

From the Pastor's Desk

Grace and peace from the One in whom we live, move, and have our being: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit!

Last month in my newsletter I posed several questions to get us thinking about how we are to move forward together as a community of faith. It is important for us as the Church to be able to ask hard questions and think about them diligently. It is also important for us to actually talk about these things with one another and with people outside the Church and to approach these conversations with a willingness to listen. This kind of questioning requires intentionality and openness to following where the Spirit leads us, which is not always easy. We have some hard work ahead of us. But if we trust in the One who is trustworthy, I am absolutely convinced that we can move forward together in some incredible ways.

This month, I would like us to think about what it means to be the Church. I have become increasingly convinced that there is an idea planted in our thinking that is effectively steering the Church off the tracks, so to speak, when it comes to how we understand ourselves and our participation in God's mission. This idea is that faith is in individual matter. This idea typically comes across in some statement like "having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ," or "faith is a private matter." If we look at the history of Christianity, faith in Christ has from the beginning been a community matter, not something that is just between God and an individual. The Gospel's are written to communities of faith that are working to understand what it means to be followers of Christ. The letters of Paul, as well as the general letters, are all written to communities or leaders of communities that are trying to figure out how to work through issues that arise from living together in community. And one of the earliest and most developed analogies that we have in scripture to describe the Church is Apostle Paul's image of the Body of Christ:

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of the one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many... If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ... If all were a single member, where would the body be? ... The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you... Now you [all] are the body of Christ and individually members of it." I Corinthians 12.12ff

Again in Romans 12.4 Paul speaks of the body of Christ: "For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." Now, let me clarify, so as not to take these texts completely out of context, that Apostle Paul is primarily addressing in these passages the necessity of all different kinds of people with differing abilities being equally important within the Church. However, undergirding this thinking is the assumption that all members of the Church, or the body of Christ, are *connected*. In order for the body of Christ metaphor to work it is necessary for the Church to be made up of people who are living in faith together as opposed to a group of people who individually have faith. Indeed, if we stick with this metaphor then we as individual members of the body *need* to be in community with others because without others our faith is incomplete at best, and useless at worst.

So where does faith come in? Faith then, being trust in God's free gift of grace, orients how we live in every other aspect of our lives. If we trust that God does love us for who we are, not because of what we have done, said, or believed but because God has decided to love us, then we will live differently. If we have faith, then we do not have to make something of ourselves or prove that we are worth something; we are already valued. If we have faith, we do not have to make ourselves acceptable or lovable; we are already loved and accepted. If we have faith, we don't have to worry about doing enough, saying enough, having enough; who we are is already enough. If we have faith, we no longer need to focus on ourselves. Instead we can focus on how to live *with* other people rather than on how we can live "better" than others. Our faith is the basis for how we live in relationship to other people, and even how we live in relationship with all of creation. Indeed, we do have personal relationships with Jesus Christ, experienced through the relationships we have with one another, and these relationships are based on faith.

As we are thinking about being the Church today, as we ponder how the Gospel is relevant today, as we consider together how we are going to move forward as the Church, I pose also these questions: What do we have to do to live as a *community* of faith? What does it look like to live out our faith *together*? How can we live out our faith together at Grace? How is this reflected in what we are already doing and what might we need to do differently to work towards living out our faith as a community?

May the God who binds us together as one be with you all.

Pastor Dan

Fall Adult Ed Schedule

Ever wondered what Martin Luther's 95 Theses were all about? Curious about how the Reformation is still important 500 years later? Have you thought about how the Gospel of Mark is different from the other Gospels? Well, you are in luck! Christian Education for Adults will be starting up again on Sunday, September 10th! We will meet in the lounge on Sundays starting at 9:45am and will spend time learning and growing together until 10:30am. Faith formation is a life-long process. There is always more to learn and new ways to grow our faith! These sessions will be led by Pastor Dan, but will involve participation from you as well. The schedule for the fall is as follows:

Martin Luther's 95 Theses: Sept 10, 17, & 24. This session will be more lecture/discussion based and will present the history behind the 95 Theses, what they are, and how they became the beginning of a worldwide movement we now know as the Reformation.

