

Grace Lutheran Church  
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## Grace Messenger

### April - May 2024

#### A NOTE FROM PASTOR ALTHEA

*If you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit.*

*So let us not grow weary in doing what is right,  
for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up.*

*So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all.*

*~Galatians 6:8b-10a~*

### The Jesus Way

Greetings to all Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

I recently learned of a high school classmate who passed away. Since I graduated, there have been several fellow graduates who have not made it passed their 20's or 30's. Death is difficult at any age. However, this recent classmate who passed was often made fun of and not everyone was friendly to her.

Easter is a season of death and resurrection. It's a season of letting go of negativity. It's a season of letting go of anything which draws us away from the ways of Christ, the ways of God's love.

My fellow classmates did not always show the young lady who passed, the love we are called to show our neighbors in God's Word. I cannot even be sure of how I treated her. It was a



#### STAFF AT GRACE

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor

Scott J. Breiner, Music Director

Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

Heidi Toth, Church Treasurer

Sandy Piskun, Ruth Bowden, Financial Secretaries

Joseph Martin, Church Council President

Mary Goodman, Church Council Vice President

Dale Kredatus, Church Council Secretary

Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

long time ago. Teenage years can be rough on all youth, but that's no excuse. I know my friends were friendly with her, but I don't remember whether or not I treated her with love. I can only hope I didn't ever contribute to making her feel outcast from our peers.

None of us are perfect. Many of us often struggle as adults to feel like we belong and feel cared about. Being outcast, feeling on the "outside" can be a very lonely place.

In this Easter season, I pray we can all find ways to remember to extend the love of Christ to others and even to forgive ourselves for our own imperfections. In this season of death and resurrection, let us all find ways to return to the Lord and extend the love shown by Christ in the Gospels to people from all walks of life!

Let us not grow weary in our Christian duty to love one another, forgive one another, and forgive ourselves of our shortcomings. Christ carries our burdens so that we may lay them at the cross. Christ taught us the ways of God's kingdom that we may extend the love of God far and wide as long as we have time on earth.

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

*Blessings to all this Easter and always,*

*Pastor Althea +*

"Who breaks the power of sin and darkness  
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings  
This is amazing grace, this is unfailing love  
That You would take my place  
That You would bear my cross  
You would lay down your life that I would be set free  
Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me"  
~This is Amazing Grace by Jeremy Riddle~



## **CATECHISM SCHEDULE**

4/7/24 LAST CATECHISM CLASS AT REFORMATION 4:00PM  
4/28/24 AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM FOR ALEX & ZAVIER

## **FELLOWSHIP SPONSORS FOR 2024**

April	4/14/24	Council
May	5/12/24	Choir
June	6/9/24	100th Anniversary Spring Fling
July	7/14/24	Summer Break
August	8/11/24	Summer Break
September	9/8/24	Worship & Music Committee
October	10/13/24	Ushers
November	11/10/24	Facilities Committee
December	12/15/24	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala

## **STRONGER TOGETHER** **Grief Support Group**

This group meets every other **Monday, at 7:00 PM (4/8, 4/22, 5/6, 5/20)** and every other **Thursday, at 2:00 PM (4/11, 4/25, 5/9, 5/23)** All who have lost loved ones are invited to attend on the day and time that fits best with your schedule. Contact the church office for more information or to confirm the next meeting times.

### **WORSHIP SPONSORSHIPS: FLOWERS, CANDLES, WINE, BULLETINS, MUSIC**

We are in need of flower sponsors, as well as other sponsorships for 2024. The sign-up charts are back up on the bulletin board across from the elevator. If you are unable to get there to sign up, you may also call the church office, and Corinne will be happy to sign you up for the dates you wish to be a sponsor.

### **2024 WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE**

<u>April</u>		<u>May</u>	
4/7	Edna Cordery	5/5	Ruth Bowden
4/14	June Jordan	5/12	Corinne Rhodes
4/21	Kevin Thomas	5/19	Meg Markkanen
4/28	James Ehrhardt	5/26	Meg LaSpina
		3/31	Mary Ann Gring

## **BABY SHOWER**

### **for Shore Memorial NICU**

will be hosted by Grace Lutheran Church along with our brothers and sisters from Reformation Lutheran Church, Absecon

**Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 PM**

Lunch will be served for Shore Medical Center nurses and guests.

Donations needed: New clothing (preemie-2T), diapers, knitted and crocheted clothing and blankets

**Deadline for donations: Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**



## **OBSERVATIONS FROM OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR & ORGANIST, SCOTT BREINER**



During my most recent Covid diagnosis, I had the opportunity to zoom in on our worship service. I have been director of music/organist for over 15 years. When I first arrived, I insisted that choir would not wear robes. Some of my reasoning for this decision was as follows:

- They would need to be washed and ironed.
- They would be misplaced.
- They would not be properly maintained.
- Wearing robes would make the choir more “exclusive” instead of being a part of the Grace congregation (inclusive).

Some choir members wanted to process every Sunday and I knew that this would also be problematic.

Our congregation has lost many members over my time here and a lot of those good ole souls used to fill in the front pews. Interesting observation! Why is it that people who attend sporting events and concerts usually want to sit as close to the “action” as possible, but when attending church, tend to sit far from the action? Our sanctuary is fairly long and not very large and when watching the service online, it looks very empty to those watching!

