship has moved indoors, due to the cooler morning temperatures of Fall and the reality of the coming Winter, rest-assured that we will continue to provide the livestreaming option of viewing our services each Sunday morning at 9 a.m. via our Facebook page. These services are also uploaded to our YouTube channel each week for your viewing convenience.

We are appreciative of everyone's patience and flexibility at this time of anxiety and concern.

In closing, allow me to share (found below) a recently written prayer by a noted liturgical scholar, Gail Ramshaw, for the World Council of Churches, that I believe is most apt for these times, which remind us to maintain hope even in the midst of illness and fear.

Deacon Robert Tewes



With the prophet Joel we lament the devastation of this plague:

The priests mourn; joy and gladness are cut off before our eyes.

Disease kills countless; fear afflicts millions.

O God, can we, can our society, survive this pandemic?

All grieve at this global loss and weep at widespread adversity.

Hear us, O God.

Uphold us with your strength.

Give us your life.

Hear these words, and receive their power:

God the Father holds the universe in arms of mercy.

God the Son brought healing to the sick and suffering.

God the Spirit grants us peace within our pain.

Thanks be to God!

Grace Children, Youth and Family Ministry



Ashley Kuhlman,
Youth Director
youth@gracealbertlea.org
1-651-280-9502

Join us for Sunday School!

Families will be able to pick up a monthly kit starting on October 4th from the church to complete at home over the month. There will be an optional in-person Sunday School on October 4th at 9:45am. To let us have the latest contact information, please sign up your child for Sunday School at www.gracealbertlea.org/sunday-school

Confirmation has started with youth gathering in small groups with our awesome pastors and volunteers leading different stations based on that night's theme. Sermon Notes, schedules and sign ups for Confirmation can be found at www.gracealbertlea.org/confirmation

6th Grade Communion Class will take place on October 11th from 9:45 – 10:30am. Families can sign up and find more information about this class at www.gracealbertlea.org/cyf

Wednesday Night Chew n Chat will take place outside near the Prayer Garden before Confirmation each Wednesday. Some activities and games will be available for youth use. Grace Lutheran will not be serving a meal, but youth are invited to bring a meal from home to eat and have fellowship with others. Food will not be permitted in the building.

Upcoming Events Schedule

(schedule is subject to change):

- Oct 4:** Sunday School Kits Ready and In-Person Sunday School
- Oct 11:** 6th Grade First Communion Class
- Oct 14:** NO Confirmation;
9th – 12th Grade Bonfire
- Oct 25:** Confirmation Sunday

High School Youth Group 9th – 12th graders are invited to join others on Wednesday, October 14th for a bonfire! We will gather at 5:30pm to check in with one another, devotion and game. Text Ashley if you plan to join (651-280-9502).

Looking for adults to help with Children, Youth & Family Ministries. We are unable to do our programming without our volunteers!! We are looking for some adults who are interested in:

- **Sunday School Monthly Leaders.** Looking for 3 - 4 adults to serve as leaders to our elementary aged students for our monthly in-person Sunday School. Contact Pastor Jennifer for more information.
- **Confirmation Subs.** Looking for a few adults that are unable to commit to being a small group leader, but would be open to being called to sub a Confirmation small group when needed. Contact Ashley for more information.
- **Confirmation rotation leaders NEEDED!!** Looking for 2 - 3 adults each Wednesday to serve as Rotation Leaders for our 7th – 8th Graders. You will lead a station, based on that day's theme, for some of the Confirmation small groups. You can sign up once or for multiple days! Contact Ashley for more information.
- **Sunday School Kit Helpers.** Looking for adults or older youth to help put together the Sunday School kits each month. Contact Pastor Jennifer for more information.