Justified! 500 Years of Faith: Oct 1, 8, 15, & 22. This session will be more interactive, using Bible passages to frame conversation around some key concepts that came out of the Reformation and still inform who we are as Lutherans today!

October 29th – There will be no Adult Ed on this day due to our 500th Celebration of the Reformation.

The Gospel of Mark: Nov 5, 12, 19, 26. This session will be Bible study with a mix of lecture and interactive activities exploring the shortest and first Gospel to be written down as we prepare to switch from hearing from the Gospel of Matthew to the Gospel of Mark for the next liturgical year. (Pastor really enjoys this book of the Bible!)

Pastor Dan is excited to go through these classes and learn with you this Fall! We hope to see you there!

COME BE A FINK!

Members of Grace Lutheran, as some of you may know, we are starting a transition this fall with our Confirmation program. In fact, we are no longer referring to it as “Confirmation”. Why? Because it is so much more! While we will still be incorporating vital Christian lessons into our weekly sessions, the way we are teaching them and the way the kids will be involved in their **Faith Formation** will be much more interactive and will expand outside these four walls and past just sitting and being lectured to.

FINK stems from the term, “Faith Inkubators”, which also happens to be part of the new curriculum we are implementing into our youth education program. We felt that it better represented the way we want our youth to feel once they go through their two-year sessions – more as a spring board to exploring their faith vs as a completion of something and a stopping point. This new format involves small and large group discussions, parent involvement, pastoral care, bonding faith communities and drawing faith out. Each month, the youth will expand out into our community with service projects, immerse themselves and their families into faith based home huddles, and connect the lessons they learn into their own lives and hearts.

So why do we need YOU? These youth will also be seeking out one of you to be their “Faith Partner”. On the fourth Wednesday of each month, beginning Sept 27th, they will be asked to spend time in prayer and discussion with a chosen adult (same sex, non-relative) of our congregation during our FINK session (6:40 - 8pm) at Grace Lutheran. This will be an opportunity for you and our youth to connect, develop faith-based relationships, learn from one another, and grow in faith together. We hope you prayerfully consider being open to this wonderful opportunity to lend yourselves to one of our 9 students we have involved in FINK this year from Grace.

If you want more information as to what a FAITH PARTNER will all involve or you want to be added to a list of those we can provide to the kids as suggestions, please talk to Brenda Erber (erberb@live.com) or Pastor Dan (pastorbaldwin16@gmail.com) by September 13th if not sooner.

“God’s Work. Our Hands” Sunday – Sun., Sept. 10



Sunday, September 10, members of Grace Lutheran Church will join with the other ELCA congregations in the area for our annual “God’s Work. Our Hands” service day in Muscatine. Will you help? For the 4th year in a row, Grace, New Era, Shepherd of the Cross, and Zion will be doing a combined community service project to obtain needed supplies for the MUSCATINE FOOD PANTRY on SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Collection sites will be Hy-Vee Food Store; Hy-Vee Mainstreet; Walmart; and Dollar General. To get more information and/or volunteer, contact Pr. Baldwin; Ramona Allenbaugh; JoAnne Fisher; or Karen Hessel. Be sure to check out the picture display on the hallway wall from the past 3 years!

GLC Ministry of Literacy



Hard to believe summer is almost over and we are ready for the fall term to start on September 5th. We are excited to have new students and welcome those who are returning. It is with mixed feelings that the students we have worked with for two years move on to 3rd grade and yet it is so satisfying to see their progress. If you haven't yet volunteered this might be the time to try. Volunteers can set how many times in a term they work with the children. It may be a couple times in a twelve-week session to multiple times. We are also looking for volunteers for snacks. The sign up for snacks is on the bulletin board across from the literacy office. For additional information contact Debbie Holiday to volunteer to help with reading or Karen Hessel for snacks. Watch for information concerning our upcoming night at Boonies October 23rd.

