

+ GRACENOTES +

June 2020



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK:

Come, Holy Spirit



As this issue of Grace Notes reaches you, we will have celebrated The Day of Pentecost via our Sunday Zoom Service or the E-mail Service edition with MP3 recording.

The events that followed the miraculous outpouring of the Spirit are recorded by Luke in chapter two of the Book of Acts. The events of that first Pentecost include the bold witness of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by the disciples. Such witnessing by the power of the Spirit caused over three thousand people to repent and be baptized in the Name of the Crucified and Risen Christ. In receiving our Lord through water and the Word, they, too, received the gift of the Spirit just as Jesus had promised. Of those early Christians, Luke writes: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42)."

Pentecost, however, is more than a celebration of a past event. Pentecost is for the ***here and now—for you and me.*** In his explanation to the Third Article of The Apostolic Creed, Luther writes:

"The Holy Ghost has called ***me*** by the Gospel, enlightened ***me*** with his gifts, sanctified and kept ***me*** in the one true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian Church and keeps it in the one true faith: in which Christian Church he daily and richly forgives all sins ***to me and all believers***, and will at the last day raise up ***me and all the dead***, and give ***me and all believers*** in Christ eternal life.

That same Holy Spirit, poured out on the first disciples, is poured out on us through water and the Word in baptism—the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies each of us with his gifts—just as he did the disciples and followers of our Lord.

Because of that gift, we have a hope for the here and now as well as the future—for the power of the Spirit is the power for living ... for the assurance of our forgiveness ... for the certainty of our life in Christ now and in eternity. The Spirit's presence in us and among us is the power for witness and service in our Lord's Name.

As we continue the celebration of Pentecost during the days and Season of Pentecost, may our hearts be opened anew to the presence of the Spirit and his gifts in our lives, especially during these COVID-19 days. May he kindle in us the fire of his love and strengthen our lives for service in this corner of God's Vineyard called Grace/Ashland.

In His Love & Service

+ Pastor Jim

Parish News

What's Happening at Grace

Grace Lutheran Ministry

Financial Status

Jan – April 2020

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH					
FINANCIAL PLAN STATUS		Apr-20			
Gen. Fund Plan vs Contributions		YTD THRU		2020 PLAN	
		APRIL	APRIL	% of PLAN	TOTAL
General Fund Contributions	\$13,680.00	\$57,580.10	35.78%		
Plan Offering Goal	\$13,411.81	\$53,647.24	33.33%	\$160,941.70	
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Over (-under) Plan goal	\$268.19	\$3,932.86			
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Contributions vs Expenditures					
General Fund Contributions	\$13,680.00	\$57,580.10	35.78%	\$160,941.70	
General Fund expenditures	\$12,870.56	\$48,237.20	29.97%		
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Net	\$809.44	\$9,342.90			

A Message from the Financial Secretaries at Grace Lutheran Church

Our message regarding pledge cards

Thank you to those of you who submitted your pledge cards. In a year when we are in the process of calling a new pastor it was important for us to get a handle on the commitments from our congregation. Having this information can make better financial decisions as a part of that call process. As always, you continue to amaze us in your support and commitment to the financial ministry of Grace.



If you have not submitted a card and want to do so, please contact the church office and they can send you a card which will be forwarded to the Financial Secretary and Treasurer as they continue to build out a budget. As always, the information you send will be held in confidentiality. Again, this is just a tool for us to build a budget and gain an understanding of the commitment we can make to a new pastor.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide us in our search and continue to lead a pastor to Grace to partner with us as we share the love of Christ.

Financial Update on the sound system:

Total amount needed to implement the new system: \$15,000

Total special offerings given to date: \$15,000

Balance needed to pay for the system upgrade: \$ -0-



We're thankful that we've been gifted the amounts needed to upgrade the sound system, and if people are interested in providing funds for future needs, they are welcome to do so. Video components will be purchased at a later date.

Answers to some of your questions:

1. Why are we upgrading the systems?

- a. Our current sound system is aging. Our Grace team has done a great job patching it together, but the time has come that it simply needs to be replaced.
- b. Likewise, our Wi-Fi is out of date and no longer functional. We need to replace that system as well.
GREAT NEWS: a generous gift has allowed us to COMPLETE this project!!!

