

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

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October & November 2021

**“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more.”
(Revelation 21:4; ESV)**

Dear Friends in Christ:

Thank you again for your many cards, gifts, and words of comfort and sympathy upon the death of my father. My dad had been in declining health for quite some time. Nevertheless, his death in late August came as a bit of a shock and surprise. Earlier in the summer, I had made plans to see him (and my mom) in late September, but God had other plans for us. As we sing in one of our hymns, “the will of God is always best” (*LSB 758*).

Following my dad’s death, I quickly traveled to California to spend a few days with my mom and sister. Although the visit was short, I was very glad to see them. It was good for me to be there. Tabitha and I will still return to California for a week in late September as we had originally planned. Thank you for your support and understanding as I have tried to fulfill my duties and obligations at church while also spending time with my family, especially with my mom.

Death is an unwelcome, yet ever-present, reality in our world and lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened our awareness of the presence and reality of death. And yet we know from hard experience that death has been a part of our world long before we had ever heard of COVID-19, and it will be with us long after this pandemic has ended. Until the Lord Jesus returns to destroy death forever, we will continue to attend funerals, stand at gravesides, and feel the absence of those who are no longer here with us. And, one day, we, too, will be the ones whose earthly remains are laid to rest. We can’t escape death. “The wages of sin is death,” the Bible says (*Romans 6:23*).

So, is there any hope for us and for our loved ones, then, to overcome the assault of this fierce and mortal enemy? As God’s people, we know the answer, of course, is yes. Will death triumph over us forever? No, of course not. Death does not have the final word over us. Jesus does. While it is true that the wages of sin is death, as that verse continues, “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

My friends, Jesus has won the victory for us over sin, death, and Satan by His own death on the cross for our sins and by His resurrection from the dead Easter morning. St. Paul writes, “We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God” (*Romans 6:9–10*). Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly (*John 10:10*). He gives eternal life to us as a free gift through faith in Him. As Jesus Himself tells us in that beloved verse, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life” (*John 3:16*). And as St. Paul so powerfully proclaims, “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (*1 Corinthians 15:55–57*).

Thank you again for your love and support for my family and me upon the death of my father. I deeply appreciate your care, concern, kindness, and generosity. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we “rejoice with those who rejoice, [and] weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15). Scripture says, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). Having been forgiven and strengthened by Christ through His Word and Sacraments, we strengthen and encourage one another, looking forward to that day when we are reunited with our loved ones who died in the faith and friendship of Jesus. We look forward in faith to that great day when Jesus returns to make all things new. Death shall be no more, and God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Brian Crane

FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS

The famous opening of Ecclesiastes finds “the Preacher” (Solomon) in the middle of an existential crisis.

“What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun,” The Preacher writes in Ecclesiastes 1:9.

Yet it feels like there has been a lot new under the more than 1,400 sunrises that have happened since September of 2017, at the start of Pastor Crane’s time of service here at Grace.

Our congregation was in the midst of determining what service times would best fit our congregation when Pastor Crane was called. We bid farewell to Pastor Poppe, Grace’s pastor for 34 years, and celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Pastor Crane’s first two months here.

The physical face of Grace Lutheran Church has changed dramatically as an elevator and new entrance have been installed thanks to the support and efforts of the members of this congregation.

Our church has celebrated its 100th anniversary and is now in its next century of existence, thanks to the blessings of the Lord.

We have lost members, and we have gained members. We have held funerals for lifelong members of our church and welcomed new children of God in Holy Baptism.

And more than one-third of those sunrises since September of 2017 have seen this church, and this world, dealing with the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic, a phrase that was, as previous translations of Ecclesiastes would have said, “meaningless” in 2017.

We sent a member of our congregation, Mark Peters, off to seminary in the summer of 2018, and since that time I have had the pleasure of serving as head elder of Grace. I have spent many hours talking to Pastor Crane since then.

