

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

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August & September 2019

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD!’” (Psalm 122:1 ESV)

Dear Friends in Christ:

Having grown up in Southern California, I visited Disneyland in Anaheim several times as a child. And now, as an adult with a family and child of my own, I've had the opportunity to visit Walt Disney World in Florida three times. As you know, Tabitha, Annika, and I just returned from our vacation there.

Disneyland, the first of the Disney parks, is known as “The Happiest Place on Earth.” The Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World is called “The Most Magical Place on Earth.” Many people must agree, because millions of people visit these resorts each year. Having just returned from Disney World, I can understand why.

When you go to one of these resorts, you truly feel like you have entered another world. Everything from the airport shuttle, to the hotel accommodations, to the food, to the theme parks themselves is excellent. The “cast members” are extremely polite, the grounds are immaculate, and the encounters with Mickey, Minnie, and the rest of the Disney characters and princesses are charming and delightful. The overall experience leaves you feeling that you have escaped to a magical world of dreams and fantasy.

The problem, of course, is that you can't remain in this wonderful world of Disney. Before you know it, the magical experience will come to an end, and you must return home to face again the pressures and stresses of everyday life. Perhaps, that's why so many people return to these resorts again and again, as we have, seeking to recapture that special feeling.

Maybe for you, your preferred vacation is not going to Disney World, but it's spending time up north for a quiet week at the lake. But whatever you choose to do for your vacation, one of the reasons we go is to try to capture those fun, but fleeting, moments of rest and relaxation that otherwise seem so elusive in this chaotic world of ours. That's why, as excited as we are to go on vacation, we often feel disappointed when we return.

The good news is that we don't have to go far to find peace and rest. And, what's more, we can find it every Sunday, and not just one or two weeks out of the year. Here, in this place, in this church, Jesus comes to be with us to give us His peace through the forgiveness of our sins. As we hear God's Word and receive His Sacraments, Jesus gives us a peace that cannot be taken away from us. His peace is permanent and enduring, because it comes from Him who paid for our sins on the cross and then rose again Easter morning to defeat the power of sin, death, and Satan over us.

With no offense to Disney then, the place where Jesus comes to be with His people is, in fact, the happiest, most “magical” place on earth. And, for us, that place is Grace. God has blessed Grace with a beautiful building, excellent music, and very kind people. Even better, every Sunday, Jesus comes to be with us to shower His blessings upon us. He gives us here His very body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins and as a foretaste of heaven. We have His promise that one day He will gather us with the saints and angels around His eternal throne to celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end.

My friends, Jesus comes to Grace every Sunday to give these wonderful gifts and blessings to you. So, please come to Him. Please come often. Please find your respite from the rigors of life and receive rest for your weary soul in this holy place. The magic and pleasures of this world are fleeting and temporary. Only Jesus can give you the gift of eternal life. By faith in Him, one day Jesus will take you out of this world and bring you to Himself in heaven, as He gives you a place with Him in the life of the world to come.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Brian Crane

FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS

“The Bible isn’t boring.”

That’s what Pastor Crane said in a June sermon, and it’s a statement I couldn’t agree with more.

The Bible contains the story of God’s love for His people from His Creation of life through His salvation of His people through His Son, Jesus. And there are stories and parables and accounts that we have all heard for years from the Bible.

But beyond the familiar lies a strange, fascinating, and enriching reading experience.

The Book of Job delves into how much one can suffer and still cling to God’s love despite the doubt of those around them. The Book of Judges is the equivalent of an action/horror/comedy blockbuster with an array of fantastical, but true, stories. Even the New Testament contains accounts of a young man falling asleep and out of a window during a long sermon of Paul’s only to be brought back to life.

All of the books of the Bible—from the poetry of the Psalms to the letters of Paul—are God’s Word. They all exist to enrich and enhance our understanding of God and His love for us.

Right now, we have an opportunity to learn more about one of those stranger corners of the Bible as Pastor Crane’s Bible Study continues to examine the Book of Revelation and explain what all of the imagery and symbolism of John’s vision from God means for us today.

