

JULY 2021 • VOLUME 20, NO. 7

June 2021.....by Pastor Robert Kinnear

As I write this morning it is a beautiful late spring/early summer day. I know this because Pr. Amanda has graciously allowed me to use her office. That means I have a window view just on the other side of the writing table where I work.

I will be sharing congregational life and the journey of faith with you while Pr. Amanda is pursuing her Sabbatical experience. I trust we will get to know each other as people who are Children of God together bearing witness to the presence and love of Christ with all whom we meet.

Each time I make the turn into the church drive now, I am greeted by the inviting sign announcing enrollment for the Preschool. To me this is one of the incredibly beautiful ministries the Church can offer. Allowing children to be in in the House of God and of Gods people helps families see how God is with us as well as the way in which God's work is expressed with our hearts and hands.

As a little boy I attended a similar preschool which was my week-day home while my parents went to work. I still remember how my dad would drive over and stop across the street from a junkyard so I could watch the Steam Shovel moving piles of junk from one place to another. It was a small morning gift my dad gave me before we said goodbye for the day. It really was a mechanical bucket device powered by steam. I offer this as a way of saying that was a long ago and different time.

It was also in a different place. I was born and raised in Springfield, IL and my parents worked for the State of Illinois. My dad died when I was 13 so his loving gesture is all the more precious because our time together was so short. After dad's death my mom and I formed a team of two. We worked, laughed and lived as a team until she and another family from our congregation dropped me and my friend off at another school. This time it was the new Carthage College Campus in Kenosha, WI. It was a wonderful experience to watch the school grow from a plot of ground with 3 buildings to the much larger complex it is today.

After graduating from Carthage, I went to Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, PA. Gettysburg is the oldest Lutheran Seminary in the United States, having been founded in 1826. Currently Gettysburg has joined with Philadelphia Lutheran Seminary to form United Lutheran Seminary. Following Graduation and Ordination in 1970, I was called to Christ Lutheran Church in Decatur, IL. That is where my wife Rebecca and I met. Her mother was the parish musician. She made beautiful music for many years after I left. She and Becky's dad were friends and visited me at the other parishes I served. In December of 1992 I attended worship on the Sunday after Christmas. That was the day Rebecca and I re-met after 22 years apart. We were both single and started dating. We would meet halfway between Decatur and Chadwick where I was then serving. We were married in April of 1994 in Rock Falls at Emmanuel Lutheran where I was then serving. We became a blended family with two young men and one young woman. Our boys live in Florida and our daughter, son-in law and granddaughter live in Kenosha, WI.

From a Preschool in Springfield, IL to being your Temporary Shepherd for the summer which brings back to another Preschool. Though this time the teachers will not have to shepherd me.

By grace, we will enjoy this Summertime together as we grow in our love for and service to our Lord.

NEW WORSHIP AND BUILDING USAGE GUIDELINES—We appreciate your willingness to care for our most vulnerable, your patience, and your support throughout the past year. At this time, Grace will be fully available with a few minor changes from pre-pandemic. Please look for the changes in a letter mailed separately.

VOLUNTEERS FOR WORSHIP— Thank you, Grace volunteers supporting weekly worship. There are several openings in the weeks ahead, please reach out if you would like to serve, or sign up at our website.

- If you are interested in volunteering as a Reader, Parking Lot Greeter, Indoor Usher or Greeter, please contact Fay Wilson faymwlsln@yahoo.com.
- If you are interested in learning to be a camera operator, sound or livestream technician, please contact Bill Nattress bill.nattress@gmail.com.