We’ve talked about the direction of our church, how to handle serious issues that needed to be dealt with and trying to make sense of a world that increasingly felt incongruent with the peace and love that God promises to us in His Word and Sacraments.

I’ve been blessed to see first-hand the care and passion that Pastor Crane has had for this church. There have been issues and questions that had not been raised to previous pastors that he has worked through. There’s not a guidebook or a class at seminary that could prepare anyone for some of these topics.

I know Pastor Crane appreciates the care and concern of this congregation, whether in the uplifting words he hears from the congregation on Thursdays and Sundays or the support in times of loss or difficulty.

I know Pastor Crane feels appreciated by the members of this church, but this month we set aside time for Pastor Appreciation Month to officially recognize his service to us at Grace.

“Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work,” Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:12–13.

Please join us on Sunday, October 17th, following the church service for light refreshments to celebrate Pastor Appreciation Month. No one could have predicted what the last four years would have brought, but I’m thankful we have had Pastor Crane with us for all of these days under the Son, Jesus Christ.

God’s blessings,
Matthew Olson

FROM THE BOARD OF PARISH FELLOWSHIP

While preparing this month’s newsletter, I began reflecting on what Parish Fellowship means to me. I found Psalm 133:1, which says, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to live together in unity!” I also found several verses about the joy of showing hospitality to others. While these are most certainly true, I think it goes even deeper. Fellowship is personal. It’s sharing similar interests and experiences. It’s making time to connect with an old friend or a casual acquaintance on a deeper level. New relationships are born when we spend time together. Please consider joining us; there is always room for more.

Coffee Fellowship is held every Sunday morning following worship. There is plenty of time for a cup of coffee, tea, or juice and a snack or two before Bible Study starts.

Ladies of Grace Luncheons will now be held on the **second** Friday of every month instead of the first. Please make note of this change. Call Jane Kunstman or Linda Eaton to make your reservation no later than the Thursday before. We will be meeting at *Honey Bees* on Douglas Ave. **October 8th** at **11:30 AM**. Next month: **November 12th**. November’s location is to be announced at a later date.

Game Day: Don’t forget to join us **October 20th** and **November 17th** following Growing Strong with Grace. Easy games and lots of fun and laughter.

Altar Flowers donated by the Memorial Committee are available after services on Sunday. Please contact Barb Galis or the church office if you know of someone who may enjoy a visit and a few beautiful flowers.

God’s blessings,
Barb Galis

FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

When it comes to stewardship, a favorite Bible verse is the account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1–4). It's a moving account. Our Lord praises the seemingly small gift of two copper coins given by a poor widow above the abundance of gifts given by the rich, saying, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them" (Luke 21:3). And that is usually where we stop. But the text goes on. "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:4).

"She ... put in all she had to live on." She gave everything. She held nothing back. She trusted that the Lord who made her and all creatures; who gave her everything she had; who redeemed her from her own sin, from death, and the power of the devil; who called her by the gospel and enlightened her with His gifts of Word and Sacrament; would continue to do this. He would provide her with all that she needed for this body and life because that is the character of the God she had.

But this is not why we give small gifts. Her gift, though it appeared small, was actually large. When we are tempted to give small gifts, it is precisely because we want them to be small! We don't trust the Lord to provide for us. We give small gifts because we lack faith in the One who created us, redeemed us, sanctifies, and keeps us in the one true faith. We give small gifts because we doubt that God will really give us what we need and desire. We give small gifts because we are not content with what God has already given.

We are not slaves, children of the slave woman, under the Old Covenant (Galatians 4). We are adopted sons of the free woman. And since we are sons, we are also heirs. And heirs receive the inheritance. For everything is already ours in Christ. And thus, moved by the willing spirit of adoption, we do the will of God in financial matters far beyond all that done by those under the Old Covenant who were forced by legal demands.

So, what have you decided to give? How do I decide what to give? Let the Scriptures be your guide.