2. What system improvements are included in the replacement of the current systems?

- a. The new sound system will enhance the quality of the sound system in our sanctuary.
- b. We will now have more access to better listening devices for the hearing impaired who attend our services.
- c. With upgraded systems we will now be able to record both the audio and video portion of our services.
- d. The audio/video recordings can now be uploaded to the updated Grace website.
- e. Wi-Fi has been expanded to cover all areas of the Grace campus: the sanctuary, church offices, meeting rooms and the church basement.

3. Why are these upgrades significant?

- a. We have had a good response to the Zoom services. It gives members who are not able to physically attend church services at Grace a better connection with the Grace community. We plan to continue Zoom or some other form of video when services resume at Grace.
- b. We know that members who have left our area may like to stay in contact with the Grace church family. Having services online provides them with the opportunity to "visit" us occasionally.
- c. There are some people who just are not comfortable walking into churches. Giving them access online they can experience the Grace family: our message, our music ministry, an introduction to the Grace family, the work we are doing in the community. Interacting with us virtually provides them the opportunity to see how Grace is doing God's work in our community and beyond.

We listened to you as we developed our long-term plan for Grace. This was one of the long-range goals. Due to physical distancing, caused by the current pandemic, we have accelerated our implementation of this goal.

As always if you have any other unanswered questions talk to a member of your church council.

For Grace church council, Mark Meyer



MORE NEWS ON THE CALL PROCESS-JUNE 2020

The Call/Interview Committee interviewed Pastor Adam Matheny on May 16. Pastor Matheny is an Associate Pastor at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Mankato, MN with approximately four years' experience since his graduation from Concordia St. Louis Seminary. We must decide if Pastor Matheny's experience and views are consistent with the requirements established by our congregation in the recent Congregational Survey and Cottage Meetings. The Call Committee will deliberate on this in the near future.

We have also requested another list of potential pastoral candidates from the Northwest District. Bishop Linnemann responded that we are in the que and will receive a list in the near future.

Finally, we have received information on Patrick Moore who is currently the Director of Christian Education (DCE) at Concordia Lutheran Church in Lakewood, CO. His goal is to become a pastor by completing requirements of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program at Concordia St. Louis Seminary. He would serve as a Vicar at Grace while completing most of his required coursework online. He would be supervised/mentored by an ordained pastor while completing his education. We will gain a better understanding of the SMP program and then decide if we should interview DCE Patrick Moore.

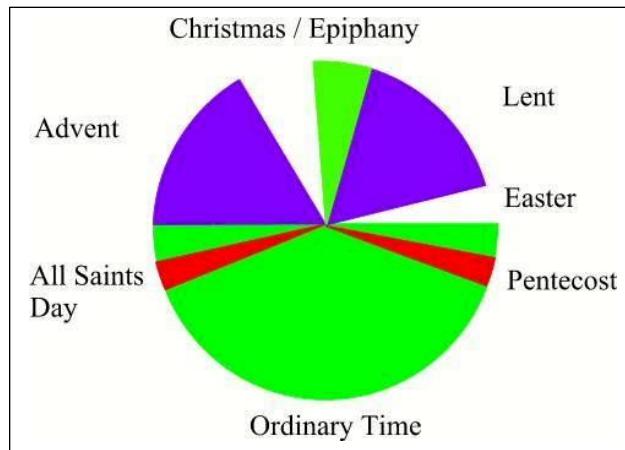
Our Journey Continues- Call/Interview Committee

THE TIME of THE CHURCH

PENTECOST

The Ordinary Time

The Season after Pentecost begins the day after Pentecost and ends with midday prayer on the Saturday (the Saturday closest to/following St. Andrew's Day, November 30) which begins The Advent Season (the beginning of a new Year of Grace).



The Sundays after Pentecost (aka "The Long Green Season") make up the longest portion of The Church's Year of Grace. This is the Time of The Church during which we focus on growing together in the life of the Holy Trinity.

On the First Sunday after Pentecost, The Church celebrates The Feast of The Holy Trinity. We are baptized into only one Name, but that Name is "of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit." There is only one Name, only one God—but there are three persons: The Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit. On Trinity Sunday, we confess the great mystery of the Holy and Blessed Trinity.

The Sundays of this time of The Church Year are known and numbered as Sundays after Pentecost. Picking up on Pentecost as the season of growth, they are often referred to as the Green Sundays. The readings focus on the life of Christ in his Church. We hear Jesus teaching his disciples and healing the faithful as we too are called to "come and follow."

