

Grace Lutheran Church
11 East Dawes Avenue
Somers Point, NJ 08244
www.gracelutheranspnj.org

Church Office: 609-927-3082
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Food Pantry: 609-927-9982

Fall Grace Messenger October-November 2024

A NOTE FROM PASTOR WENDOLYN



On a recent Saturday, our Church hosted a booth at the Good Old Days festival. Chris Dennis planned and set up, Corinne bought our activities and hand-outs, and Grace members gave an hour or two to share God's love with passers-by. It might not sound like much - we helped kids and youth to color a shell, and we invited adults to tie a prayer ribbon onto a display. And yet, there were moments that were truly Grace-filled. As a Pastor, I got to hear ...

"Oh, you're the Church with the Food Pantry! and the Cookie Walk!"

"I've been wondering when I can bring my young kids to Church;
but I know they can't sit still."

"Can I come to your Church if I don't know if I believe in God?"

"Can we come to your Church if we're gay?"

"Could you pray for my grandson? He just joined the military." (As tears began)
You know, these moments weren't miraculous - but they couldn't have happened anywhere other than that booth. None of those people were going to call the Church, or show up on their own. But because we were there and created a space for them to chat, we had over 1,000 contact minutes where we got to look people in the eye, and assure people that God - and we - love them just as they are. When

STAFF AT GRACE

Rev. Wendolyn Trozzo, Vice Pastor

Scott J. Breiner, Music Director

Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

Heidi Toth, Church Treasurer

Ruth Bowden, Sandy Piskun, Financial Secretaries

Joseph Martin, Church Council President

Mary Goodman, Church Council Vice President

Dale Kredatus, Church Council Secretary

Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

kids couldn't think of anything to color on their shell, we would ask them what they like - colors or animals or hobbies - and as they colored we got to be their Sunday School teachers or faith mentors, even if only for 5 minutes. As a pastor, these were moments of grace: I got to tell a mom that it's ok for her daughter to miss Church once a month for Cheer, because she could share God's love at that event. I got to tell kids that God loves the pet fish that they were coloring. I got to assure people that we would pray over their ribbons that had their hopes and fears.



Additionally, we got to invite these people to worship and to our upcoming benefit concert and Oktoberfest. I got to walk around to other booths and chat about how our Church can connect with what matters to them, and as I wandered, I noticed that we were the only Church there offering that simple, healing time with those hundreds of people. I was so grateful to be part of a congregation that said, as the mermaid Ariel sang, "[we] want to go where the people are"! Thank you for being a Church that welcomes all people, but doesn't wait for them to come find us. Mark your calendars and help us plan for future festivals, both in our Church home and out in our communities, so that we can bring Grace to those who need it!

Peace,

Pastor Wendolyn

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION/GREEN TEAM

somersptgreenteam@gmail.com

Meetings are held: 1st Monday of each month

Location: Council Chambers at City Hall

1 West New Jersey Avenue

Somers Point, NJ

Meetings are open to the public to discuss relevant environmental issues impacting Somers Point. Not from Somers Point? See sustainablejersey.com to look for a team in your town.

WELCA

WELCA meets the second Tuesday of each month at 12:00 PM in the Church Lounge to plan service projects and events for our church and community. ALL women are welcome to attend!

REPORT FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT, JOE MARTIN

Council met with both the Call Committee and Bishop Bartholomew on September 19th. The Call for a new pastor proceeds. Please see Stephen Gring's report in this newsletter for details. Pastor Wendolyn will stay with us now as an interim Pastor during this process. As an interim Pastor we will have her for 20-25 hours a week to provide us with Pastoral services to serve our congregation. We are all so grateful to have her caring experience to be with us during this process.

The church painting and storm windows project, as well as work related to the fire department's required upgrades will be occurring in the upcoming weeks.

Council approved the purchase of 2 new computers for the church. These will be coordinated with Corinne and Heidi to meet the needs of our office and Treasurer.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

The new Church Directory is almost completed! It will be ready to distribute soon! We will have an electronic version, as well as hard copies, and will let you know as soon as they are ready!

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Grief Group - All are Welcome
Whether you've lost a job, a loved one,
health, relationships, or a dream,
we're here to help you as we support one another.

Grace Lutheran Church
2nd & 4th Thursday of each month at 7pm October-January
Free and Confidential Small Group Care

To reserve a spot, call the Church office at 609-927-3082 or email:
office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net

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

We are in need of flower sponsors, as well as other sponsorships for the remainder of the year. The sign-up charts are 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.

FELLOWSHIP SPONSORS FOR 2024

October	10/13/24	The Trozzo Family
November	11/10/24	Facilities Committee
December	12/15/24	100 th Anniversary Gala

2024 WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE

	<u>October</u>		<u>November</u>
10/6	June Jordan	11/3	Ruth Bowden
10/13	Edna Cordery	11/10	Corinne Rhodes
10/20	Kevin Thomas	11/17	Meg Markkanen
10/27	James Ehrhardt	11/24	Meg LaSpina

CALL COMMITTEE (REPORTED BY STEPHEN GRING, CHAIR)

Bishop Tracey Bartholomew held a combined meeting with Council and the Call Committee on September 19. The Bishop presented a very comprehensive overview of the call process and reviewed the Ministerial Profile Document. Call Committee members were available to ask numerous questions about the process.

Bishop Bartholomew indicated that the process designed to find a suitable candidate could take a year or more depending upon the applicant pool. When final revisions to the MPD are received, the formal process will begin.

The Call Committee will meet in mid October to develop the interview process. In the meantime, the Bishop will begin to solicit applicants; upon determining a suitable match for Grace, the applicant's profile will be referred to the Call Committee for an initial review.

