

# Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

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## August & September 2018

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**“You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.” (Leviticus 20:26 ESV)**

Dear Friends in Christ:

Eight students from our Grace Youth Group attended the Higher Things Conference July 3–6, 2018, at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. I had the privilege of attending the conference with them, together with our two wonderful youth leaders: Matthew and Laura Olson.

If I were to summarize the conference in one word, I would say, “Wow!” It was truly outstanding. The worship services were beautiful and reverent; the Bible studies and plenary speakers were engaging and edifying; and the evening recreational activities were fun and entertaining. As an added bonus, I had the opportunity to teach one of the Bible studies. It was literally “standing-room only” in my classroom. I had no idea that a study about the symbolic meaning and use of numbers in the Bible would be so popular with young people. Thank you to our youth for suggesting this topic!

The theme of the conference was “Sanctified.” Throughout the conference, we were reminded that the Holy Spirit is the One who sanctifies us. He has set us apart—He has made us holy—through faith in Jesus. We don’t make ourselves holy; rather we are holy because the holiness of Jesus was given to us in our Baptism and is sustained throughout our lives by the working of the Holy Spirit through God’s Word and Holy Communion. Because the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all our sins, we are holy, just as Jesus is holy, free to live a life of holiness and good works in service to God and one another.

I have many more positive things I could say about the conference, but my time and space are limited. So, I will conclude my letter on this note: Thank you to Matthew and Laura for their tireless, sacrificial service on behalf of our youth and congregation. Our participation in the conference would not have been possible without them. Thank you also to our youth for attending, as well as to their parents and families for allowing them to do so. I enjoyed spending the week with these young, faithful servants of God. They have a deep love for the Lord, His Word, and His Church. And, finally, thank you to the members of Grace for your continued prayers, support, and financial gifts for our youth group. I can say without any hesitation that your support of this conference was money well spent. I can’t wait until next year. With your help and the Lord’s, I look forward to attending next year’s conference and many more in the years to come!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Crane

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### **FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS**

You work hard. You go to school. You had a busy Saturday. You deserve to rest.

But where do you find rest? Do you find it in sleeping in? Do you find it in watching six hours of football?

“Jesus is your rest.” That’s what Rev. George Borghardt, president of Higher Things, said when teaching on the Ten Commandments at the Higher Things conference that I was blessed to attend with eight of our church’s youth, my wife, and Pastor Crane. Pastor Borghardt pointed out that in a week that has 168 hours, attending church takes up only an hour or two. It’s not a large commitment of time, but it is an important commitment.

“We need church.” That’s what Pastor Crane said in a recent sermon here at Grace. Church is the only place we can receive the fulfillment of Jesus’ sacrifice for us in communion. It is where we join with our brothers and sisters in song, prayer, and fellowship. It is where we need to be and where we find a much greater rest than any worldly thing can bring. It’s the rest and comfort in knowing our Redeemer lives.

We need to be in church. We all need to be in church. And Bible Study.

One of my favorite things at Higher Things was seeing a room full of people, mostly youth, filling a room to hear Pastor Crane teach about the Bible. We have a pastor who loves to preach and teach. We should be hungry to learn from him. And for our young people, we have Sunday School and Youth Bible Study starting on September 9. You’re never too young, or old, to learn about the Bible.

Let us all find the rest that is above all rest. And let us find it together in worship, at the communion rail, and in study of the Bible.

Matthew Olson  
Head Elder

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### **YOUTH HIGHER THINGS RECAP**

Pastor Crane, Matthew and Laura Olson, and eight youth from Grace attended the Higher Things conference from July 2-6 at Carleton College in Northfield, MN. We were blessed with several milestones for this trip. This was the largest group and most youth we have ever been able to take to a Higher Things conference. And this was the first time we had our pastor attend the conference with us.

We traveled together in a 12-person van to and from the conference. The trip took a long time, but we were thankful to be able to travel together. We stopped at Grandad Bluff in La Crosse for lunch on the way to the conference and took in the beautiful views of the surrounding area.

We ate meals together and played games in our time before the conference started with the opening service. The chapel at Carleton sounded wonderful with more than 600 youth, adult leaders, and pastors singing hymns. All week we were blessed with great sermons on the subject of “Sanctified,” the theme of this year’s conference.