We are to give proportionally to what we have received from God's giving to us (Luke 12:48; 1 Corinthians 16:1–2, 2 Corinthians 8:12). But you have not been set free to give nothing. See that you excel in the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7)!

We are not free to live selfishly outside the Gospel, without regard for God who gives us all good gifts, without generosity for our neighbor who needs us and our gifts, without supporting the community of faith in which we live, without care for our spiritual fathers and those who teach and help raise our children in the faith, and without resources for the poor and needy.

In short, we are not free to live unto ourselves, hoarding what God has given us only for us. For love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:10). And the sum of the law is this: Love God and love your neighbor (Matthew 22:34–40). We love because He first loved us. We give because He has given to us.

Luther once said, "Possessions belong in your hands, not in your heart" (LW 14:240). There is a reason your 10 fingers spread apart. With your hands you catch God's gifts for what you need and let the rest fall through your fingers to your neighbors – your family, your friends, your community, your church.

FROM THE SAFETY AND SECURITY TEAM

The following persons are on the Safety and Security Team for Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church: Pastor Crane, Kevin Turkowski, Gaylord Weidner, Dennis Eaton, David Eaton, Phyllis Lenz, Walt Bohn, and Dan Tredo.

Here are some of the things that have been done in the past three or four years:

- Eight cameras have been installed. Three monitors installed: one in the church office, one in the fellowship hall, and one in the usher’s cabinet.
- Made improvements to secure church during the worship service by locking the doors about 15 minutes after the service starts, doing a walk around the church property (i.e., the parking lot), and monitoring the cameras.
- For communication purposes, we have radios for the security team.
- Installed a key box to be able to account for the keys easily and to have easy access.
- Updated lighting around the outside of the church.
- Installed eight more smoke alarms and two smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.
- Put first aid kits in the kitchen, Office Equipment Room, and narthex.
- Tightened loose pews for safety.
- Rekeyed the church, replacing a traditional key with a key fob so it can be activated and deactivated by the office computer.
- Also had the sheriff’s department come in for a safety evaluation.

Our next meeting is **Saturday, October 9th, 2021, at 9:00 AM**. Anyone is welcome to come.

If you have any questions or concerns about safety or security for the church, please contact a trustee member.

Submitted by Walter Bohn

2021 FLOWER CHART still has a few open Sundays available. The cost is **\$27.00** for two bouquets. To reserve a Sunday, please sign your name and the occasion on the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Please make your checks payable to “Grace Lutheran Church” and place in the secretary’s box in the Communication Center. Thank you!

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS are Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

COLLECTING men’s long sleeve shirts, used but in good condition. Also collecting sheets and ice cream pails. If you have any questions, please contact Ruth at 637-0367.

ELEVATOR: As of **August 31st**, the balance on our elevator loans stands at **\$263,703.82**. Thank you for your support and generosity!

FROM THE SAFETY & SECURITY TEAM: A friendly reminder to keep your vehicles locked while you’re at church.

ADDITIONAL TIME TO BUY GAS CARDS!

These cards are now for sale before Bible Study on Sunday in the Fellowship Hall as well as before the service on Sunday in the Office Equipment Room. Please see Walter Bohn in the Fellowship Hall before Bible Study to purchase cards then. If you need to purchase gas cards some time other than Sunday morning, please call the church office to arrange for an alternate day and time. Grace gets a percentage back on all cards sold. Kwik Trip cards are currently available in \$25, \$50, and \$100 amounts. Thanks!

SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSION: The Sunday School children chose to have this year’s offerings help Lutheran Heritage Foundation to translate Luther’s Small Catechism and Bible storybooks into the languages of children around the world. The Vacation Bible School offering this year also went toward this mission. We have received \$565 in donations, which provides 113 Bibles for children around the world! To God be the glory! If you would like to contribute towards this, there is a donation box in the Office Equipment Room. We look forward to using the gifts we have been given to share the news of Jesus with children throughout the world!

