



GRACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Grace for Today

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ADDING IT ALL UP.....by Pastor Ken Gibson

I recently found myself doing some filing in my office, and as such I was able to see a file cabinet overflowing with work that I guess one could call my ministry. In this cabinet is almost every sermon I have ever written, minus the stack of sermons that are on top of the cabinet and a file that I have at home which do not fit in my office cabinet. I wondered to myself, "Just how many sermons are in these files? How many wedding homilies or funeral messages are here in this space?" If I were to add it all up, it would be a significant body of work. It made me think about how many people in their respective callings have a body of work as well. Perhaps you have spent a career in the construction business, and you can actually look at the homes you have built or the buildings you have maintained, etc. I am sure it is significant and in so many ways an upright thing to share with others to be able to say, "I built that." Or, "I managed that building and have kept it operational for x amount of years etc." Truly that would be pleasing to share with one's family and friends.

In ministry it is hard to point to a building and/or a place and say that you built it or anything else. What I rather think, and pray frankly, is: "Just how many lives have I touched?" Has the work of my preaching, and/or the work of the pastoral care made a difference in people's lives?" Now let me be clear, the "difference" I refer to is not what I have done but that the Gospel has been communicated and Christ has been made known and/or felt in the work that God has called me to do. Sola De Gloria. To God alone be the Glory.

I pray that such is true and that in the last 11 years we, as a church community, have touched the lives of each other in our sharing of the ministry and mission that is Grace Lutheran Woodstock. Perhaps we can all ask ourselves a similar question: "Is Christ being made known in my work?" "Is the Gospel, the good news of Jesus, extended through us in this place and wherever I work?" Luther taught much in the area of work. In an exposition he wrote on Psalm 128 verse 2, Luther reminds us all that our work is sacred.

*"Your work is a very sacred matter. God delights in it, and through it God wants to bestow upon you blessing. This praise of work should be inscribed on all tools, on the forehead and the face that sweats from toiling. For the world does not consider labor a blessing. Therefore, it flees and hates it.... But the pious, who fear the Lord, labor with a ready and cheerful heart; for they know God's command and will. Thus, a farmer sees the verse written on his wagon and plow, a cobbler sees it on his leather and awl, a laborer sees it on wood and iron: **'You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you.'** (Psalm 128:2)"*

I have been happy, and in the spirit of Thanksgiving, I am grateful. I hope and pray that our life together has made others happy too, for when you add it all up, it is all about Grace.

WACM COAT DRIVE- As the air cools we are asked to bring warmth to those who may need it most. Please consider donating any coats, jackets, boots, gloves and scarves, that you no longer need, to Grace through the weekend of **November 2-3**. You may also assist in helping with the distribution of this warmth by volunteering to serve at Redeemer on **November 7-9** during one of the shifts needed to make this all happen. There is a sign-up sheet in the activities folder at the welcome desk. In addition, if you know of someone who would need a coat, jacket, boots, mittens or blankets, please let the office know and a distribution certificate will be made available to all who may need such assistance.

YOUNG ADULT/COLLEGE AGE BREAKFAST- College students and young adults are invited to breakfast with the pastors on Wednesday, **November 27 at 9 a.m.** at Three Brothers Restaurant. We hope to see you there!

PRAYERS-*Please lift up these petitions in your prayers—To become a praying member of the Friends in Prayer, please submit name and e-mail address to dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org.*

World: Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, churchwide staff & their families, Bishop Jeff Clements, synod staff & their families, those serving in military conflicts, Arusha Town Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (our companion parish), Scott Bunch serving in the military.