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 Rob Kinnear & his family; Pastor Amanda Bergstrom & her family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Charlie Bell (friend of Jamielynn Wedoff), Mary Sue Boerner (friend of Paul Lockwood & Diane Baker-Lockwood), Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Jim Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Stephane Fylpaa-Asher, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tom Goggin, Hal Goodman (friend of Bob & Janice Laird), Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Leonard Haulotte (brother of Laura Boal), Denise Hoover, Anne Johnson, Nicholas Karasch (nephew of Jamielynn Wedoff), Steve Kosmen (loved one of the Koehn family), Elayna Kuipers (friend of the Wedoff Family), Anna Larsen (sister of Al Henniges), Amanda McNally (grandniece of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Kem Moran (friend of Barb Aavang), Gloria Ogle, Linda Page (friend of Joe Evanoff), Georgia Petersdorf (sister-in-law of Gladys Renner), Pat Peterson, Carol Raffel, Carol Rank, Shawn Rank (son of Carol Rank), Barbara Readell, Sheila Readell, Jayne Reicher (great niece of Barb & Wayne Japp), Herb & Bev Renner (brother & sister in law of Ken & Gladys Renner), Nick Resek (son of Tammy Resek-Goggin & brother to Heidi Olsen), Jessie & Sue Robertson (friends of Ron, Mary & Kimberly Koehn), Maria Rossini (family friend of Heidi Olsen and Tammy Goggin), Nathan Ruffino, Nicholas Ruffino, Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), John Rust (Aavang family friend), Colton Sciluffo (infant son of a friend of Joy Oberman), Nathaniel Shipp (family friend of Brian Meyers), Ann Sinnett (friend of Shirley Berna), Andrea Strayer (mother of Lisa Wahkowiak), Dave Sundby (brother-in-law of Deborrah Evanoff), Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahan), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Bev Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Nick Wedoff, Esther Wienke, Ruth Zirves

Sorrows: Ludwig E. Henniges (brother of Al Henniges), Carroll Lohmeyer (father of Luke Lohmeyer), Ron Hansing (brother of Ken Hansing), Nancy Davis

Joy: Baptism of Lavyn Boyer Young (son of Dever & Tanya Young)

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—The deadline for the August newsletter is **July 15th**. Please send articles to Lauren Kleinjan at lkleinjan@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Call the office at 815-338-0554.

SABBATICAL RENEWAL LEAVE—Grace created a Sabbatical Policy in 2013 to support long-term pastoral calls as one of the goals of the 2013 Strategic Plan. In 2019, Grace Lutheran Church was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program for Pastor Amanda’s sabbatical leave, which was postponed from last summer 2020 to this year, June 1- August 31, 2021. The theme of Pastor Amanda’s sabbatical and renewal is going marveling—to be filled with wonder at God’s presence revealed in creation, relationships, and travel, even as the ongoing pandemic requires several changes in plans.

During this sabbatical time, Pastor Amanda will not be available by phone or email. Please contact the church office with questions or reach out to Pastor Rob Kinnear for pastoral care coverage.

(Pastor Rob: office phone: (815) 338-0554, cell phone: (815) 353-1489, or rkinnear@sbcglobal.net)

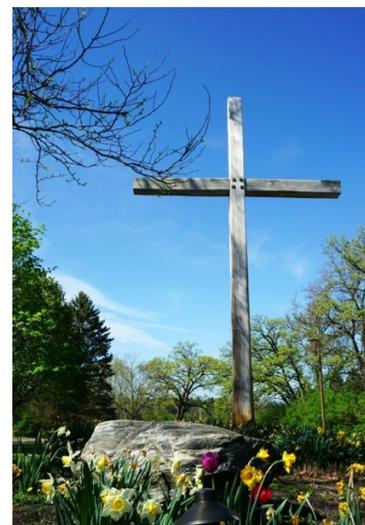
GRACE & COMMUNICATION UPDATES—In addition to this *Grace for Today* newsletter, we have additional updates and news shared through our weekly Thursday emails, *Grace Notes*. Please call the office or email Carrie Fiorina cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org to add or update your email address if you do not already receive emails from Grace.

- To plan meetings or events at Grace, please submit a building usage form (<https://www.gracewoodstock.us/building-usage-form/>) in advance to request space & contact the church office with questions.
- To submit a note for the newsletter, *Grace for Today*, please email Lauren Kleinjan (lkleinjan@gracewoodstock.org) by the 15th of each month to be included in the next month’s newsletter issue.
- To request a reminder or note in the weekly email, *Grace Notes*, please email Carrie Fiorina (cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org) by Wednesday morning each week.