Because the Pentecost Season is part of the "ordinary time" (The Church's Half of the Year of Grace), lesser festivals are appointed to be observed and celebrated. When these Saints' Days or Commemorations fall on Sundays, The Church highlights them as teaching moments about the breadth of The Church's life and work that enable us to reflect on how we worship, witness, and serve "with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven."

On the Last Sunday after Pentecost, The Feast of Christ the King, The Church gives voice to the joyful hope of our Lord's reign and his coming again at the end of time.

During the Sundays after Pentecost, the church is decorated in green, the color of growing plants. The color marks the season of growth in living in our Baptismal promise and receiving the Lord's Word and Sacraments.



"How Important Is It, Anyway?"

May 12, 2020

Acts 17:16-18 - Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So, he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

There's a bit of humor tucked away in this story of Paul's visit to Athens. Some of the locals were trying to figure out what he was up to. They finally concluded that he was preaching about foreign gods—not just one, but more than one. How did they get that idea? Well, Luke says it was because "he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection." It looks like Paul mentioned the resurrection so often that some people decided he was preaching two gods—one named Jesus, and one named "Resurrection"!

Of course, we know better. But this tells us that Paul spent a lot of time talking about the resurrection—probably more than we're used to hearing, even in church. Of course, it's important. But is it *that* important?

Yes—yes, it is! But why? There are so many reasons, and here are just a few. When God raised Jesus from the dead, it was the first real proof that our long nightmare of death and destruction was ending. Here, finally, was the first human being who had passed through death and come out the other side—never to die again. That's good news!

But there's more. By raising Jesus from the dead, God made it clear that everything Jesus said and did had God's stamp of approval. God would never raise a liar from the dead! But He raised Jesus. And so God says to the whole world, "This is My dear Son. Listen to Him!" (See Luke 9:35.)

There's even more. We know that Jesus died on the cross to take away the power of sin, guilt, and evil over our lives. His death set us free. But forgiveness is invisible. If Jesus had stayed dead, how could we be sure He had set us free from sin? We would always wonder, wouldn't we? But not now—because He has risen from the dead, and many eyewitnesses have seen Him. And the very first thing He said to the disciples gathered together in that locked room was "Kairete!" which is usually translated as "Greetings!" But if we take it literally, it means "Rejoice!"

Now that Jesus has risen from the dead, we have every reason to rejoice. The One we love the most in the world is alive again, and we will never lose Him. And He has opened paradise to us and to everyone who belongs to Him. This is what the resurrection means.



We are so incredibly thankful for the friendships and family we found in Grace Lutheran Church. Coming into a new state, where we didn't know anyone, and newly married, it was a blessing to find this church and its wonderful community. Our time spent in the music ministry is one that we will cherish for a long time, and we think it will be hard to find another community as caring and loving as Grace is.

Thank you for taking us into your family these past three years and supporting us through our marriage, Gracie's master program, and the passing of Joshua's father. We also know that our family is so thankful that we had this community to lean on and be a part of.

We also with deep gratitude want to thank you all for your generous gift as we start this next chapter in our lives here in Colorado. We were both overwhelmed by your generosity and giving spirits, and are incredibly thankful to receive such a gift during this time. It was enormously helpful for our move and creating a new home for us here in Colorado.

We will miss making music with everyone on Sunday and enjoying fellowship hour afterwards. Thank you for being our friends and our Oregon family. We hope to visit sometime soon.

Much love,

Josh & Gracie Ewert

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

I watched him playing around my door,
my neighbor's little boy of four.
I wondered why a little child would choose
to wear his Dad's old worn-out shoes.

I saw him try with all his might
To make the laces snug and tight.
I smiled to see him walk, and then
he'd only step right out again.

I heard him say his voice so glad,
"I want to be just like my Dad."
I hope his Dad his steps would choose,
safe for his son to wear his shoes.



And then a shout, and cry of joy
a "Hello, Dad!" and a "Hi-ya, boy!
They walked along in measured stride,
Each face aglow with love and pride.

"What have you done today, my lad?"
"I tried to wear your old shoes, Dad.
They're big but when I am a man
I'll wear your shoes, I know I can."

They stopped and stood there hand in hand
he saw his son's tracks in the sand.
His words—a prayer—came back to me,
"Lord, let my steps lead him to Thee."