Woodstock: Pastor Ken Gibson & his family; Pastor Amanda Bergstrom & her family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Charlie Bell (friend of Jamielynn Wedoff), Rev. Jim Berg (friend of Marlene Botts), Shirley Berna, Lois Bloese, Angela Boe (friend of Hanlin Family), Mary Sue Boerner (friend of Paul Lockwood & Diane Baker-Lockwood), Dee Bohn, David Brugger (friend of Shirley Busse), Frank Bunch, Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Allison Clark (niece of Martha & Bill Fleck), Jim Davis, Nancy Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tom Goggin, Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Jace Hanlin, Sue Hanson-Smith (friend of Barb Aavang), Liz Henniges (wife of Al Henniges), Steve Kosmen (loved one of the Koehn family), Elayna Kuipers (friend of the Wedoff Family), Anna Larsen (sister of Al Henniges), Elizabeth Lynd Loser, Amanda McNally (grandniece of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Karen Millman, Tammy Millman (daughter of Karen Millman), Kem Moran (friend of Barb Aavang), Carol O'Brien (sister of Bill Larsen), Gloria Ogle, Andrea Paetsch (aunt of Debbi Lynd), Linda Page (friend of Joe Evanoff), Georgia Petersdorf (sister-in-law of Gladys Renner), Bruce Randolph (husband of Ila Randolph), Carol Rank, Shawn Rank (son of Carol Rank), Sheila Readell, Jayne Reicher (great niece of Barb & Wayne Japp), Herb & Bev Renner (brother & sister in law of Ken & Gladys Renner), Jessie & Sue Robertson (friends of Ron, Mary & Kimberly Koehn), Nicholas Ruffino (brother of Nathan Ruffino), Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), John Rust (Aavang family friend), Colton Sciluffo (infant son of a friend of Joy Oberman), Eleanor Setser, Orion Stine (friend's grandson of Kathy Stone), Elsie Stoddard, Ginny Stroh (mother of Fay Wilson), Doris Sunday, Dave Sundby (brother-in-law of Deborrah Evanoff), Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahon), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Bev Visconti, Gino Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Esther Wienke, Bud Winter, Ruth Zirves

Sorrows: Donna-Marie Gazdziak, Dorothy Gibson

Joys: baptism of Emmett Cohen Caldwell (son of Kelsey & Ben Caldwell), baptism of Miles Ryan Westbrook (son of Cortney & Chad Westbrook), wedding of Kimberly Koehn & Nicholas Kosmen

If you wish to add a prayer request for the newsletter, please call the church office at 815-338-0554. Your prayer concern will run for one week and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* e-mail and phone teams may also be submitted by telephone to the church office or by e-mail to Gracewoodstock.org. Due to confidentiality laws, hospitals no longer notify churches or pastors when a member is hospitalized. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or is admitted to the hospital, please call the church office.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE-The deadline for the December newsletter is **November 15**. Please send articles to Lauren Kleinjan at lkleinjan@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Call the office at 815-338-0554.

LILLY ENDOWMENT CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT.....by Pastor Amanda

In this time of giving thanks, giving thanks on All Saints weekend and then gathering around the Holy Communion meal and PieFest on Thanksgiving Eve; I am grateful for Grace's support of sabbatical leaves for the mutual benefit of church and pastors. Grace created a sabbatical leave policy in 2013 as a strategic planning goal, and this spring our church council approved a sabbatical leave for me next summer, from June 1–August 31, 2020.

I am filled with gratitude to share news that Grace Lutheran Church has been awarded a 2019 Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Grant for my sabbatical leave. Grace Lutheran Church is one of 150 congregations that were awarded this grant by Christian Theological Seminary, which administers the Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program. Grace's \$50,000 grant award will fund my renewal leave activities, as well as Grace's expenses of part-time pastoral coverage, leave-taking and return celebrations, and congregation renewal experiences.

The theme of my sabbatical and renewal is "going marveling," to go marveling at God's presence revealed in relationships, creation, and travel. Through this intentional time of rest and renewal, I plan to engage in physical and spiritual self-care practices, explore the concept of "thin places" in Celtic spirituality through a residential program week with the Iona Community, and nurture important relationships with my family and friends.

I give thanks to God for the call to serve as one of your pastors and I look forward to this time of renewal. There will be more congregational renewal activities to share about for next summer, but for now you are welcome to note a couple dates. May 30 & 31, 2020 will be a sabbatical sending celebration during worship and then I will return to Grace at the beginning of September. Then on October 4, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. we will welcome pastor and artist Paul Oman for a special "Drawn to the Word" worship service in celebration of the shared time of renewal.

I invite you to read more about this incredible grant award: <http://www.cpx.cts.edu/renewal/news/2019/09/16/christian-theological-seminary-announces-150-congregations-awarded-lilly-endowment-2019-national-clergy-renewal-program-grants>

Thank you for being a part of this faith community, I am grateful for you and the many gifts God has given each of us, gifts united by Christ for the mission we share. Joy and peace to you in this time of giving thanks!