Parish Nurse Notes



Lori Tuchtenhagen,
Parish Nurse
parishnurse@gracealbertlea.org

Greetings Grace Lutheran,

I recently learned that each year during the month of October, 'Red Ribbon Week' is designated as a week to remind us of the importance of developing healthy communities and lifestyles free of substance abuse. Did you know that alcohol is the number one drug of choice among our nation's youth? Yet the seriousness of this issue does not register with the general public or of policymakers. Every day, on average, 11,318 American youth (12-20 years of age) try alcohol for the first time. Children who are drinking alcohol by 7th grade are more likely to report academic problems, substance use, and delinquent behavior in both middle school and high school. More than 1,700 college students in the U.S. are killed each year as a result of alcohol-related injuries. Let's help to raise awareness amongst our youth, keeping them in our prayers

that they make wise choices and lifestyles free of alcohol and substance abuse.

May God Bless You,
Lori Tuchtenhagen, Parish Nurse

I was also informed that, "Red ribbons are being placed on mailboxes, trees, doors, porches and in yards of people across the nation to symbolize that we are praying for our nation and our neighbors during this pandemic," It serves as a visual reminder to pray for those touched by this virus, whether it is someone who has it or someone who is on the front line in harm's way.



MARTHA CIRCLE

**Wednesday, October 28 at 9:30 a.m.
Fireside Room**

**Masks are required. Social distancing will be observed.
No food allowed. Bring your own beverage.**

**New members NEEDED and are welcomed!
Questions: Call Sharon at 507-383-4909**

Worship

Information & Guidelines

Some things to consider as you come to indoor worship:

You **MUST** sit six feet apart in family groups. Masks at this time are **MANDATORY**.

Communion (please bring your own wine/juice and bread), music, preaching and fellowship will be very present. We are so excited to be able to offer these worship services. Please come if you are healthy. If you are unwell or at risk, please continue to watch our worship provided on our Facebook page.

Mid-week worship is available Wednesday evenings on Facebook and on our website.



CREATION CARE CORNER

A Prayer on Climate Change

Creator God, this earth is miraculous and beautiful. Forgive our confusion and inaction as we confront the challenges of climate change. In the light of your truth, seen so clearly in the life and teaching of Jesus, help us to re-examine ourselves and our lifestyle choices and see clearly the implications of how we live on all that sustains life on this earth. May we follow your lead in caring for every aspect of this precious world, which you made, and love.



We pray for world leaders to find new, just and radical agreements that will protect our fragile world for future generations. Throughout history you have moved people to do amazing things for the sake of their neighbors. Inspire us now to work together, as your people, to change priorities in the way we live, so that we build a fair and safe world for all your creation; a world where your will is done as it is in heaven. Amen.

Adapted from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Source: Wikimedia Commons.
Contributed by Mike Lockhart, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Church Council Minutes

September 8, 2020, 6:30 p.m. (ZOOM meeting)

1. Call to Order and Roll

The meeting was called to order by President Tims at 6:32 PM.

2. Opening: Pastor Shane

Pastor Shane guided the Council through a breathing imagery exercise focused on God's Genesis creation.

3. Open Forum – No items

4. Approval of Today's Agenda – Action

It was MSA (Moved/Seconded/Approved) by Drommerhausen and Tims to approve the agenda for the meeting.

5. Approval of Minutes

It was MSA by Schindler and Drommerhausen to approve the August meeting minutes.

6. Budget Update: Dave Drommerhausen and P. Tewes

The budget was reviewed with the Council, with these highlights:

- Giving is on track for the year and is in-line with giving in 2019.
- Expenses are on track within the approved church budget and actually under budget through August.
- Revenues currently exceed budgeted needs at this point in the church year.

It was MSA by Groenewig and Hamborg to approve the budget report.

7. Reports

- Lead Pastor Report: Pastor Koepke
 - ◆ Pastor Shane thanked the Council and the congregation for their expressions of support around the death of his father-in-law.

- Associate Pastor Report: Pastor Gonsalves

- ◆ Sunday School and Confirmation planning are underway for their September starts.
- ◆ Pastoral duties have included two baptisms (Peace Garden), one recognition of baptism, two funerals (inside church facilities), and one wedding (inside church facilities).