I hope you take the time to join that study and to choose your own adventure in reading the Bible at home. There’s always something new to learn and appreciate, even in a book that was written centuries ago.

Sincerely,
Matthew Olson

FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

Have you ever noticed the subtle ceremony of receiving the offerings during the Divine Service? The offerings are collected in plates or baskets, and they are brought forward and given to the pastor or an assistant. The pastor turns toward the altar, and, as he slightly bows his head, the offerings are raised slightly to the Lord and placed on the altar or an adjacent table.

Why do we have this ceremony? And what does it teach us? For that is what ceremony does – it teaches, as the Augsburg Confession tells us what we need to know about Christ (AC XXIV, 1–3).

Originally, this ceremony included more than simply bringing forward what was collected in the offering plates. The elements for the Holy Communion – the bread and the wine – were brought forward with the offerings. The offerings and elements were lifted toward the Lord and placed upon the altar. The altar, now made a table, would be set for the Lord’s Supper.

Gifts brought to the altar come from the sweat of His people’s brow. They are the bread and wine, the fruits of His people’s labor in this fallen world. After six days of labor and toil, the people are to bring a generous proportion for the Lord’s work. Gifts set upon the altar are offered to the Lord for Him to take up and press into service for His gracious work.

For what is offered to the Lord from the sweat of His people’s brow – the bread of anxious toil – comes back to us as the bread of life. The bread comes down from heaven that whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup will receive life through the forgiveness of their sins.

This is not unlike what the Lord did for His people in the Old Testament:

“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the Lord your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your God chooses, to set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the Lord your God chooses and spend the money for whatever you desire – oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household.” (Deuteronomy 14:22–26)

What a blessing! God provides for us in all things. He provides bread from the sweat of our brows. He receives this from us in the first-fruits offerings we give to Him in thanksgiving and praise, and He turns these into spiritual bread. He gives this heavenly bread – the bread of eternal life – back to us so we might have joy.

So, the next time you are in the Divine Service, watch this ceremony in wonder. The offerings we have given to Him, the Lord gives back to us in His supper so that we may rejoice in the salvation He won for us upon the cross.

FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF YOUTH

Sunday School and Youth Bible Study

Sunday School and Youth Bible Study classes will resume on **Sunday, September 8th**. This year, the Sunday School classes will be using the new Enduring Faith curriculum from Concordia Publishing House. Youth Bible Study will begin their year on the theme of “By Grace Alone,” a study of how God’s grace for His people can be seen in the Bible. We look forward to seeing you in our classes this year.

Higher Things Retreat Summary

On Tuesday July 2nd, five youth and one chaperone from Grace traveled to Concordia University in Chicago, Illinois, to attend the Higher Things Retreat. The theme of the week was “Concordia” meaning “harmony” or “with one heart.” The youth attended the Divine Service, Matins, Vespers, Evening Prayer services, and Plenary sessions with over 400 other participants, as well as choosing several small breakout sessions. Breakout sessions covered a wide range of subjects including relationships, absolution, smartphones, and, even, Lutherans and Nazis. Lots of great learning and discussions took place. A variety of free-time activities were also offered in the evenings. Our group participated in Game Show activities and Escape rooms. We were blessed to be able to spend the time with our former Vicar, now Pastor, Jacob Eichers. We ended each night with Pastor Eichers leading us in Compline. The youth as well as their leaders thank you all for your continued support of our programs and fundraisers.

One youth said, “Loved Chris Loemker (organist) and Pastor Borghardt (president of Higher Things and leader of several breakout sessions). Every class was informative and entertaining. And it is always one of the best weeks of the summer.” Another youth said, “I liked all the classes I went to. My favorite topic was, ‘When Relationships Go Bad.’ I really enjoyed the nice dorms this year.”

Without your support, these trips would not be as easily attended. We are already starting to plan for next year’s retreat, which is themed “Watermarked.”

100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Photo Directory

Photos will be taken for a new photo directory for Grace. Lifetouch will be taking photos between **September 5th – 7th**. Sessions can be signed up for at church or on-line at <https://booknow-lifetouch.appointment-plus.com/b01z1rs2>. There is no fee for the photo sitting and every family that has their photo taken will receive a free photo directory and an 8 x 10 family photo. We hope to have as many families sign up as possible.

