

Grace Lutheran Church
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Grace Messenger June-July-August 2023

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

THOUGHTS TO REFLECT ON FOR THE SUMMER

Summer is a season of growth. It is also a great time to reflect on how we can grow in our faith, and, as we grow in our faith, God has patience with us. God lovingly watches over us as we do our best following our own path in life.

A reading from 2nd Peter 3:8-10, 14-15:

⁸ But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be destroyed with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish, ¹⁵ and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

In the past few weeks, I have watched the newsfeed from the New Jersey Forest Fire Service on Facebook (which, in simple terms means I've been following news about the statewide forest fires). Then, of course, we all received news that Canada had several fires of its own getting out of control. It became quite a nuisance (and a hazard for many) that our air quality was poor for several days. I heard many complaints from people that we could not go about normal activities.

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STAFF AT GRACE

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor

Scott J. Breiner, Music Director

Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

Heidi Toth, Church Treasurer

Sandy Piskun, Ruth Bowden, Jill Welfield, Financial Secretaries

Stephen Gring, Church Council President

Mary Goodman, Church Council Vice President

Kevin Thomas, Church Council Secretary

It seems we were all being taught a lesson in patience. We had to have patience that things would eventually get better just like we did during COVID. We are lucky that this time everything took days, not years, to clear up. We are blessed that we do not live in a location which has more significant pollution on a regular basis. Urban areas in China and India often have poor air quality. I have family who lived in Shanghai for several years and spoke about how gross the air pollution was especially in the city.

We don't often like to be patient. However, we are reminded in scripture that God always has more than enough patience for us. We are blessed to have a faithful God who



never gives up on us. From the beginning of time, God had patience in creating the world, in creating each of us. God does not run out of patience, grace, or forgiveness. Christ's great love for us on the cross is the reason we are humbled and also celebrate our gift of patience and gift of grace from God.

I was thankful when I finally heard that our country and some other ally countries sent firefighters to help Canada fight the wildfires. Meanwhile, a few new fires started again around New Jersey.

We can be thankful that God has never-ending patience with us. We also hear God's call to stewardship of the earth. During a spring and summer season with so much of our forests being taken by fire and floods happening abroad, we are reminded that we are called to be good stewards of God's creation. We should not take our clean air, water, or wonderful forests for granted.

I hope you all have a safe and blessed summer season. Worship continues at 8:00am and 10:15am every Sunday. I hope to see you around.

*Enjoy the sunshine!
Summer Blessings to all,
Pastor Althea*

The Rev. Althea Albright

My summer office hours are typically Monday-Thursday 10:00am-1:00pm. Our Administrative Assistant, Corinne, and I will be spending the summer working from alternate rooms in the church due to the renovations of the office. Corinne will be happy to get us connected if anyone has pastoral care needs or concerns.

OUR MINISTRY TOGETHER IN 2023

The Council Corner by Stephen Gring, Council President

Renovation Project: 2023-2025

A Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, June 11 to approve the scope and financing for renovations to the church. The project was approved unanimously by the congregation and will take place over a two year period of time. The summary of work to be addressed is listed below.

2023– Renovation of Pastor’s office and church office with additional work to the surrounding areas that is inclusive of updating security for that general area.

2024– Renovations to the upstairs kitchen that will include the installation of new appliances.

2024-2025– Installation of new storm windows that will cover the existing vintage stained glass windows in the sanctuary. Additional work will be done to refurbish the window frames and other wooden structures. Exterior painting will also be done.

While monies for the two year project are in hand, members of the congregation are urged to continue their generous and thoughtful giving to the Capital Improvement Fund for the purpose of saving for future major work that may be necessary to maintain the church’s facilities.

A special thanks is extended to all the groups and individuals who helped in the development of the renovation project. It required several months of meetings and discussions to arrive at the final scope of the project.