FIRE DRILL– As a part of our Congregational Disaster Preparedness Plan, we will be practicing our fire drill/evacuation plan during worship services in November. Whenever you hear or see the fire alarm system alarms at Grace, please evacuate immediately to the designated safe location, which is the north end of the upper parking lot toward Clausen/field if possible. Please avoid the path of emergency response vehicles, and in the event of a non-drill evacuation- please do not exit in vehicles until exit routes are cleared from emergency responders. During the upcoming fire drill, we will practice evacuating the building and then return for the rest of the worship service. Thanks for participating in Grace's preparedness plan.

WELCOME CENTER HOST- There is a need for a welcome center host the 2nd Sunday of the month before the 8:30 A.M. service and the 4th Sunday of the month before the 10:45 a.m. service. Substitutes are always needed and welcome as well. If you are interested in spreading the Grace, please Janette Hess at rdbj210@gmail.com or the office.

NEW eGIVING OPTIONS THIS FALL- Many people give their offerings by cash or check, over 50 households currently give through our automatic withdrawal program, and beginning this fall Grace has additional electronic giving options available. You can change, stop, or temporarily hold your giving by contacting Grace's church office 4 business days in advance of a scheduled contribution. Please give in the way that is most convenient for you and let us know if you have any questions.

New eGiving Options, beginning Fall 2019

Give Online at our website: www.gracewoodstock.org

Give by Text by texting **877-698-3604**

1. *Get Started:* Enter your 10-digit GivePlus Text number and the amount you wish donate, then press send.
2. *Register:* You will receive a registration link. Click the link and enter your contact and payment information. Tap "Process."
3. *Give:* After registration is complete, you will receive a verification text as well as a receipt via email.

Repeat: For future giving, simply send a text with the amount you wish to give, and it will process automatically.

Give through Give+ Mobile App by downloading the app

- Download the FREE app on your Apple or Android phone by searching for "GivePlus Church" in your app store
- Make one-time or recurring donations using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account
- Securely and conveniently manage donations using Touch ID/Fingerprint, PIN or password
- Log in or donate as a guest

a variety of gifts, united by Christ.

Last month we celebrated Commitment Weekend by bringing forward our Estimate of Giving Cards and Time & Talent Cards to indicate our intentions to give in 2020. Thank you for your generous sharing of time, talent, and treasure; we are grateful for your commitments to give in the year ahead.

If you have not yet had a chance to indicate your giving plans for next year, please return your cards by placing them in the offering during worship, mailing or dropping off in the church office. Additional cards are also available on the Information Desk.

God has given us all a variety of gifts, and the gifts we give in response to God's grace are united by Christ for the mission of Sharing God's grace. Thank you for sharing your gifts with the mission and ministry of Grace Lutheran Church.

SENIOR LUNCHEON - Come and learn how providing a simple lunch can break the cycle of poverty as Andy Bellavia comes to share information about the "Lunches for Learning" outreach ministry on **November 26** at 12:00 p.m. Honduras is among the poorest nations in the world with much of the population living below the poverty level, earning less than \$2 per day. However, statistics show that a child who earns at least a sixth grade education has hope for breaking the cycle of poverty because he or she will learn basic reading, writing and math skills that open future doors. Lunches for Learning exists to break the cycle of poverty in rural Honduras by providing a healthy lunch to school children every school day at their school; thereby allowing these children to stay in school so they can complete their education and enter the workforce as literate individuals.

Grace has sponsored a school for seven years through the Endowment fund and has recently split sponsorship of a second school with Peace Lutheran Church in Spring Hill, TN. Andy will be making his 4th trip to Honduras this year. At the November luncheon, he will share his experiences and introduce everyone to Grace's extended family in Honduras. Our menu this month includes Mozzarella Meatloaf, Martina's Classic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Italian Bread, and Apple Date Crisp with Ice Cream.

Please sign up in the Activity Binder by November 24. If you have any questions, please contact Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY- Lifetouch will be photographing all our households at Grace for a new directory.

Dates/Times: Monday and Tuesday, November 25 & 26 – 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Thursday and Friday, December 5 & 6 – 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 7 – 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

To reserve your photography time slot please sign up online via our website: www.gracewoodstock.org or stop by or call the office at 815-338-0554 during office hours.