100th Anniversary Service and Luncheon

Grace is celebrating a century of blessings from God throughout this year. Our special 100th Anniversary Church Service will be held on **Sunday, October 13th**, at **9:00 AM**. South Wisconsin District President, the Rev. Dr. John Wille, will be preaching the sermon, and the service will feature special musical accompaniment.

Our 100th Anniversary Luncheon will follow at noon at Infusino's Banquet Hall, 3201 Rapids Drive, in Racine. The menu for the luncheon will be Fried Chicken, Sliced Beef, Meatballs & Sausage, Mostaccioli, Italian Potatoes, Corn, Tossed Salad, Coffee & Water. Soda will be available at the cash bar. Tickets for the luncheon are \$20.00 each and will be limited to the first 150 purchased. Tickets are for sale in the Office Equipment Room or by calling the church office at (262) 633-4831. We hope you can join us in our celebration of Grace's centennial year!

CONNECTION CORNER

Rahul, Becky, Johanna, and Natasha Saxena family

The Saxenas joined Grace in 2002 after Rahul accepted a work position here in Racine. Becky was a stay-at-home mom for both girls back in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where we lived from 1994 until 2002.

By trade, both Becky and Rahul are chemical engineers and Rahul is currently working as one. Becky is working as a chemist. Rahul loves to golf and play badminton. Becky reads a lot and can cook gourmet food. We love to travel as a family. Johanna is currently in between graduating from the University of Minnesota with degrees in Spanish and Psychology and going to medical school for psychiatry and is located in Houston, Texas. Natasha is in Minneapolis as a medical scribe in between graduating from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, in June and going on to schooling for Nurse Practitioner in neonatal care.

Our backstory is that Becky was brought up Lutheran in the Apostolic Lutheran Church federation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She remembers hearing many sermons in the Finnish language. She participated in Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and went to at least two Urbana conferences as a student at the University of Minnesota and the University of Minnesota – Duluth. Rahul was brought up Hindu in Agra, India (where the Taj Mahal is) and converted to Christianity in 1992. They met at school in Houghton, Michigan, at Michigan Technological University. Their 27th wedding anniversary will be in October.

During their time in Grand Rapids, they were members of St. Mark Lutheran and Immanuel Lutheran. This was where they became introduced to the Missouri Synod. From there, when arriving in Racine, both girls attended Concordia Lutheran School in Sturtevant for elementary school.

Currently, Rahul is serving as the vice president of the Grace congregation, holding the Council meetings once a month, and Becky serves as chair of the Memorials and Gifts Committee and chair of the Board of Christian Care. We covet your prayers for our family.

ELEVATOR FUND: As of Sunday, July 21st, we have raised \$37,395 for the Elevator Fund. Thanks be to God! To make additional donations, you may use the specially marked white envelopes in the pew racks.

VBS: IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER!

Please check the Vacation Bible School table near the coat room for registration forms, information, and donation requests. This year's VBS runs from **August 5th – 9th**, and the theme is SONRISE National Park.

PARENTS OF 7TH & 8TH GRADERS MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Confirmation Class orientation meeting will be **Wednesday, September 4th**, at **6:30 PM** in the Fellowship Hall. Please plan to attend and inform the office ASAP of your intention to do so.

SUMMER WORSHIP TIMES: Through Labor Day, we will have a Thursday evening worship service at **6:30 PM** in addition to our regular Sunday morning **9:00 AM** service. The Thursday service will be the same as the following Sunday's service.

JOIN US FOR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT:

Tuesday, August 6th, from 4:00 – 8:00 PM. Join us here at Grace for fun! Please bring a dish to share with everyone. We'll also have special carnival games!



GRACE CHOIR is always in need of singers. Are you one of them? We begin rehearsals on **Wednesday, September 25th, from 6:30 – 7:30 PM** in the balcony. Grace Choir usually sings the first and third Sundays of the month, plus special holidays. We will be singing at the 100th Anniversary Service on October 13th. Please consider joining us. Questions? Contact Elyse at church Thursday nights (summer) or Sunday mornings. Thanks so much!