- Deacon's Report and Technology Update: Deacon Bob Tewes

- ◆ Music programming is starting up with the bell choir. The Bell Choir will practice indoors; with social distancing and the use of fans to enhance air circulation. Other choirs will start soon, with practices outside to start, and deploying small assemblies initially.
- ◆ Indoor worship will start on Sunday, September 20, with one service at 9:00 AM, limited to 100. There will be, also, overflow space available to accommodate an additional 100 congregants. The worship service will also be broadcast live online.
- ◆ The church hosted a funeral for another church due to their lack of capacity to facilitate social distancing.

- Commission & Committee Report Highlights

- ◆ LEAD (Backpack Program): First delivery of food has been made. Food supplies have been replenished. Salem Lutheran is providing financial support.
- ◆ Technology: Funds have been spent to support sound quality enhancements, mixing capacity, and storage of equipment.

Continued on page 9

Church Council Minutes Continued

8. Old Business

- 75th Celebration: October 10, 2021 (Committee: Pastor Shane, Jim Munyer, Marsha Smith)- (on hold)
- Constitution: Pastor Shane will present the final draft edits to the Council prior to the next meeting and approval will be sought in September.
- Capital Campaign: Schindler noted that \$2,184 was contributed to the campaign in August. Drommerhaussen updated collection figures and the revised total collected for the campaign is \$1,074,308. There is \$153,858 cash on hand. It was also noted that \$18,250 has been spent to date on the restroom project.
- Update on bathroom remodel: Due to higher-than-expected bids for the project based on the expanded scale of the remodel, the Grace Foundation donated \$100,000 to the effort. Twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) is a direct gift.

An additional \$75,000 match to congregational giving was also approved. A letter updating the congregation on the project will be done by Pastor Shane and Schindler. Funds will be raised before final bids are firmed up.

9. New/Other Business

- Sunday's Outdoor Services: Outdoor services will end with the September 13th worship service. Indoor worship will resume on September 20. See the Deacon's Report for more details.

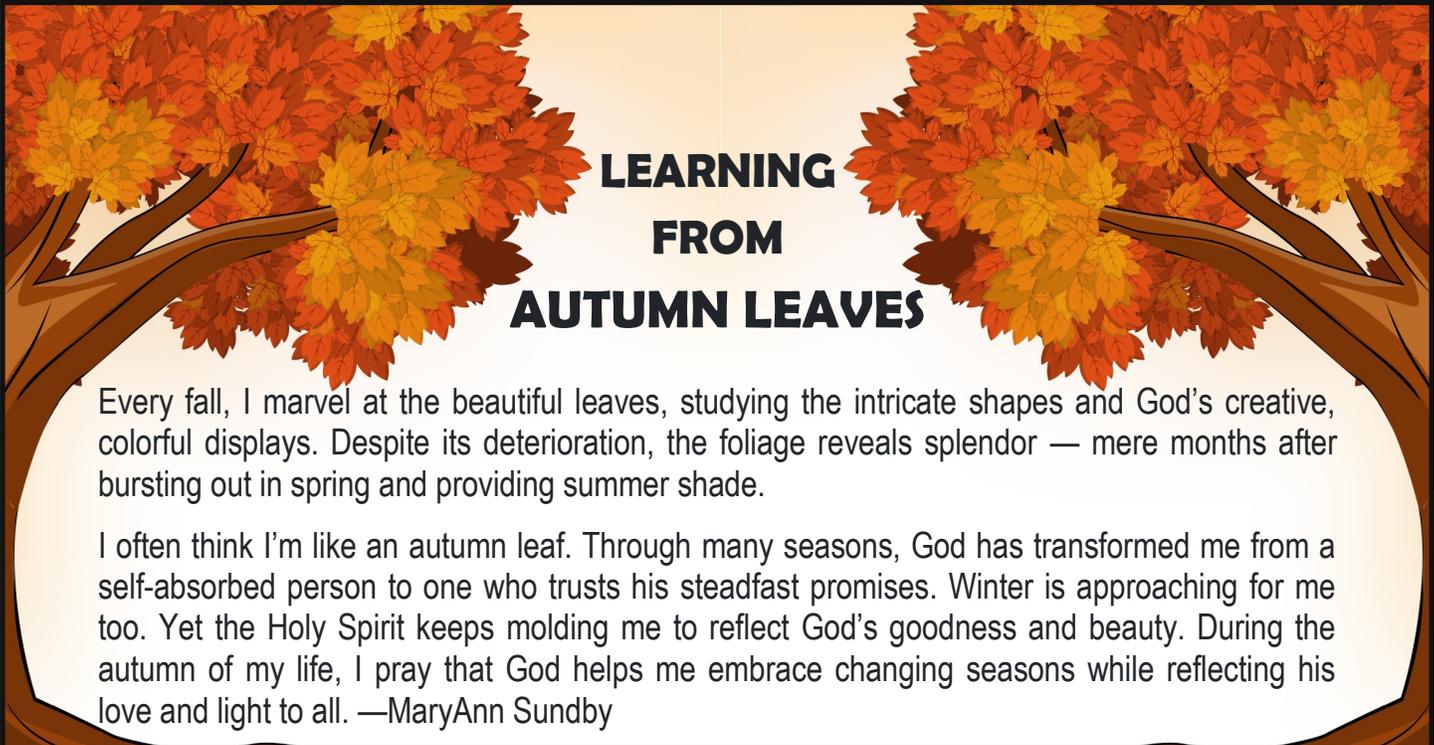
10. Prayer Intercessions – Pastor Shane led the Council in closing prayers.

11. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Schindler

Grace Lutheran Church Council Secretary



LEARNING FROM AUTUMN LEAVES

Every fall, I marvel at the beautiful leaves, studying the intricate shapes and God's creative, colorful displays. Despite its deterioration, the foliage reveals splendor — mere months after bursting out in spring and providing summer shade.

I often think I'm like an autumn leaf. Through many seasons, God has transformed me from a self-absorbed person to one who trusts his steadfast promises. Winter is approaching for me too. Yet the Holy Spirit keeps molding me to reflect God's goodness and beauty. During the autumn of my life, I pray that God helps me embrace changing seasons while reflecting his love and light to all. —MaryAnn Sundby

Gifts of Love

BOILER/BUILDING/ROOF/FURNACE FUND

In Memory Of:

Julie Jasperson given by Kent Jasperson

Gift Given By:

Carroll & Mavis Hanson

BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAMS

In Memory Of:

Dr. Ted Myers given by Faith Ryan

Christine Jahnke (Hagen), daughter of Wayne & Sharon Jahnke given by Mary Tuft

Gift Given By:

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin, Ona Meyer, Anonymous

CAPTIAL CAMPAIGN

In Memory Of:

Julie Jasperson given by Kent Jasperson

FOOD SHELF

Gift Given By:

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin, Anonymous

LIBRARY FUND

In Memory Of:

Mel Nelson given by Sandy Fredrickson

Christine Jahnke (Hagen), daughter of Wayne & Sharon Jahnke given by Virginia Sorenson

LOVE OFFERING

In Memory Of:

Dennis Kahl (father-in-law of Pastor Shane) given by Dave & Julie Drommerhausen

Josh Medd given by Shirley Pearson

Gift Given By:

Ed & Julie Groeneweg

MARTIN LUTHER FUND

In Memory Of:

Christine Jahnke (Hagen), daughter of Wayne & Sharon Jahnke given by Dale & Dorothy Baldwin, Bill & Jane Buege, Gary & Karen Ohlman, Judy Menssen, David & Jeanne Lundak

Dennis Kahl, father of Janelle Koepke given by Bill & Jane Buege

Gift Given By:

Bill & Jane Buege, Anonymous (

PRAYER GARDEN

In Memory Of:

Dennis Kahl, father of Janelle Koepke given by Mark, Karen, Sara, Amy Sanderson

Julie Jasperson given by Kent Jasperson

QUILTERS

Given By:

LuAnn Sallee

PLEASE NOTE that any additional "Gifts of Love" recorded by the church office after October 25, 2020 will appear in the next issue. If you have given a gift and your name has not been recorded, please call the church office so the correction can be made. Thank you.