Each day we also attended a Plenary Session, which was an hour-long study led by Pastor George Borghardt and Pastor Donovan Riley. It was wonderful to see hundreds of youth so engaged in study of God’s Word.

“They both had amazing sessions that kept me interested even when I was super-tired,” one of our youths said.

There were six sessions of classes offered with a very wide variety of topics to choose from. Our youth attended classes that discussed the Lutheran view of dating, exorcism, the use of Facebook, the relationship between Christianity and science, looking at end-times prophecies through the lens of Marvel movies, and vocations.

“I thought Pastor Borghardt’s class on vocations was very informative and eye-opening,” a youth said.

A highlight for this conference was being able to attend a class taught by our own pastor! All of our group attended Pastor Crane’s class on looking at the significance of several numbers that are used frequently in the Bible. More than 80 people, mostly youth, crammed into a classroom to hear Pastor Crane and another 30 people had to be turned away because the room was too full!

“Pastor Crane’s class was a huge success! It was obvious he took a lot of time to prepare for his class and I was so proud of him,” one of our youth said.

Another blessing of having Pastor Crane with us was being able to do Compline together, which is an end of the evening service of prayer, singing, and Bible readings. We had never been able to do this service on our own before.

The night time also offered opportunities for fellowship and fun. We played cards with our group, petted some exotic animals, got free shaved ice for our group winning a challenge, and attended a chant-off where one of our youths participated.

We got back to Grace very late on July 6th, but thankfully we returned home safely.

We thank you for your very generous support of our youth. Without your donations, we would never be able to have these kinds of wonderful opportunities and experiences. And if you want to know anything else about this conference, we strongly encourage you to talk to our youths!

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### **FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP**

**“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery”  
(Gal. 5:1).**

We celebrate this month because of the freedoms and liberties our country has afforded us. We are right to do this. We should be thankful for these liberties: the freedom to gather together to worship and to live out what we believe in our daily lives.

But freedom and liberty in our age has devolved. It has become a freedom from duty instead of a freedom for it. Indeed, freedom and liberty in our age has turned into licentiousness: a license to do what we want, when we want.

This license is a submission, again, to a yoke of slavery. For freedom as license to do what we desire when we desire it means we are slaves to our desires, slaves to our passions.

Christ died to set us free from our sinful desires. In Holy Baptism, our Old Adam is drowned and put to death along with all sin and evil desires so that a new man may arise and live before God in righteousness and purity.

In Christ, we are a new creation. We are set free from the passions of the flesh so that we are free to do our duty and bear fruits of the Spirit.

Our duty is what God calls us to do as members of a family, society, and the church.

God calls us to believe in His Word and gladly hear and learn it. He calls us to pray for all people. He calls us to live in faith toward Him and in fervent love for our neighbor. He calls us to put the gifts He gives to us in His service. God calls parents to provide for their children and raise them in the fear and admonition of the Lord. And God calls children to honor their parents and provide and care for them when they are no longer able to do so themselves.

God calls the government to punish those who do evil and to reward those who do good. He calls citizens to pay their taxes and honor the governing officials as God’s servants. He calls pastors to preach and teach the Gospel as well as repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And He calls hearers to support those who teach them with every good thing.

Christ died to set us free from the works of our selfish flesh, giving us the freedom and liberty to do our duty. Stand firm, then, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

## **FROM THE BOARD OF MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM**

### **July 2018 Missions Update on the Mahlburgs in Sri Lanka**

Rev. Steven and Martha Mahlburg, along with their 5 children, are in their second year of missionary service in Sri Lanka.

Rev. Mahlburg works with the LCMS church partner in Sri Lanka, visiting all the active congregations and mission stations in the Ceylon Evangelical Lutheran Church. There are over a dozen of them, and this past June marked a milestone of his visiting the last one. He plans to continue these visits to build up and encourage these folks with the Word of Christ.

Rev. Mahlburg writes, "I was asked to teach an English language Bible class for the youth in the upcountry. I was eager to do this. The class has been a real blessing for me. I enjoy connecting with the youth and look forward to building lasting relationships with them. Most important, I pray that their faith will be strengthened and their relation with Jesus. The youth are eager to learn about the Bible and do far better with English than I am with Tamil. Whether I am teaching children in English or training pastors or encouraging parishioners or telling a taxi driver about Jesus, this is all God's work. I am thankful and humbled that God would entrust us with participating in His work here in Sri Lanka. Thank you for partnering with us by your prayers and support."