We are very grateful to all the members of Grace who contributed to the financing of the project. With monies from bequests and contributions from active members, we are able to proceed with this important work. This will be a fitting legacy to the ongoing commitment of the congregation of Grace as we begin our celebratory 100th Year in 2024.

Investment Seminar on Tuesday, June 20, 2023

On June 20, the congregation has been invited to attend a special presentation by a representative of the Lutheran Church’s investment group (ELCA Pooled Trust Fund). The purpose of this meeting is to give members a better understanding of the current investment philosophy that is used to manage the Church Endowment Fund and allow members to raise questions about the current investment strategies. It is important to remember that the church is dependent upon the **interest** from the Endowment Fund to balance the annual operating budget of the church. However, as a Lutheran Church, we are very fortunate to have a substantial endowment fund that has been carefully managed over the years. Without this prudent stewardship, Grace would not be in the favorable financial status that exists today.

If you have any questions about the operation of the church, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or any member of the current Council.

Stephen Gring, Council President
Mary Goodman, Council Vice President
Kevin Thomas, Council Secretary
Heidi Toth, Council Treasurer
Jane Thomas

Jorge Perez
Gay Blohm
Robin Johnson
Chris Dennis
Dale Kredatus

GRACE PLACE FOOD PANTRY

Grace Place Food Pantry is open Monday – Thursday 9:00 - 11:30 a.m., and is closed the **first FULL** week of each month. Several area churches, various organizations and generous individuals supplement our monthly deliveries from CFBNJ. Many people donate fresh produce from their gardens during the summer months and it is a welcome addition to our weekly offerings.

Donations may be dropped off at the Food Pantry during their hours of operation or at the church office during regular office hours.

We can always use pasta, rice and pasta sides, mashed potatoes, cereal, oatmeal packets, Chef Boyardee, Tuna, Granola Bars, condiments (mayo, ketchup, mustard), toilet paper, soap, toothpaste and napkins. Please be mindful that **we cannot accept any food products that have expired or outdated dates or any items that have already been opened.**

Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Church is having a food drive for Grace Place on Saturday, June 24, 2023. If you are ready, willing and able we would really appreciate your help. Please arrive at Grace Lutheran Church by 10:15am.

It is and has always been a TEAM effort!

My sincere thanks,

Jim Cordery, Director, Grace Place

*For we are co-workers in God's service;
you are God's field, God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:9*

CHURCH DIRECTORY 2023

If you have not yet submitted your updated contact information for our church directory, please do so as soon as possible. We are getting ready to move into the next phase of the directory process, which is taking pictures of members and families. If you have a nice picture you would like to submit, please turn it in to the church office with your name and names of any family members on it. If you are not submitting your own picture, you will need to sign up for a date and time to do that. We will make an announcement of this as soon as we confirm the photography team's availability.

WORSHIP SPONSORSHIPS:

FLOWERS, CANDLES, WINE, BULLETINS



June

6/4 Everything: Dale Kredatus
6/11 Flowers: Mary Goodman, Candles: Linda Rihl
Wine/Bulletins: Roberta Blumenthal,
6/18 Flowers: Betty Cross, Candles,/Wine/Bulletins:
Gay Blohm
6/25 Flowers: Roberta Blumenthal, Candles: Linda Rihl

July

7/2 Candles/Bulletins/Wine: Jim Dolan
7/9 Flowers: Jim Dolan,
Candles/Bulletins/Wine: Thinschmidts
7/16 OPEN
7/23 Flowers: La Spina Family
7/30 Flowers: Roberta Blumenthal

August

8/6 Flowers: Dr. & Mrs. Carlson
8/13 Flowers: Mary Goodman
8/20 Flowers: Betty Cross
8/27 OPEN