I would like to invite you all to move closer to the cross (where the action takes place) and also get a bit closer to me and the choir, who are all members of the family at Grace. Let the online viewers see for themselves that Grace is a “close-knit” family who enjoys worshipping “together” as close to the “action” as they can get.

## **REPORT FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT, JOE MARTIN**

Council met on 3/22/2024. Council agreed to use a new, incoming memorial gift for the upcoming Capital Improvement Project. The project will include new storm windows on the sanctuary, painting the outside trim of the church, beginning the process of replacing fire doors as required by the state, and finishing the work begun on the upstairs kitchen.

It was then agreed and made church policy to follow the recommendation to Financial Support Team to change the distribution formula of any other new undedicated gift monies to: 70% to the General Fund, 20% to the Endowment Fund and 10% to the Capital Improvement Fund. (The previous formula was 80% Endowment, 10% General and 10% Capital Improvement.)

Council has started the process of creating a committee to oversee the Endowment Fund. As the financial health of the church will become more and more dependent on income produced by this fund, it was felt that a team of 4 or 5 members with financial and investment background or abilities would be invaluable to our continued well-being. Any members interested on helping with this, please contact the office. This is a work in progress and the congregation will be kept informed as it proceeds.

On Sunday, March 24, Pastor Althea announced that she would sadly be leaving Grace to move closer to her family and take a position in Lebanon, PA. Church Council wants to assure the congregation that it has been in contact with the NJ Synod and all are working on making sure that pastoral care will continue as much as possible. The Synod's procedure to search for a new pastor does not formally begin until after the last day of Pastor Althea's official duties here at Grace. Council will then formally elect a Call Committee of six voting members of the congregation. The term of that committee will terminate upon the installation of the newly called pastor.

## **100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

We had over 90 people in attendance for our worship service with Bishop Tracie Bartholomew. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful kick-off luncheon following worship, catered by Gregory's Restaurant: Elite Fleet!

The fun continues with our next celebratory event:



### **Community Event**

**Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>**

following the 10:15 AM worship service.

A picnic lunch will be served outside (weather permitting) including hotdogs, strawberries, ice cream and more!

Stay tuned for more detailed information as the planning of this event unfolds.

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

## **Oktoberfest 2024**



We hope you will join us for  
our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual German Festival on  
**Friday, September 27, 2024**

Invite family! Invite friends! Invite neighbors!  
Stay tuned for details about our upcoming trip to  
Germany in April 2025!

# PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following people in your daily prayers:

**Members of Grace:** Debbie K., Renee P., Carole T., Bettie C., Bob C., Diana M., Shirley B., Fritz F., Bruce H., Bonnie C., Ruth K., Lois R.

**Our family and friends:** Eileen, Jeff (Ruth T.), Stephanie B., Marilyn, Margie, Ric (Ruth B.), Rinata, Patti R., Kayla, Kelly, Lorna & Luna (Clare B.), Bob, Kim (Jim F.), Savannah, Houston (June J.), Shirley (Debbie K.), Bob & Lou (Dale K.), Jim, Stephanie, George, Jodie, Kim (Meg L.), Tim (Diana M.), Karen, Ashley, Patricia, Terry (Renee P.), Ralph, Catherine, Sal, Ana, Mark (Corinne R.), Rob, Dorrie (Marlene D.), Carrie (Ray H.), Sue (Carol L.), Christine K., Demetri, Amy, and Abigail, Jayden, Robin, Shawn, Jim, and Vicki, (Bob K.), Hellen & Family & the staff and children of CICRIN, Patricia (Pastor Althea), Marilyn (Sue R.), Linda (Edna C. & Patty D.)

**Those serving our country:** Mike Bilello, ANG, Cainan Johnson, USAF, & Daniel Casner, 3rd USN

**Woodview Estates:** Lorraine Moore

**The Shores at Wesley Manor:** Eleanore Guire

Please notify Pastor Althea or the church office of any changes or additions to our prayer list.





### April

4/5 Gary Schafer  
4/9 Mary Goodman  
4/11 Zavier Shea  
4/14 Dorothea Kyle  
4/15 Joey Landy  
4/16 Carol Spatz  
4/17 Leigh Goff  
4/19 Wendy Dolan  
4/19 Keith Hoelker  
4/24 Sue Johnson  
4/25 Tara Landy

### May

5/1 Jayne Lare  
5/2 Shirley Blankenship  
5/3 Mike Berenotto  
5/5 Melissa Kleva  
5/7 John Miller  
5/10 Carol Dotts  
5/11 Dale Kredatus  
5/15 Carol Gallagher  
5/17 Joe Friedrich  
5/17 Charles Young  
5/18 Judith Hoffert  
5/24 Michael LaSpina  
5/26 Ruth Traa  
5/27 Tony Berenotto  
5/28 Laura Siteman  
5/31 Margarete Groves



### April

4/8 Jim & Edna Cordery  
4/25 Inger & Michael Reynolds

### May

5/1 Kathi & Rich Krattenmaker  
5/12 Lillian & Charles Young  
5/21 Chris Dennis & Stephen Ferguson