GRACE STEWARDSHIP—As we approach the mid-year of our church, calendar, and fiscal year we are reminded that God is indeed faithful, and God’s steadfast love endures from generation to generation. As we navigate the changes brought about by the pandemic, our pastoral transition, and general uncertainty, God’s grace abounds and calls us forward into God’s future.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in the faith community of Grace Lutheran Church. It is a gift and joy to share God’s grace together. We are grateful for your shared commitment to this congregation.

As we move to being fully-opened, we invite you to join us in prayer, thanksgiving, and giving as we discern how God is calling us forward in mission and ministry. Join us in *prayer*—praying for one another, for our neighbors, for the stirring of the Holy Spirit. Join us in *thanksgiving*—thanksgiving for God’s grace, for the promise of Jesus’ resurrection, for the faith we hold in God to see us through this uncertain time. Join us in *giving*—giving our financial offerings, time and gifts for ministry to God in support of the mission we share.



SHOWER THE PRESCHOOL IN LOVE—We are so excited to be re-opening Grace Preschool this Fall after last year's hiatus. Just like a new baby or a new marriage receives support from friends and family, we're asking Grace to help *Shower the Preschool in Love* and help us to prepare for the upcoming school year.

Please visit our Amazon Wish List - bit.ly/GracePreschool . You'll find a wide variety of items for purchase to help get our classrooms into the best possible shape to welcome our students - everything from new Lenovo tablets which will allow teachers to communicate more effectively with parents to wooden jigsaw puzzles to help build fine motor skills!



Items ordered from Amazon will be shipped directly to Grace Preschool. If you would like to purchase an item elsewhere, please mark that intention on the Amazon Wish List. We'll have a bin by the front church doors to receive these donations.

Thank you so much for ALL your support of our Grace Preschool! If you have any questions, please contact Casey Dezwijger, Preschool Director, at cdezwiiger@gracewoodstock.org or 815-338-0554 ext. 213.

Please keep Grace Preschool in your prayers for an amazing, Grace-filled year!

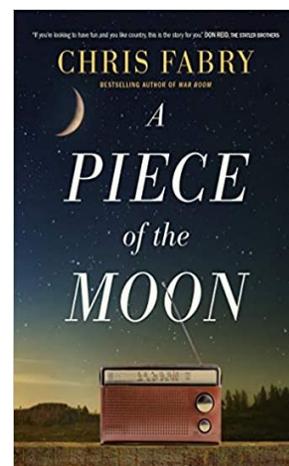
SENIOR PINOCHLE CLUB—The Senior Pinochle Club Meets **July 9th and 23rd** in Grace Center at 12:30. Join us at for fellowship; followed by some friendly games of pinochle. We are willing to teach new players. Please enter through the lower level doors. For more information, please call Shirley Busse at (815) 338-9063 or Marge Birk (815) 338-0958.

PHISHING SCAM REQUESTS- Grace's pastors, staff, and leaders will never text or email you to request gift cards or fund transfers. A number of nearby church members have received phishing emails or text messages that seem personalized and appear to be from a pastor or staff member. Please call the church office or talk to a pastor or staff member in person if you receive an odd request; thank you!

SUNDAY BOOK CLUB—On July 11th, Sunday Book Club will begin a new book called "A Piece of the Moon" by Chris Fabry. We will be meeting in person in Grace Center and on zoom at 10:15am Sunday mornings.

Book Summary: *When eccentric millionaire Gideon Quidley receives a divine revelation to hide his earthly treasure somewhere in the hills, he sets out to find a fitting hiding spot, choosing only a few Bible verses as clues leading to untold riches of gold, silver, cash . . . and one very unexpected—and very costly—item.*

New members are always welcome. Purchase of the book is not required to participate. Discussion questions are emailed out weekly. Please call Shirley Busse at (815) 338-9063 to receive the questions and for the link to join in via zoom.