OR District Grant News

Recently I sent a list of the 21 proposed Mission Grants for the 2021-2022 Biennium of the Oregon District LWML to the Women of Grace LWML. Since there will be no physical convention, all business will have to be done online. Each recipient was asked to choose eight of the 21 Grants. I received 13 replies. The two following Grants received the most votes:

#4. Carrying Christ into the Heart of the Hispanic Home: \$6,500.00. The Lutheran Latino Ministries is a recognized Service Organization of the LC-MS. Since 2003 Deaconess Marta Luna has worked with LLM with her husband until his passing in 2017. Grant funds would help ensure ample time for Deaconess Marta to disciple families and keep her working at a full-time level by helping provide sustaining support for salary, mileage and communication.

#14. Lutheran Curriculum for St. John Lutheran School: \$3,000.00. The St. John Lutheran School in Eagle Point, OR has been offering faith-based education to the Southern OR region for over 30 years. It currently serves 54 students from preschool through fourth grade. This Grant will help continue instruction in biblical doctrine as professed in the LC-MS.

As votes are received and compiled by the District Board, I will highlight those funded throughout the year. These Grants are solely funded by our MITE contributions.

TO YOUR HEALTH – Health Ministry Page

To promote Christ-centered health & wellness

Here are some very important safety tips for you and your family members. Please read them carefully and incorporate them into your summer activities. They'll help to minimize or prevent common summer emergencies.

General Precautions

- ALWAYS carry a First-Aid Kit in your car.
 - If you do not exercise regularly, do not participate in strenuous activity—especially in the heat.
 - Take frequent rest breaks and avoid strenuous activity during the hottest time of the day.
 - Limit sun exposure and use sunscreen. Don't forget to reapply sunscreen as needed/directed.
 - Avoid standing or sitting for long periods of time. Point and flex your feet at your ankles to assist venous return to your heart.
 - Eat and drink food and fluids that contain sodium and electrolytes: apple juice is a good choice; commercially made sports drinks also contain sodium, glucose and potassium but usually cost more.

Water Safety

- Supervise children continuously who are in or near water.
 - Never swim alone.
 - Keep appropriate water rescue and flotation devices, including life jackets on boats and around the swimming pool, lake or river.
 - Don't drink alcoholic beverages while in or around the water.
 - Nearly 80% of all boating fatalities are the result of drowning. Be careful!



Snake Precautions

- Use extreme caution in areas known to be the habitat of snakes: swamps, caves, rocks, ledges, tall grass, wood piles, bushes, heavy underbrush, and crevices.
 - Snakes are most active on warm evenings.
 - Wear boots and protective clothing, such as rugged trousers and heavy gloves.
 - Use walking sticks or trekking poles while walking or hiking. Don't hike alone. Always let someone know where you are hiking and when you plan to return.
 - If you encounter a snake, don't handle or harass it. Stay out of striking distance. Remember that young venomous snakes are dangerous too. A dead snake can still bite for up to an hour after death.

It's important to have an emergency kit in your car. The American Red Cross recommends that you include the following items:

*A battery or solar powered radio

A Swiss army knife, extra sunblock, sanitizers—

*A flashlight and extra batteries

wipes and/or lotion, and insect repellant

*Extra bottles of water and non-perishable foods such as granola bars, raisins in the trunk of your car.

Until next month, “Here’s to your health!”



Feeding Un-housed Persons

What a gift! A kind and generous Grace person gave an anonymous \$100 bill to help feed the homeless last week.

Three Grace members, Ilaena, Krista and Nan have helped to prepare and pack healthy lunches for 70 homeless persons on Mondays from March – June 15. These meals are delivered (through OHRA) daily to 4 different parks in Ashland where guests pick them up, along with a bottle of water.

This meal project is short term. Look for information on developing plans for feeding homeless residents in the summer and fall. Meantime **the Ashland Emergency Food Bank** is serving this population. Grace has been and continues to be a strong support for the Food Bank. We can continue to help them with our prayers, donations of food and finances.

Those Who Serve in June

Lay Ministers

June 7 John Gisclon
June 14 Ray Kistler
June 21 Pat Meierhoff
June 28 Bob Janssen

Lay Readers

June 7 Ilaena Hepford
Eping Hung
June 14 Jan Kabel
Mark Meyer
June 21 Patrick Henry
Krista Hepford
June 28 Gary Plano
Nan Gunderson

June Birthday's



June 2 Patricia Meierhoff
June 6 Ray Kistler
June 8 Bert Davis
June 12 Maggie Wells
June 15 Rob Palassou
June 16 Randy Fisher
June 21 Carole Moore
June 22 Teresa Jarvis
June 23 Mike Neely