GRACE LUTHERAN PRAYERCHAIN

Would you like a prayer for yourself or others? Call the church office (507-373-6496) with your name and phone number and someone from the Prayer Chain will contact you for further information. Prayers are kept confidential among prayer chain members.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00a Early Bible Study	2	3
4 9:00a Worship Service In-person or Online 9:45a Sunday School 11:00a 9th Grade Confirmation	5 6:00p Hardanger Group	6 9:30a Staff Meeting 6:00p Bells of Praise	7 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs 5:30p Online Worship 6:00p Chew-n-Chat 6:30p Confirmation	8 6:00a Early Bible Study	9	10
11 9:00a Worship Service In-person or Online 9:45a 6th Grade First Communion 11:00a 9th Grade Confirmation	12 6:00p Hardanger Group	13 9:30a Staff Meeting 6:00p Bells of Praise 6:30p Council Meeting	14 4:30p NO Cherub & Chancel Choirs 5:30p Online Worship 5:30p 9th-12th Grade Bonfire 6:00p NO Chew-n-Chat 6:30p NO Confirmation	15 Newsletter Deadline 6:00a Early Bible Study 	16	17
18 9:00a Worship Service In-person or Online	19 6:00p Hardanger Group	20 9:30a Staff Meeting 6:00p Bells of Praise	21 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs 5:30p Online Worship 6:00p Chew-n-Chat 6:30p Confirmation	22 6:00a Early Bible Study	23	24
25 9:00a Reformation Worship Service In-person or Online TBD Confirmation Worship 	26 6:00p Hardanger Group	27 9:30a Staff Meeting 6:00p Bells of Praise	28 9:30a Martha Circle 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs 5:30p Online Worship 6:00p Chew-n-Chat 6:30p Confirmation	29 6:00a Early Bible Study	30 10:00a Grace Notes Mail Prep	31
						

Grace Prays

Prayers of Healing

Bruce & Diane Olson
Dex Henschel
Carolyn Schmitz
Norma Demmer
Richard Anderson
Richard Dahlen
Dick Haug
Arlene Hobbiebrunken
Bob Field

Prayers for those Grieving

The family and friends of **Dawn Baas**
(mother-in-law, Gwen Baas,
brother-in-law, Tom (Deb Baas))

The family and friends of **Ruth Strand**
The family and friends of **Marilee Citsay**

Prayers of Joy

Baptism of **Graham Flatness**, son of
Brady & Katelyn

Baptism of **Josie Leiste**, daughter of
Michael & Heather Leiste

Recognition of Baptism for **Abe Leiste**, son of
Michael & Heather Leiste

Tyler & Courtney Thumma's Wedding
Worshiping in the sanctuary again!

The resuming of vocal and bell choir music ministry!
The resuming of Sunday school and confirmation.

If you know anyone needing prayers of our congregation, please let us know so we can include them on our list. Requests for the Prayer Chain can be arranged by calling the church office.

October

(The list below is to remind us to pray for our Grace family members on the following dates.)