BELL CHOIR: We would really like to get the Bell Choir ringing again this year, but we can't do it without you volunteering to rehearse on Thursday nights. We would ring on occasional Sunday mornings. If we get enough volunteers (we need 11), we will then schedule rehearsals. Please contact Elyse at church Thursday nights (summer) or Sunday mornings. Thank you!



...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.

HOSPITALIZATIONS: Due to HIPAA Laws, hospitals cannot notify us 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!

100TH ANNIVERSARY QUILT: We are creating a friendship quilt for the 100th anniversary. There are blocks in the Office Equipment Room for each family to sign. Please come and sign a square.

CHRISTIAN RESOURCE GUIDE: The Christian Resource Guide is a compilation of businesses, professionals, services, churches, ministries, and schools in the Milwaukee area. There are free copies available in the narthex.

CHURCH PICNIC: Grace Lutheran Church will hold its annual church picnic on **Sunday, September 8th** from **12:00 PM – 3:00 PM** at the Kids' Connection Playground in Franksville Park. Meat and beverages will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass and lawn chairs for your family. Come ... rain or shine!

GROWING STRONG WITH GRACE meets again on **Wed., September 18th**. Ms. Vivian Merlo from Preservation Racine will be our guest speaker on that day. She has an incredible wealth of knowledge of Racine and Racine County. Pastor will say grace at **11:00 AM sharp**. Not to be missed!

GRACE FAMILY NEEDS HELP WITH MEDICAL EXPENSES: Laura and Keith Deschler, and their son Jarrell, are members of Grace. Laura recently required urgent surgery on her right ear to repair a ruptured eardrum. This surgery resulted in high medical bills, most of which are not covered by Keith's health insurance. If you would like to make a donation to help with these expenses, please visit www.blessity.org and click on the "Donate Now" button underneath the Deschlers' photo. Blessity is a Christian crowdfunding site, with 100 percent of every donation going directly to help those in need.

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 with the new information. Thanks for your help!

GRACE EMBROIDERED T-SHIRTS are now half-price – \$15 each! We have five extra-larges available. See Ruth Anger.

KWIK TRIP & SPEEDWAY GAS CARDS are for sale in the Office Equipment Room. Grace gets 5-10% back on all cards sold. Thanks!

RLHS GOLF OUTING 2019: Please join us on **Monday, August 5th**, at Meadowbrook Country Club, for our 31st annual golf outing to benefit the RLHS athletic program. All are welcome – alumni, parents, and community members. To participate, visit RacineLutheran.org and click on "Golf Outing" under the "Support Us" tab.

Daily Lectionary Readings August – September 2019
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Thursday, August 1: 1 Samuel 17:1-19
Acts 26:1-23

Friday, August 2: 1 Samuel 17:20-47
Acts 26:24-27:8

Saturday, August 3: 1 Samuel 17:48-18:9
Acts 27:9-26

Sunday, August 4: 1 Samuel 18:10-30
Acts 27:27-44

Monday, August 5: 1 Samuel 19:1-24
Acts 28:1-15

Tuesday, August 6: 1 Samuel 10:1-23
Acts 28:16-31

Wednesday, August 7: 1 Samuel 20:24-42
1 Corinthians 1:1-25

Thursday, August 8: 1 Samuel 24:1-22
1 Corinthians 1:26-2:16

Friday, August 9: 1 Samuel 25:1-22
1 Corinthians 3:1-23

Saturday, August 10: 1 Samuel 25:23-44
1 Corinthians 4:1-21

Sunday, August 11: 1 Samuel 26:1-25
1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Monday, August 12: 1 Samuel 28:3-25
1 Corinthians 6:1-20

Tuesday, August 13: 1 Samuel 31:1-13
1 Corinthians 7:1-24

Wednesday, August 14: 2 Samuel 1:1-27
1 Corinthians 7:25-40

Thursday, August 15: 2 Samuel 5:1-25
1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Friday, August 16: 2 Samuel 6:1-19
1 Corinthians 9:1-23