GLC Promotion of Special Events & Members

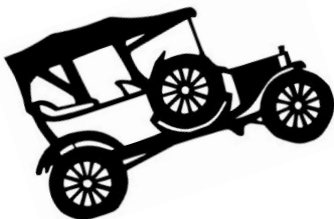
Hey members of Grace, we need your help. Don't worry, it is easy! We want to promote our special events and member involvement on Facebook, our (soon to be) new website, our newsletters, and on our bulletin boards! You don't have to be on Council or one of the boards to get involved. When appropriate, we encourage you to take photos at our church and community events. We want to see YOU, our church family, in action and share the joy and love that our congregation puts out into the community and world. Please send your GLC related photos (or your link to photos) to: glc.ed563@gmail.com If you prefer to drop off developed photos, that is fine too, please leave them with Carol in the office. Your participation is encouraged all year long and truly appreciated. Thank you.

Grace Women News by Mary Hovick & Karen Hessel

An Invitation: All women of Grace are invited to join us on Tuesday September 12th at 9:30. We will meet at Grace in the lounge. The Bible study for the next few months will be on The Apostles' Creed. Core beliefs are the foundation of a credo or an "I believe" statement. When people are trying to work together for a common cause our personal credos become enfolded into our community of faith. For our life of faith together, creeds are more than just words. They help carry one another through doubt, joy and sorry. Join us as we take this journey and explore the history behind the Apostles' Creed. You are invited to be a part of the group to join in the discussion or just listen, everyone is welcome.

DATE TO REMEMBER: September 21st we will be hosting a luncheon for a Model "A" Car Society. We will be asking for donations of salads and desserts and volunteers to help on the day of the event. Look for additional information in the next few weeks.

Grace Women News Model A Car Society Visits Grace



On Thursday September 21st at around 11:30 A.M. 30 – 40 model A cars from Des Moines will be parked in the Church parking lot. Women of the Church are preparing lunch for our visitors. They will only be here for a brief period. You are welcome to come and look at the cars and visit with the drivers.

2017 Crop Hunger Walk



The year's Crop Walk will be on Sunday, October 1st starting at 2:00 p.m. at the Pearl City Station on the Muscatine Riverfront. To register to walk go on-line to register at crophungerwalk.org/muscatinea. There are two fundraisers planned to help support this event. The first is a Shop & Share which will be held at Hy-Vee Food Stores. The shopping days are September 25, 26, & 27th. The slips for this fundraiser will be located on the Credenza in the Church Foyer. Also a fundraiser will be held at the Mississippi Brew on Tuesday, September 26th from 5-10:00 p.m. A percentage of all sales will go towards the Crop Walk. This will be the 46th year for the Muscatine Crop Walk. Please help support this great cause.

September 2017, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story



Direct Support Professionals Week

Do you know someone who is a caregiver to a loved one? It is often both a demanding and meaningful role. During September's National Direct Support Professionals Week, we celebrate all the ways in which these professionals help children and adults achieve their goals and build meaningful lives.

One way LSI is empowering Iowans with disabilities is through our Respite Care program. We offer respite care for both children and adults, providing caregivers with a well-deserved break. Through respite, an individual is able to get out into his or her community and build a strong bond with a respite care provider. It's another way LSI is empowering the people we serve toward a more independent lifestyle.

We thank you for your faithful support of LSI – you create so many new life-changing possibilities for children, families and adults! If you would like to learn more about how you can support these crucial services, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at deborah.whitford@LSIowa.org.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

It takes a village

Jessica felt overwhelmed.

She spent most of her time caregiving for her daughters, Angelique and Ariana, and she knew she needed a break. She turned to LSI's Services for People with Disabilities. Through LSI, Jessica and her family could receive respite care for the girls, which gave her some time to take a break and catch her breath.

Angelique and Ariana now receive respite care from their providers, Kaitlyn and Megan. Once a month, Kaitlyn and Megan play games with the girls and get them out in their community, giving Jessica time to take care of herself.

Since last fall, Jessica has seen her daughters become more confident and independent as they've built a strong bond with their LSI caregivers. She is feeling more relaxed and in control of her parenting, and she is happy to see Angelique and Ariana find great role models in Kaitlyn and Megan.