September

9/3 Flowers: Brenda Traa
9/10 OPEN
9/17 OPEN
9/24 Flowers: Kathy Nigsch

WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE



June

6/4 Mary Ann Gring
6/11 Ruth Bowden
6/18 Meg Markkanen
6/25 Shirley Blankenship

August

8/6 Edna Cordery
8/13 Corinne Rhodes
8/20 Meg Markkanen
8/27 Shirley Blankenship

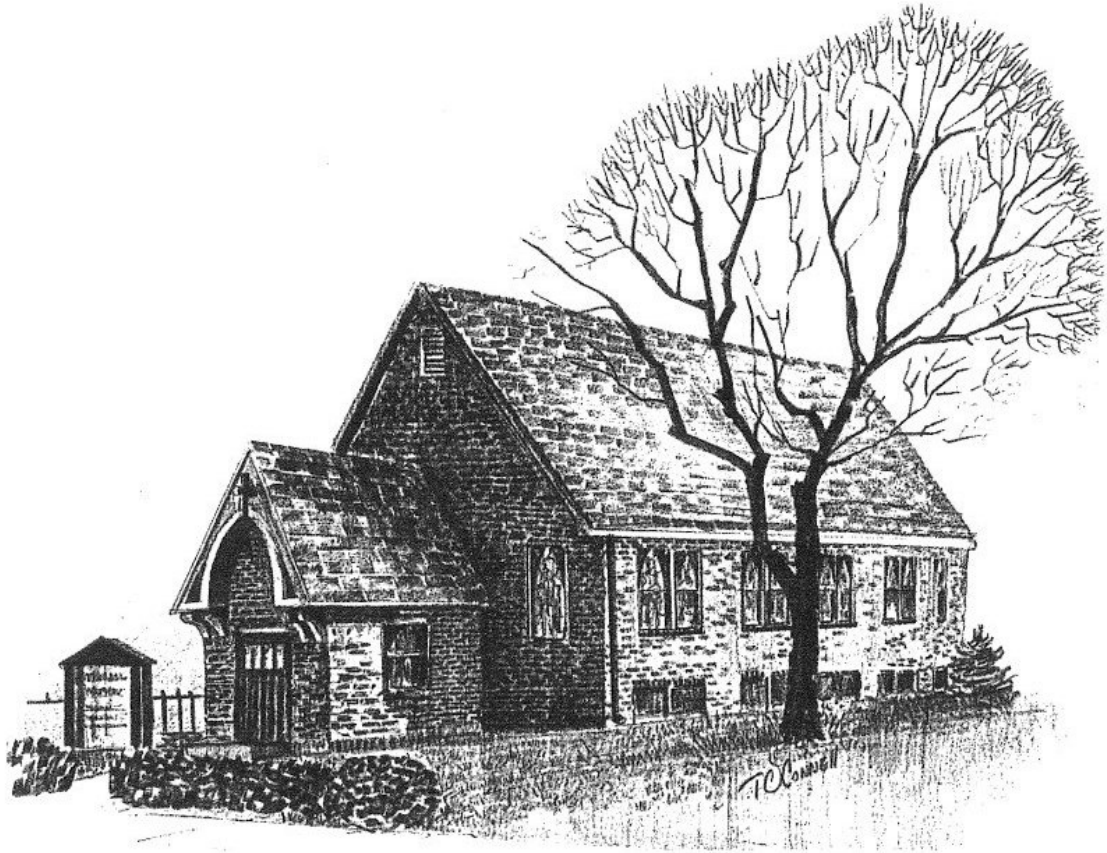
July

7/2 Meg La Spina
7/9 June Jordan
7/16 Kevin Thomas
7/23 Mary Ann Gring
7/30 Corinne Rhodes