Each household receives one free standard 8 X 10 print and a free directory for participating . Photos will be received before Christmas!

THANKSGIVING ALTAR DISPLAY- We are in need of pumpkins, squash, colorful gourds, apples, potatoes, Indian corn and corn stalks for our Thanksgiving altar display. Please be sure that these items are cleaned of any dirt or mud before you bring them into the building. All edible produce will be donated to the Food Pantry after December 1st. Please leave your donations in the entryway on the upper level the weekend of **November 23-24**. If you have any questions, please contact [kereinhart@yahoo.com](mailto:kereinhard@yahoo.com).



SUNDAY BOOK CLUB- Sunday Book Club meets between services in Room 102. On November 3 & 10, we will read and discuss Dietrich Bonhoeffer and November 17 & 24 will be on Jackie Robinson. Come and learn what made these men great! Bring down some coffee and enjoy some homemade treats along with the lively discussion. If you have any questions, please call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063.

COFFEE MINISTRY- Coffee Ministry has started providing coffee, lemonade, and a treat weekly on Sundays, from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. It is the coffee ministry's goal to continue fellowship between services and that donations are needed to maintain this important fellowship event.

VITALITY SURVEY DISCUSSION- Between services on December 8th the Council will share the results and key takeaways from the Vitality Survey we took earlier. A lot was learned about our congregation's relationship to God and each other. Come hear the results and take the opportunity to ask questions.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS- Nancy Kreznor will be providing free blood pressure checks between services on the last Sunday of the month...**November 24** in the narthex.

SOUP MINISTRY- We have some new homemade soup varieties! Quart and Pint size containers are available in the Parlor refrigerator. Please help yourself and take one to a shut in or someone who had been ill.

CHURCH CLOSINGS AND EVENT CANCELLATIONS- When severe weather arrives, Grace Lutheran Church will follow D200 closing and cancellations. All weekday activities, including preschool, will be cancelled if D200 has cancelled classes. Please check the [Emergency Closing Center](#) website or any of the radio stations listed on the [D200 website](#) for any severe weather cancellations.

e-GRACE — To receive your Grace For Today newsletter online just stop by the Information Center and sign up for this service. No one will be removed from the “hard-copy” mailing list unless they have formally subscribed to the e-newsletter.

UPDATED PHONE AND ADDRESSES— Please contact the church office if your contact information has changed, or you no longer have/use a landline phone.

SYNOD NEWS-

Walking Together is the weekly e-news of the Northern Illinois Synod. Everyone is encouraged to subscribe by using the online form at <http://nisynod.org/pubs/wt/> or by sending names and email addresses to karin@nisynod.org.

SAVE THE DATE-

Confirmat./Richardson's Farm- NOV 1
Office Closed/Veteran's Day- NOV 11
Women's Health Event- DEC 1
WACM Coat Collection- NOV 2 & 3
Sewing Circle- NOV 5
Afternoon Bible Study- NOV 5
DAP- NOV 7
WACM Coat Distribution- NOV 7-9
Veteran's Day/Office Closed- NOV 11
Afternoon Bible Study- NOV 12
Faith Circle- NOV 18
Sewing Circle- NOV- 19
Afternoon Bible Study- NOV 19
DAP- NOV 21
Blood Pressure Checks- NOV 24
New Member Breakfast- NOV 24
LifeTouch Dir. Pictures- NOV 25 & 26
Senior Luncheon-NOV 26
Afternoon Bible Study- NOV 26
Piefest- NOV 27
Young Adult Breakfast- NOV 27
Thanksgiving/Office Closed- NOV 28
Church Office Closed- NOV 29
Women's Health Event- DEC 1
Christmas Parade- DEC 1
Sewing Circle- DEC 3
Afternoon Bible Study- DEC 3
LifeTouch Dir. Pictures- DEC 5-7
Youth Group Christmas Party- DEC 7

Visit the Grace website for the most up-to-date information for all that is happening at Grace!

gracewoodstock.org

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

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Custodians/Chris & Kim Ethridge

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Office Hours: 8:30 am–3:30 pm, M–Th

8:30 am–12:00 pm, F