In family news Martha writes, "We took a trip to visit some cultural sites in Sri Lanka. We visited the cave temples at Dambulla, the ancient ruins at Anuradhapura, and ruins of the ancient fortress at Sigiriya. Liberty and Skye competed in a school drama competition. We also celebrated Skye's 15th birthday."

#### **PLEASE PRAY FOR**

- Wisdom to better help and encourage their church partner in Sri Lanka.
- More opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus
- Autumn as she prepares to begin university in the U.S.

#### **GIVE THANKS AND PRAISE FOR:**

- New believers.
- The opportunity to spread the message of Jesus around the world.
- People who are not ashamed of the Gospel.
- The many congregations and individuals who pray for, encourage, and partner with them.

In His Service, Steven & Martha, Autumn, Liberty, Skye, Rose, and Duncan

Follow them on FaceBook at Mahlburg Missionaries In Sri Lanka.

Read their blog at <https://missionsrilanka.wordpress.com/>

#### **Birthdays:**

- Steven - Jan. 27
- Martha - Dec. 11
- Autumn - Sept. 13
- Liberty - July 15
- Skye - May 29
- Rose - March 19
- Duncan - July 24

Wedding Anniversary: Aug. 11

To support the LCMS through the work of Steven Mahlburg, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and mark checks "Support of Mahlburg Sri Lanka."

Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at [lcms.org/Mahlburg](http://lcms.org/Mahlburg).

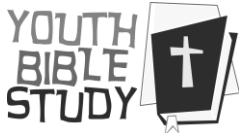
**SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS:** Sunday School and Youth Bible Study will begin for the year on Sept. 9 at 10:30 AM in the downstairs chapel.

Sunday School is offered for children from age 3 to 6<sup>th</sup> Grade. Each week we open with hymns and a message together and then learn the week's Bible story.

We hope to see you all there!

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**YOUTH BIBLE STUDY RETURNS:** Youth Bible Study will return on Sunday, Sept. 9 at 10:30 AM in the Youth Room. Youth Bible Study is offered for all youth from 7<sup>th</sup> Grade through high-school seniors.



Each Sunday we will study the Bible and discuss how God's Word applies to our lives. We look forward to having you join us!

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...that meetings begin again in September! Please pay close attention to the attached church calendar to ensure that

you don't miss anything important that is scheduled for your board! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the church office (633-4831) any time.

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**NEW WORSHIP TIME:** The new time for our Sunday morning worship service will be continuing in the fall at **9:00 AM**. Bible Study will be at 10:30 AM after the service. For the summer months (Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend), we will also have a Thursday evening worship service at **6:30 PM**. The Thursday service will be the same as the following Sunday's service. **The last Thursday night service will be August 30<sup>th</sup>!** The Voters also decided to revisit the new worship time at a Special Voters' Meeting on **October 7, 2018**.

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**BARTZ SCHOLARSHIP FUND:** The Board of Education would like to remind you that you can donate to the Bartz Scholarship Fund at any time. This goes to help our members who are going into church work.

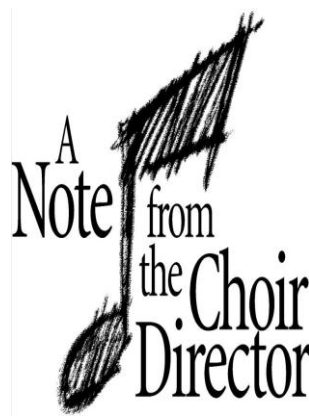
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**REGULAR OFFICE HOURS** are Monday – Thursday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED:** Are you looking for a way to serve your church? Would you prayerfully consider working with the youngest members of our congregation? The Sunday School program here at Grace is looking for Sunday School teachers! If you are interested in teaching Sunday School starting in the fall, please contact Laura Olson for more details. *Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."*

*(Matthew 19:14)*

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**GRACE CHOIR** begins rehearsals on **Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**, at 6:30 PM in the balcony. **BELL CHOIR** begins on **Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup>**, at 6:30 PM in the balcony. **We still need ringers!** All are welcome! Please see Elyse in the balcony or

call at 632-0219.