"It was a big decision to open up and feel comfortable with respite care for the girls, but Kaitlyn and Megan have done wonderful things for them," Jessica says. "We're so appreciative for LSI's respite care, and having that resource is just wonderful."

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES
SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2017, 10:30 a.m.

Don Ager, Council President, brought the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. John Simmons served as Parliamentarian. Pr. Baldwin read from Romans, Chapter 12, and led the fifty-two (52) voting members in prayer.

US FLAG AND FLAGPOLE ON CHURCH PROPERTY: Don Ager

The anonymous donor would provide the flag and flagpole. It would be the church's responsibility to provide the installation, lighting, and power for lighting the flag, either hard-wired or solar. It would be the church's responsibility or a member of the church to replace the flag when it becomes tattered and worn by the weather.

The Property Board Chair spoke indicating they had no objections to the installation and maintenance of the flagpole. Any damage to the flagpole would be covered by the insurance company.

Questions and Comments from the attendees:

The question was asked about lowering the flag to half-staff when asked by state or federal agencies. It was stated that type of request is applicable to state and federal buildings. However, it would be appropriate for the church to lower the flag to half-staff in the event of a presidential death.

The flag may be an added benefit for Grace's Boy Scout Troop.

The flag could be considered an "Outreach to All Veterans."

A flag dedication ceremony could be conducted as directed by Council.

The flag on church property could indicate to some as a vote of confidence for policies of the United States government.

The flag is apolitical and represents freedom of religion.

A survey conducted by Phil and Mary Chalupa revealed 10 churches in Muscatine have a flag and/or flagpole and 16 churches have neither one.

A motion by Phil Chalupa, and seconded by Marvin Krieger, to install a U.S. flag and flagpole on church property was made. Voting by paper ballot revealed 43 voting YES and 7 voting NO. The motion was passed.

MISSION STATEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: Pr. Baldwin

Pr. Baldwin briefly explained the process in determining the two proposed mission statements, how they would be used in worship, and the graphic designs.



Proposed Mission Statement No. 1:

Easy to understand and communicate

Comments from the attendees:

Easy to understand and communicate

Short, sweet, and simple

Very good statement

Change wording to "Sharing the Love; Spreading the Word; Serving the Children of God"

Proposed Mission Statement No. 2:



Comments from the attendees:

Very good statement

Change wording to **Growing, Receiving, Acting, Caring, Encouraging**

Could be used as a teaching tool for the younger Christian Ed students

The motion was made by Brenda Erber and seconded by Jim Edmond to approve the proposed mission statements with the amendment of adding “ing” to the wording. Voting by paper ballot revealed 37 voting YES for mission statement #1 and 14 voting YES for mission statement #2. The motion was passed declaring Sharing the Love, Spreading the Word, Serving the Children, Of God will be Grace’s new mission statement for the future.

The Benediction was given by Pr. Baldwin and Don Ager adjourned the meeting at 11: 25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,-

JoAnne Fisher, Council Secretary

Council Action and Highlights August 24, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Ager, Ramona Allenbaugh, Jim Edmond, Brenda Erber, JoAnne Fisher, Katie Green, Cindy Hermann, and Sam Paul

MEMBER EXCUSED: Pr. Baldwin

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD:

The Confirmation/Affirmation of Baptism program has been renamed to FINK or Faith Inkubators. The program will expand past the old way of learning and teaching. Rally Day’s theme of Renewed by Christ, Transformed by Love, will be September 3rd with games, activities, cross-generational study, and a meal after worship.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE:

CLB members will be providing the meal for Rally Day on September 3rd.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

Fifty-two voting members attended the meeting on Sunday, August 20th. The flag and flagpole proposal was approved 43-7 in favor. The new mission statement and logo proposal of *Sharing the Love, Spreading the Word, and Serving the Children of God* was also adopted.

FUNDRAISING BOARD:

There are approximately 45 cookbooks left which can be purchased Sunday mornings or during normal office hours Monday-Thursday.

PICTORIAL DIRECTORY:

The directories have arrived and are available for pickup of one to a family.