September

9/3 Ruth Bowden
9/10 June Jordan
9/17 Kevin Thomas
9/24 Mary Ann

100th Anniversary of Grace Lutheran Church



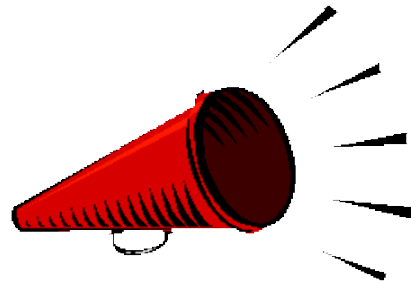
Report by Jim Foreman, Committee Chair

At our recent meeting, Diana McArdle remarked, “Grace is amazing!” This coming year, we at Grace Lutheran Church will be celebrating that fact. February 2025 marks the one hundredth anniversary, and we will kick off the celebration with a special service on the 25th with Bishop Bartholomew in attendance. Throughout the balance of the year there will be other event culmination in a gala dinner towards the end of the year. In between there will be other activities, such as a concert and family event during the summer. These events are in the planning stages. We hope to include families and members of the public at large.

Members of the committee include, John and Patty Dunn, Edna Cordery, Diana McArdle, Ruth Kruger, June Jordan, Stephen Gring, Jill Welfield, Bettie Cross, and Scott Breiner. Co-chairs are Pastor Althea Albright and Jim Foreman. Dick Fetter has been unable to attend but has provided suggestions and support. New members are also welcome.

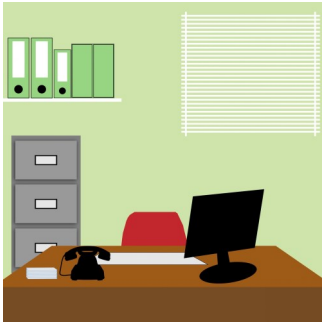
We will try to keep you updated as our plans progress. We are still open to new idea and suggestions. We will also be asking for artifacts and memorabilia for a display commemoration the 100th Anniversary.

Announcements



Ten new members were installed at Grace Lutheran Church on Sunday, April 30! We extend a warm welcome to our new members: Melissa, Johanna, Robert, Frank, James & Wendy, Victoria, Dale, Carol G., and Carol L.

OFFICE RENOVATION BEGINS



Office renovations are expected to begin at the end of June. During that time our office will most likely be temporarily relocated to the Conference Room. We will keep you updated as this process unfolds. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we pack, relocate and perform office duties from a new location this summer.

We received the following thank-you note from Funny Farm Animal Rescue for our March Joyful Noise Offering:

Hi Grace Lutheran Church!

Thank you so much for your kindness and thinking of the animals in need at the Funny Farm. Your donation is greatly appreciated.

Love,

Laurie and the Critters





CHAT AND CHEW

weekly Bible study
Thursdays at 12:00pm (noon)
starts June 29, 2023

Bring your own lunch and
enjoy informal scripture study
and discussion
led by Pastor Althea

SUMMER SPLASH DAY

Saturday, July 22, 2023
11:00am-2:00pm

Youth and families from our
church and community are
invited to participate in
outdoor water games,
activities, and enjoy food and
ice cream here at Grace!

For Admission:
Bring a non-perishable food
item for the FOOD PANTRY

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following people in your daily prayers:

Members of Grace: Debbie K., Renee P., Carol F., Carole T., Mary G.

Our family and friends: Eileen, Jeff (Ruth T.), Stephanie B. (Roberta B.),
Marilyn, Margie, Glenn & Deb (Ruth B.), Max, Rinata, The Martin Family (Clare B.),
Bob, Kim (Jim F.), Michal Ann, Savannah, Houston, Marilyn (June J.), Shirley (Debbie K.),
Bob & Lou (Dale K.), Jim, Elliot (Meg L.), Janice & Keyara (Diana M.),
Bernadette, Lou, Ron, Berl, Cindy, Eric, Donny, Carol (Renee P.),
Catherine, Sal, Ana, Mark (Corinne R.), Karen (Sue R.), Bob, Donna (Brenda T.),
Joan, Harry (Jill W.), Eleanor (Roberta B.), Rob, Dorrie (Marlene D.), Carrie (Ray H.)

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

Our members at home: Bonnie Condliff, Joan Glenz, Ruth Kruger, Lois Reardon

Villa Raffaella: Barbara Johnson **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.