SUPPORT COMMITTEE-GIVING WITH GRACE

In the last episode we discussed the importance of having an up-to-date will. In this issue of Giving with Grace we will begin a discussion of the different types of property that can be given.

Cash:

A gift of cash is always a welcomed gift. Cash is that gift which keeps the door open and the heat on in the church. It is the simplest and most direct way to contribute to Grace. You may designate a gift to be used for a special purpose, or donate to the general good will of the community. Any unrestricted gift will find many uses.

The out-of-pocket cost of the gift of cash is less than the dollar amount given because of the charitable deduction that is created by the gift.

Example: A person who pays 28 percent of their income in taxes, could make a gift of \$1,000 and the actual after-tax cost of that gift is only \$720.

Recognizing that tax saving, could you afford to increase your weekly gift?

In the next issue, watch for a discussion of the double benefit of giving **Appreciated Securities or Other Appreciated Personal Property**. It is always good advice when considering any gift transaction to consult your tax advisor as to how that gifting strategy might affect your personal situation.

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

Please visit, like, and follow our Facebook page, titled **Grace Lutheran Friends!** You can also find us on Instagram! We would like to start livestreaming our church services on Facebook. This would help us to get more viewers and allow more people to see us and the ministries and social events we provide. In order to do this, we need at least 100 followers. All you have to do is follow Grace Lutheran Friends on Facebook, then invite all of the people on your friend list to like and follow our page, following these easy steps:

Search for **Grace Lutheran Friends**– NOT Grace Lutheran Church– and tap on it.

Tap on followers (next to likes and under the title)

Tap on invite others.

Tap on Select All.

Tap on Send Invites (at the bottom)

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Pastor Wendolyn will be hosting a new member orientation on **Sunday, October 6 at 9:00 AM**. Anyone who wishes to become a member of our Grace Lutheran Church family is invited to attend. New members will be installed on **Sunday, October 27, at the 10:15 AM worship service**.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Pastor Wendolyn and her dog, Lance, invite you...



Do you have a furry, feathery, or scaly family member?

Bring them (or a photo) and a lawn chair to the

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 6 at 4pm

Grace Lutheran Church

We will have a short outdoor worship service with treats and a commemorative ribbon for your pet. Friends and neighbors, stuffed animals, and pets of all kinds are welcome!

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!" (Psalm 150:6)

FEED THE NORTHEAST

Thrivent is sponsoring Feed the Northeast 2024!

If our congregation can gather 500 food items in the month of October, Thrivent will send the food pantry an additional \$500! What a great tool in our battle against food insecurity in our communities!



SEAMAN'S INSTITUTE

The Grace Stitchers are working hard to make essential items for the men & women working at sea during Christmas. This Christmas at Sea Donation Drive will take place during the month of October, and your donations are very much needed and appreciated!

Items Needed:

Warm hats & scarves	Shaving Cream	Shampoo
Work socks, work gloves	Playing cards, puzzles	Combs
ChapStick	Hand lotion	Pens/Writing paper
Nail clippers	Toothbrush, toothpaste	Mini-sewing kit
Razors	Deodorant	Hard/boxed candy, gum, cough drops

CAPE SHORE CHORALE ANNUAL FUNDRAISER AT GRACE:

Saturday, November 2 from 6:00-9:00 PM.

"A NIGHT ON BROADWAY"

A \$50.00 donation per person includes Hors d'oeuvres, desserts, beverages and a night filled with musical entertainment!

*for more information and to reserve,
contact Claire Theis @ (609) 214-5323
or clairetheis@hotmail.com*



COOKIE WALK

Saturday, December 14, 2024

9:00 AM-12:00 PM or until sold out

Start gathering your favorite holiday cookie recipes, stocking up on those ingredients, and getting ready to bake, bake, bake!

We need cookies galore!

If you have any Christmas items you no longer need or want, you may donate them to be sold at the white elephant table at the Cookie Walk.

100TH ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

The Playmates concert was spectacular and very successful! Over \$1,500.00 was raised for the two local animal shelters. Thank you to the Playmates: Scott Breiner, Pamela Whitman, Rich Kurtz, and Jason Koenig, for sharing their amazing musical gifts and talents!

Please mark your calendars for our final event: **100th Anniversary Gala!**

Sunday, December 15 at the Atlantic City Country Club in Northfield

Bishop Bartholomew and former pastors of Grace Lutheran Church will be invited.

Final details will be made known as soon as they are determined.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

October

10/4 David Condliff
10/10 Greg Goff
10/15 Corinne Rhodes
10/16 Roberta Blumenthal
10/18 Bobby Grant
10/19 Joyce Bianco
10/23 Victoria Costello
10/23 Helen Fenske
10/25 Marge Wigglesworth
10/26 Ellie Hull
10/27 Phyllis Phelps
10/27 Joe Ruffenach
10/27 Karl Suckiel

November

11/6 Stephen Ferguson
11/7 Patricia Ogrodnek
11/8 Zavier Shea
11/9 Mary Lou Brown
11/9 Kevin Thomas
11/19 Scott Breiner
11/19 Helen Flamm
11/22 Barbara Hendrix
11/22 Gail Rink
11/24 Nancy Bilello
11/28 Mary Ann Gring
11/28 Michael Piskun, Jr.



October

10/9 Robert & Mary Ellen Bartholomew
10/10 Tom & Marge Wigglesworth
10/21 Kevin & Lise Heffron

November

11/18 Stephen & MaryAnn Gring
11/18 Karl & Aud Suckiel
11/24 Joe & Donna Martin
11/27 Frank & Linda Corradetti
11/27 Bruce & Elizabeth Hoelter