1. Kjersten Brue
2. Roxann Brue
3. Ronnie & Linda Bryan
4. Angela Bryand, Angela, Chase, Jayda
5. John & Tammy Bryand, Anthony, Jesse, Jordan, Paris
6. Bill & Jane Buege
7. Dale & Paula Buendorf, Mason, Henry
8. Bryan & Sheila Calderon, Axel, Aidric, Ari
9. Heather Cameron
10. JD & Mindy Carlson, Dylan, Drew
11. Mary Carlson
12. Jeffrey & Angela Carson, Courtney, Chelsey, Cayley
13. Debbie Christensen
14. Judy Christenson
15. Mark & Sharon Christian, McKinzey, Andy
16. Jamison & Amy Cichosz, Gavin, Campbell, Burke, Mika
17. Renee Citsay
18. Paul & Cheryl Citurs, Tyler
19. John & Natasha Clarey, Kendal, Kallen
20. Dell & June Claussen
21. Michael & Nancy Cottrell
22. Linda Crom, Christy
23. Barry Dahl
24. Jerry & Tricia Dahl
25. Wes & Kate Dahl, Brent, Jake, Lainey
26. Richard Dahlen
27. Shauna Dakken
28. Mike & Julie Dandrea, Broc, Alyssa
29. Marjorie Dann
30. Lacey DeBoer
31. John & Jan Delle



Caring and Sharing

Becky Tennis Hanson and Corrine Tims

Kathleen & Randy Appel
Paula & Dale Buendorf
Julie & Mike Dandrea
Kathy Diaz
Fern Drescher
Heather & Todd Earl
Jennifer & Jeshua Erickson
Wynnette Flores
Janet & Dexter Henschel
Linda & Don Holst
Janece & Max Jeffrey
Vicki & Mike Larson
Pat Linnes
Faye & Richard Madson
Tonya & Paul Matson
Kelli & Andy Nelson
Nikki & Mike Olsen
Sharon & Arnold Pasche
Shirley & Larry Pearson
Pamela & Mike Pleiss
Jenn & Jim Quiram
Kim & Dustin Rafdal
Amy & Kelvin Rehnelt
Heidi & Preston Robeck
Renaë & Neil Sather
Annette Schmitz
Hazel Spiering
Renee Thorson
Lori & Randy Tuchtenhagen
Diane VanGuilder
LaJean & James Westeng

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES for Adults at Grace

We invite you to join any of our regular Bible study groups at Grace Lutheran.

Sunday Morning Adult Forum
September — May
(Postponed until further notice)

Tuesday Morning Bible Study
Tuesday mornings, 10:00-11:00 am
(*Fireside Room*)

This study for women offers fellowship, singing, and great discussion.

Thursday Morning Bible Study
6:00-7:00 am (*Kitchen*)

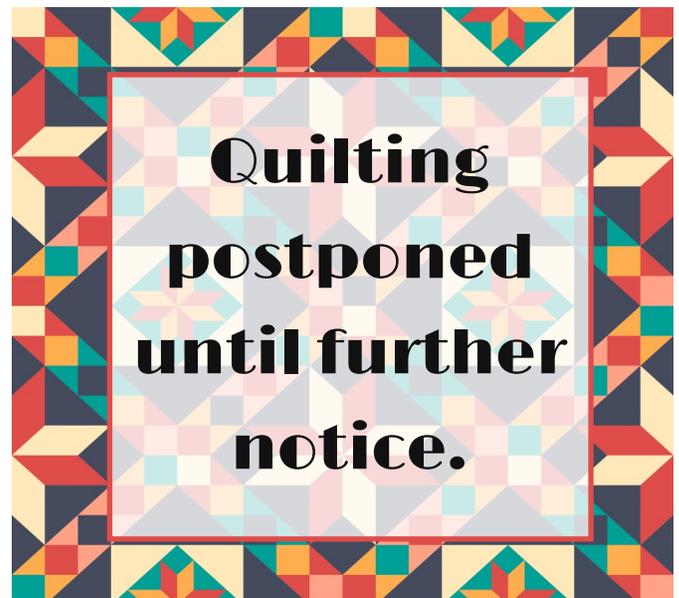
Consider joining this group where there is an opportunity for good discussion and good fellowship.