WORSHIP SERVICES: Our Sunday worship services can be viewed on Grace’s Facebook page and on our YouTube channel, “Grace Lutheran Church, Racine, WI – LCMS.”

VOTERS’ MEETING: Our next regular Quarterly Voters’ Meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 17th, 2021, at 10:30 AM.**

PORTALS OF PRAYER: Quarterly daily devotional books for October – December are available in the narthex. Please help yourself! If you wish to donate to cover the \$5.00 cost per year, please place in the appropriate slot in the narthex. Thanks!

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!

CANCELLATION POLICY: When the Racine Unified School District is cancelled for the day or has early release because of weather conditions, all activities at church are cancelled. Please feel free to call the church office if you are unsure if a meeting or event will take place.

ADVENT WORSHIP SCHEDULE: Grace’s Midweek Advent Vespers services will be held on Thursday evenings again this year, starting December 2nd.



CONNECTION CORNER



Nancy Lockrem

I have been a member of Grace Lutheran Church all of my life, 83 years.

My parents met at church! My mother, Marion Hanson, was confirmed on October 20, 1929, and my father, Albert Jensen, on October 26, 1930. He was invited to Grace by a friend. Grace members had just added a 30-foot addition to the original wooden building. It could now seat 200 members.

They were married five years later on February 23rd. I am the second of four daughters. I was baptized on January 22, 1939. My sisters, Shirley and Marilyn, are also still members. Pamela lives in Union Grove.

Curtis and I were married on June 28, 1958, at Grace and were blessed with four children: Linda, David, Leslie, and Steven. All four were baptized and confirmed at Grace. They attended Concordia Grade School and Lutheran High School. We continued to be blessed with ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Curt went to his Heavenly Home in June of 2010.

Grace has been a part of my life all these years. I taught Sunday School for 55 years, and I am still serving on the Altar Guild after 50 years. I am the church historian, served on the Funeral Committee, restored dolls for sale at the Harvest Fair, and have served wherever I felt God was leading me to use my talents.

I became a Sunday School teacher the Sunday after my confirmation. I was so led by my fourth grade Sunday School Teacher, Ester Bernat! I thank God for her influence in my life. I wanted to be a faithful follower like her!

My favorite thing about our church building is the Bartz Office. I spent many hours of learning, Confirmation Classes, meetings with God's Servant, Pastor Bartz, and the restoration of his office for the 100th Anniversary. God-given memories!

I thank God for all of our faithful pastors that He has provided Grace with His Word and who still are guiding me toward my Heavenly Home.