Saturday, August 17: 2 Samuel 7:1-17
1 Corinthians 9:24-10:22

Sunday, August 18: 2 Samuel 7:18-29
1 Corinthians 10:23-11:16

Monday, August 19: 2 Samuel 11:1-27
1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Tuesday, August 20: 2 Samuel 12:1-25
1 Corinthians 12:1-13

Wednesday, August 21: 1 Kings 1:1-4, 15-35
1 Corinthians 12:14-31

Thursday, August 22: 1 Kings 2:1-27
1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Friday, August 23: 1 Kings 3:1-15
2 Corinthians 1:1-22

Saturday, August 24: 1 Kings 5:1-18
2 Corinthians 1:23-2:17

Sunday, August 25: 1 Kings 7:51-8:21
2 Corinthians 3:1-18

Monday, August 26: 1 Kings 8:22-30, 46-63
2 Corinthians 4:1-18

Tuesday, August 27: 1 Kings 9:1-9, 10:1-13
2 Corinthians 5:1-21

Wednesday, August 28: 1 Kings 11:1-26
2 Corinthians 6:1-18

Thursday, August 29: 1 Kings 11:42-12:19
2 Corinthians 7:1-16

Friday, August 30: 1 Kings 12:20-13:5, 33-34
2 Corinthians 8:1-24

Saturday, August 31: 1 Kings 16:29-17:24
2 Corinthians 9:1-15

Sunday, September 1: 1 Kings 18:1-19
Ephesians 1:1-23

Monday, September 2: 1 Kings 18:20-40
Ephesians 2:1-22

Tuesday, September 3: 1 Kings 19:1-21
Ephesians 3:1-21

Wednesday, September 4: 2 Kings 2:1-18
Ephesians 4:1-24

Thursday, September 5: 2 Kings 2:19-25, 4:1-7
Ephesians 4:25-5:14

Friday, September 6: 2 Kings 4:8-22, 32-37
Ephesians 5:15-33

Saturday, September 7: 2 Kings 4:38-5:8
Ephesians 6:1-24

Sunday, September 8: 2 Kings 5:9-27
Philippians 1:1-20

Monday, September 9: 2 Kings 6:1-23
Philippians 1:21-2:11

Tuesday, September 10: 2 Kings 9:1-13, 10:18-29
Philippians 2:12-30

Wed., September 11: 2 Chronicles 29:1-24
Philippians 3:1-21

Thursday, September 12: 2 Chronicles 31:1-21
Philippians 4:1-23

Friday, September 13: 2 Chronicles 32:1-22
Colossians 1:1-23

Saturday, September 14: 2 Chronicles 33:1-25
Colossians 1:24-2:7

Sunday, September 15: 2 Chronicles 34:1-4, 8-11, 14-33
Colossians 2:8-23

Monday, September 16: 2 Chronicles 35:1-7, 16-25
Colossians 3:1-25

Tuesday, September 17: 2 Chronicles 36:1-23
Colossians 4:1-18

Wed., September 18: Nehemiah 1:1-2:10
1 Timothy 1:1-20

Thursday, September 19: Nehemiah 2:11-20, 4:1-6
1 Timothy 2:1-15

Friday, September 20: Nehemiah 4:7-23
1 Timothy 3:1-16

Saturday, September 21: Nehemiah 5:1-16; 6:1-9, 15-16
1 Timothy 4:1-16

Sunday, September 22: Nehemiah 7:1-4; 8:1-18
1 Timothy 5:1-16

Monday, September 23: Nehemiah 9:1-21
1 Timothy 5:17-6:2

Tuesday, September 24: Nehemiah 9:22-38
1 Timothy 6:3-21

Wed., September 25: Malachi 1:1-14
Matthew 3:1-17

Thursday, September 26: Malachi 2:1-3:5
Matthew 4:1-11

Friday, September 27: Malachi 3:6-4:6
Matthew 4:12-25

Saturday, September 28: Deuteronomy 1:1-18
Matthew 5:1-20

Sunday, September 29: Deuteronomy 1:19-36
Matthew 5:21-48

Monday, September 30: Deuteronomy 1:37-2:15
Matthew 6:1-15