Grace WELCA Women's Circles
Mary Circle (Postponed until further notice)

Lois Circle (Postponed until further notice)

Martha Circle (meeting 4th Wednesday, 9:30 am)

New members are always welcome! Call the church office, 373-6496, for more information.





QUARTERS FOR WORLD HUNGER

According to a news release in the Minneapolis Star Tribune on September 6, 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic is upending food supply chains, crippling economics and eroding consumer purchasing power. This is happening in every part of the world in spite of the fact that there is an enormous global food surplus -- and it is happening in every part of the world. This makes no sense, does it? Some projections show that by the end of the year, COVID-19 will cause more people to die each day from hunger than from virus infections. We need to pray daily that God will work through people and organizations to bring back order to the chaos caused by the pandemic. Now more than ever, the World Hunger fund needs our support and monetary donations. Thank You.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

The Caring & Sharing **still needs co-chair** for the month of **November**. Please contact the church office if interested. Please consider being a co-chair for one of the months listed above.

Remember your coins for Sunday's Indoor Noisy offering!

NO FAIR TRADE COFFEE
Until further notice

GENEROSITY AT GRACE



Thanks for your attendance either In-Person or Live Streaming as we continue to be the church apart and together.

The Finance Ministry Team and Church Council appreciate your generous support. Your faithful Stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace Lutheran.

Message from Latvia

15 September 2020

Hello dear friends in Albert Lea,

Thank you, brothers and Sisters in Christ, for fellowship and support for long years and for your open heart and love.

It is hard for us to hear and read that the US is severely affected both from the epidemic and from the frustration of the people. We very much hope and pray that your faith grows stronger in difficulty, grows and brings you closer to God. God's blessings, like sunlight breaking through the clouds of thunderstorms, strengthen you.



We are thankful to God we were limited by security reasons and the number of people to 25, but we were able to hold services in the church without interruption all pandemic time. From July we were able to meet up to 100. But we still have to keep a distance of 2 meters in the church and there are changes to the order of service that reduce contact. In that time, we baptize and confirm, but suddenly there are not many children and young people.

We are thankful to God that we are protected from a large number of infected in Valka and in Latvia as a whole. Thanks to God our levels of infected people are the lowest in Europe. We can almost live our daily lives in our own country with only small restrictions by refraining from traditional holidays trips and seeing visitors coming to Latvia.

Latvia and our church have responded to the call of European Christians in all countries to create and mark pilgrimage stages of way to Santiago de Compostela. In early August, the first event outside the church was St. Jakob Camino opening sign in Valka.

On the first Saturday of August, according to tradition, the Cemetery Festival takes place in Valka. This is something unusual for Europe and for the whole world, but it began in our country around the end of the 19th century - the beginning of the 20th century, when we were part of the Russian Empire. Our evangelical church had many limitations, and the only possible event outside the church walls was this Cemetery Festival. Cemetery festivities were also allowed during the 50 years of Soviet occupation. The tradition is deeply rooted, especially outside the big cities, and is still alive. On this day, family members come to visit their family home and old youth friends meet. Maybe that similar Thanksgiving Day in US. For congregation that is mission chance to address those whose faith is poor or haven't.



In August, as well we organized Ignatius spirituality weekend retreats at the neighbourhood church. There were not much interest from the congregation, but we hope that this event and spirituality will find its place in the lives of congregation members.

We look forward to seeing you.

Greetings to all of you from brother and sisters in Valka.

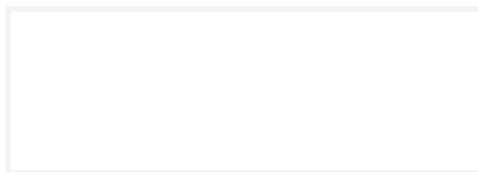
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Welcome Home!

**Join us for worship
together in person.**

**Sunday mornings at 9:00 am
in the sanctuary or watch the livestream on
[facebook.com/GraceAlbertLea](https://www.facebook.com/GraceAlbertLea)**

See “Information & Guidelines” on page 7