GRACE GOING MARVELING...

Let Me Live Grace-fully

by: Ted Loder (*Guerillas of Grace: Prayers for the Battle*, p.131)

“Thank you, Lord,
for this season
 of sun and slow motion,
 of games and porch sitting,
 of picnics and light green fireflies
 on heavy purple evenings;
and praise for slight breezes.
It’s good, God,
as the first long days of your creation.

Let this season be for me
 a time of gathering together the pieces
 into which my busyness has broken me.
O God, enable me now
 to grow wise through reflection,
 peaceful through the song of the cricket,
 recreated through the laughter of play.

Most of all, Lord,
let me live easily and grace-fully for a spell,
 so that I may see other souls deeply,
 share in a silence unhurried,
 listen to the sound of sunlight and shadows,
 explore barefoot the land of forgotten dreams and shy hopes,
 and find the right words to tell another who I am.”



QUARTERLY STATEMENTS— In early July, quarterly giving statements will be mailed. Please contact the church office at (815-338-0554) with any questions. Thank you for your financial offerings in support of mission and ministry through Grace Lutheran Church.

CHRIST IN OUR HOME DEVOTIONAL—The July, August, September 2021, Christ in Our Home devotional is now available in the box outside the front entrance and at the Welcome Desk for those who would like to pick one up. Large print is also available.

BULLETIN & PRESENCE LIGHT SPONSORS— We continue to have openings available for Bulletin Sponsors and Presence Light Sponsors. Please sign up in the binder if you are attending in person worship or call the church office at 815-338-0554 for getting signed up. This ministry helps with the cost of paper for our newsletter and bulletins. This ministry continues to be a way to celebrate occasions or to honor or grieve loved ones along with your church family. The sponsors will be published in the Grace for Today, in our Grace Notes and in bulletins.

Presence Light Sponsors:

- **July 4**
To the glory of God on our 60th wedding anniversary, given by Jerry & Mary Johnson
- **July 25**
In honor of our daughters, Kim & Tracie, on their birthdays, given by Ken & Kathy Zank



Bulletin Sponsors:

- **July 4**
To the glory of God, given by Bob & Joyce Shook
- **July 18**
In honor of Andy's birthday, given by MB
- **July 25**
In honor of our daughters, Kim & Tracie, on their birthdays, given by Ken & Kathy Zank

eGIVING OPTIONS- In addition to weekly offering envelopes, Grace has additional electronic giving options available. Please give in the way that is most convenient for you and let us know if you have any questions.

Give through automatic withdrawal program. To participate, please complete an enrollment form and return to the church office to schedule pre-authorized electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your bank account. You can change, stop, or temporarily hold your giving by contacting Grace's church office 4 business days in advance of a scheduled contribution.

Give Online at our website: www.gracewoodstock.org

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

1. **Get Started:** Enter the 10-digit GivePlus Text number (877-698-3604) 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.
4. **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

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

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

Lead Pastor

Rev. Amanda Bergstrom

**Sabbatical: June-August 2021*

Sabbatical Pastoral Coverage

Rev. Rob Kinnear

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Director of Communications

Lauren Kleinjan

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Director of Music Ministries

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Tammy Baier, Carrie Filetti

Director of Preschool Ministry

Casey Dezwijger

cdezwijger@gracewoodstock.org

Sunday School Coordinator

Jamielynn Wedoff

Youth Standing with Jesus/High School Youth

Kirsten Green, Gretchen Hutchens, Al Wilson

Interim Confirmation Coordinator

Carrie Fiorina

Building Supervisor/Ken Zank

Custodians/Chris & Kim Ethridge

Officers & Council

Andy Bellavia, Mike Freeman, Lisa Banker, Gayle Hoch, Gretchen Hutchens, Kevin Kleinjan, Mary Koehn, Mike Liedtke, Matt Meiners, Jessica Potoczky, Seth Rowe, Robert Teuber

council@gracewoodstock.org