PROPERTY BOARD:

Grace received a \$32,000 “down payment” check for repair of the sloped roof with additional funds available upon request after completion. G&S Roofing, who repaired the flat roof, will be consulted to determine a time for repair. However, it may not be until spring since the roofers in Muscatine are quite busy and the fact that our roof is not leaking at the present time. Repair to the sloped roof was scheduled for 2019 in the 4-year Capital Improvement plans. The Property Board recommended four locations for placement of the flag/flagpole. After discussion of the different locations, Council approved placing the flag/flagpole in the alcove area on the west side of the entry drive where there is access to electricity to power the light. Council also approved a \$1,063 quote from Service Master of Muscatine for scrubbing and sealing the floor in the Social Hall. Date and time is yet to be determined.

PROJECTOR/VGA UPDATE:

A quote from Reference AVS in Davenport indicated the cost for two 70-inch TV monitors with labor, wiring, etc., would be \$9,138 and two 75-inch monitors with labor, wiring, etc., would be \$10,538. A Congressional meeting to present the proposal for a vote will be held soon. Disposition of the current projector screen was also discussed. The screen is in good condition and the suggestions were to list it for sale on EBAY or in the newspaper in order to recoup some of the cost for the upgrade.

SOCIAL MINISTRY:

God’s Work Our Hands will be Sunday, September 10th. Volunteers are needed for a 1-hour shift to collect donations for the Muscatine Food Pantry. This is a combined community service project with Zion Lutheran Church, Shepherd of the Cross, and New Era Lutheran Church.

WEBSITE:

It was the consensus of the Council members to advertise in the paper and on line for an independent contractor to maintain Grace’s web page.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC:

Two worship services will return on September 10th. Plans are being made for a Bach Cantata on October 28th written specifically for celebrating the Reformation. Possible musical groups include the Muscatine Symphony and the Muscatine High School Music Department. There will be one service on Reformation Sunday, October 29th.

Respectfully submitted,

JoAnne Fisher, Council Secretary

Meeting adjourned: 7:45 p.m.

Length of Meeting: One hour and fifteen minutes

Anniversaries & Birthdays

Please save the next page to use for your prayer list. Pray for each person on their birthday and anniversary. By the end of the year, you would have prayed for everyone in the congregation. **If we have missed a birthday or anniversary or if corrections need to be made, please call the church office at 263-5680. Thank you.**

September Anniversaries

<i>Keith & Marilyn Hultquist</i>	9-10	<i>Peter & Ruth Allinger</i>	9-22
<i>Craig & Jane Theobald</i>	9-11	<i>Al & Sue Bengtson</i>	9-23
<i>Barry & Dawn Pence</i>	9-19	<i>Chuck & Karen Gardner</i>	9-25



September Birthdays

<i>Kallie Kemper</i>	9-02	<i>Connie Fett</i>	9-10	<i>Connie Fuller</i>	9-16
<i>Jeanna Lippelgoes</i>	9-03	<i>Cindy Rusch</i>	9-10	<i>Kelly Gardner</i>	9-17
<i>Gary McCullough</i>	9-03	<i>Barbara Schmelzer</i>	9-10	<i>Shawna Moss</i>	9-17
<i>Steve Rusch</i>	9-04	<i>Ava Stein</i>	9-10	<i>Peyton Stein</i>	9-18



<i>Chad Vander Linden</i>	9-04	<i>Janice Fear</i>	9-11	<i>Cindy Alexander</i>	9-22
<i>Norma Whitmore</i>	9-04	<i>Judy Pameticky</i>	9-12	<i>Deb Holliday</i>	9-25
<i>Roger Lande</i>	9-09	<i>Mary Chalupa</i>	9-14	<i>Monika Boyer</i>	9-27
<i>Shannon Lewis</i>	9-09	<i>Ken Fisher</i>	9-16	<i>Lisa Paul</i>	9-28

REMINDER

Please remember to provide the office with any name, address, email changes, or other pertinent information, so that we have correct information in our Shepherds Staff member file system and email system. Call the office at 263-5680 or email us at glc@machlink.com with changes. Thank you.



Have a safe and enjoyable Labor Day Weekend!