Daily Lectionary Readings October – November 2021

Friday, October 1:	Deuteronomy 2:16-37 Matthew 6:16-34	Monday, November 1:	Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Matthew 20:17-34
Saturday, October 2:	Deuteronomy 3:1-29 Matthew 7:1-12	Tuesday, November 2:	Jeremiah 1:1-19 Matthew 21:23-46
Sunday, October 3:	Deuteronomy 4:1-20 Matthew 7:13-29	Wednesday, November 3:	Jeremiah 3:6-4:2 Matthew 22:1-22
Monday, October 4:	Deuteronomy 4:21-40 Matthew 8:1-17	Thursday, November 4:	Jeremiah 5:1-19 Matthew 22:23-46
Tuesday, October 5:	Deuteronomy 5:1-21 Matthew 8:18-34	Friday, November 5:	Jeremiah 7:1-29 Matthew 23:1-12
Wednesday, October 6:	Deuteronomy 5:22-6:9 Matthew 9:1-17	Saturday, November 6:	Jeremiah 8:18-9:12 Matthew 23:13-39
Thursday, October 7:	Deuteronomy 6:10-25 Matthew 9:18-38	Sunday, November 7:	Jeremiah 11:1-23 Matthew 24:1-28
Friday, October 8:	Deuteronomy 7:1-19 Matthew 10:1-23	Monday, November 8:	Jeremiah 20:1-18 Matthew 24:29-51
Saturday, October 9:	Deuteronomy 8:1-20 Matthew 10:24-42	Tuesday, November 9:	Jeremiah 22:1-23 Matthew 25:1-13
Sunday, October 10:	Deuteronomy 9:1-22 Matthew 11:1-19	Wednesday, November 10:	Jeremiah 23:1-20 Matthew 25:14-30
Monday, October 11:	Deuteronomy 9:23-10:22 Matthew 11:20-30	Thursday, November 11:	Jeremiah 23:21-40 Matthew 25:31-46
Tuesday, October 12:	Deuteronomy 11:1-25 Matthew 12:1-21	Friday, November 12:	Jeremiah 25:1-18 Matthew 26:1-19
Wednesday, October 13:	Deuteronomy 11:26-12:12 Matthew 12:22-37	Saturday, November 13:	Jeremiah 26:1-19 Matthew 26:20-35
Thursday, October 14:	Deuteronomy 12:13-32 Matthew 12:38-50	Sunday, November 14:	Jeremiah 29:1-19 Matthew 26:36-56
Friday, October 15:	Deuteronomy 13:1-18 Matthew 13:1-23	Monday, November 15:	Jeremiah 30:1-24 Matthew 26:57-75
Saturday, October 16:	Deuteronomy 14:1-2, 22-23, 14:28-15:15 Matthew 13:24-43	Tuesday, November 16:	Jeremiah 31:1-17, 23-24 Matthew 27:1-10
Sunday, October 17:	Deuteronomy 15:19-16:22 Matthew 13:44-58	Wednesday, November 17:	Jeremiah 33:1-22 Matthew 27:11-32
Monday, October 18:	Deuteronomy 17:1-20 Matthew 14:1-21	Thursday, November 18:	Jeremiah 37:1-21 Matthew 27:33-56
Tuesday, October 19:	Deuteronomy 18:1-22 Matthew 14:22-36	Friday, November 19:	Jeremiah 38:1-28 Matthew 27:57-66
Wednesday, October 20:	Deuteronomy 19:1-20 Matthew 15:1-20	Saturday, November 20:	Daniel 1:1-21 Matthew 28:1-20
Thursday, October 21:	Deuteronomy 20:1-20 Matthew 15:21-39	Sunday, November 21:	Daniel 2:1-23 Revelation 18:1-24
Friday, October 22:	Deuteronomy 21:1-23 Matthew 16:1-12	Monday, November 22:	Daniel 2:24-49 Revelation 19:1-21
Saturday, October 23:	Deuteronomy 24:10-25:10 Matthew 16:13-28	Tuesday, November 23:	Daniel 3:1-20 Revelation 20:1-15
Sunday, October 24:	Deuteronomy 25:17-26:19 Matthew 17:1-13	Wednesday, November 24:	Daniel 4:1-37 Revelation 21:1-8
Monday, October 25:	Deuteronomy 27:1-26 Matthew 17:14-27	Thursday, November 25:	Daniel 5:1-30 Revelation 21:9-27
Tuesday, October 26:	Deuteronomy 28:1-22 Matthew 18:1-20	Friday, November 26:	Daniel 6:1-28 Revelation 22:1-21
Wednesday, October 27:	Deuteronomy 29:1-29 Matthew 18:21-35	Saturday, November 27:	Isaiah 1:1-28 1 Peter 1:1-12
Thursday, October 28:	Deuteronomy 30:1-20 Matthew 19:1-15	Sunday, November 28:	Isaiah 2:1-22 1 Peter 1:13-25
Friday, October 29:	Deuteronomy 31:1-29 Matthew 19:16-30	Monday, November 29:	Isaiah 5:1-25 1 Peter 2:1-12
Saturday, October 30:	Deuteronomy 31:30-32:27 Matthew 20:1-16	Tuesday, November 30:	Isaiah 6:1-7:9 1 Peter 2:13-25
Sunday, October 31:	Deuteronomy 32:28-52 Matthew 20:17-34		