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**PICTURE OF THE WEEK:** As we proceed with our elevator adventure with great anticipation, it might be fun to look back on the building of our beautiful church building! A progression in pictures of this past adventure will remind us all of how God was with our forefathers and that He will be with us as we add to our beautiful church. Look for a picture each week in the narthex and catch the "can-do attitude" from God and our forefathers!

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**DIVINE CALL:** Our former Vicar, Jacob Eichers, received his call into the Office of the Holy Ministry at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. He has been called to serve as Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in La Crosse, Wisconsin. His ordination and installation service is **Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup>** at 4:00 PM at Faith. If you wish to send greetings, the address for the church is 1407 Main St., La Crosse, WI 54601.

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**PORTALS OF PRAYER:** Quarterly daily devotional books for July – September are available in the narthex.

**FUTURE NEWSLETTER DELIVERY:** We are looking into not renewing our bulk mail permit next year as a possible way to save money for the church. As we make this decision, we would like to know how you would like to receive your future newsletters. Would you like to pick them up at church, have them emailed to you, read them on our website, or continue to have them mailed to you? Please let us know your thoughts. You can contact our church office or leave a note in the suggestion box. Thank you!

**THE GROWING STRONG WITH GRACE** group will meet on September 19, 2018. As we start our 3<sup>rd</sup> year, our presenter that day will be Diane Rogstad. She comes from the Aging & Disability Resource Center of Racine County. Diane has some very interesting topics of many things we don't know exist for the senior community here in Racine County. Please bring a dish to pass. Pastor Crane will have the meal prayer at 11:00 AM. Hope you all can make it!

**QUILTING NEWS:** In January through July, we made 50 quilts and distributed them to Veterans (Little Houses), A Place of Refuge (Milwaukee), Hospitality Center (Racine), and Siena Center. Beginning September 2, 2018, donate \$30 and receive a t-shirt. For more information, contact Ruth Anger at 637-0367.

**KWIK TRIP & SPEEDWAY GAS CARDS** are for sale before and after both services in the Office Equipment Room. You can also purchase them any time during regular office hours from the church office. Grace gets 5% back on all cards sold. Cards are always available in \$25, \$50, and \$100 amounts. Many thanks!

**FLOWER CHART** is now available for sign-up in the narthex. The cost is **\$27.00** for two bouquets. Please make your checks payable to "Grace Lutheran Church" and place in the secretary's box in the Communication Center. To reserve a Sunday please sign your name and occasion.



**ADULT INQUIRERS CLASS** begins Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. This 12-week class is for people who wish to join Grace and members who want to study the basics of the Christian faith. The class will meet Sundays from 12:00 – 1:00 PM. Please contact Pastor for more information.

**PARENTS OF 7<sup>TH</sup> & 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** Confirmation Class orientation meeting will be Wednesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 PM in the fellowship hall. Please plan to attend and inform the office ASAP of your intention to do so.

**A REQUEST FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:** Do you have a child who recently left for college? Is your child no longer living at home? Has your phone number recently changed? Please let Dorothy in the church office know. We are updating our records and are seeking the most accurate and up-to-date information for our church records. You can call the office (633-4831 anytime Monday – Thursday from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM) or e-mail [gracelutheransecretary@yahoo.com](mailto:gracelutheransecretary@yahoo.com) with the new information. Thanks for your help!

**REQUEST FROM CHURCH OFFICE ABOUT HOSPITALIZED MEMBERS:** Due to HIPAA Laws, we are no longer able to contact the hospital and find out if our members are hospitalized. Please call the church office and inform us of your hospitalization so that we can keep you in our prayers and pastoral calls can be made. Thank you!

**MISSIONARY VISIT:** On Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, Pastor David Preus and his family will visit Grace. Pastor Preus is an LCMS missionary in the Dominican Republic whom Grace is helping to support financially as part of our mission budget. Their visit will begin with a pot-bless meal starting at 5:30 PM. Following the meal, Pastor Preus and his family will share with us about their exciting mission work in the Dominican Republic.

**NEW ADDRESS:** The Peters' new address is 12711 Stellhorn Road, New Haven, IN 46774. They pass on their greetings to everyone. They deeply appreciate your prayers and support as Mark begins his studies to become a pastor.