

Grace Messenger

August 2021



WEDNESDAY NIGHT FUEL RETURNS

We are pleased to announce that our Wednesday night FUEL makes its return beginning September 8th.

The evening launches with our Grace Family Table meal, a serving of delightful FUEL for the body. The meal is served at 6 p.m. This home-cooked dinner provides all those who attend a chance to experience good food and good fellowship, and makes it possible to participate in the other activities of the evening without rushing home to eat something before coming to church.

The evening filled with other wonderful activities designed to add FUEL to your heart and soul.

6:30 p.m. GriefShare (see the article in this issue)

6:45 p.m. Youth group, grades 9-12

7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

7:00 p.m. "Glory to the Lamb," an 11-week study of the Book of Revelation, led by Pastor Tom.

Mark your calendars, and join us for this high octane fall lineup.

PASTOR'S REFLECTION

Over the last two months you have met the letters "G" and "R" as we unpack the meaning of our "Growing in G.R.A.C.E" discipleship pathway. This pathway is a tool our congregation has developed to help you understand how to mature in your faith. So far you have learned that the letter "G" stands for "Grow in God's Word" and the letter "R" stands for "Re-telling Your Faith Story." You also read about three skills and practices that you are encouraged to develop with each of these letters.

This month we focus on the letter "A: Applying Your Spiritual Gifts." Disciples of Jesus know that they have been created for a divine purpose, so they actively discover their spiritual gifts and use them. The Scriptures teach us that every believer in Christ has been given at least one spiritual gift. It is through the use of these gifts that the Holy Spirit's power is displayed, meaning that Christians who use their gifts are tapping into the power of God in what they do.

Three passages of Scripture list the spiritual gifts: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-28; Ephesians 4:11-13 and Romans 12:6-8. Other verses that remind of us the importance of knowing our gifts and using them include 2 Timothy 1:6 and 1 Peter 4:10. As we apply our gifts, we discover the unique purpose for which God has created us.

Each person in the Grace family is encouraged to learn what the Scriptures teach about spiritual gifts and their importance to the health and vitality of the Christian community. As you do, you discover that God designed us all to be in relationship with each other, and that each person is vital to a fully functioning church.

We also encourage you to discover your own particular gift. Do you have the gift of service? Hospitality? Teaching? Administration? What has God equipped you to do for Him?

And then once you know how God has gifted you, find a way to use your gifts in a meaningful ministry. Remember! That is why God created you. That is how you make the biggest positive impact for His kingdom.

You are special! You are important! You make a difference for Jesus as you "Grow in G.R.A.C.E." and apply your spiritual gift.

MY MINISTRY: CHILDREN & YOUTH

I've told several of you before how blessed I have been to know so early on (6th grade) what my calling would be (teaching) and then successfully engage in that calling for a lengthy career (34 years). The bonus blessing of being named the Children and Youth Ministry Director (7 years ago!) at my home church after retirement has allowed me to continue to reap the benefits of teaching, learning from, and growing kids and youth. Teaching, now at church, is a no-brainer for me. It's literally what I've been doing my whole life. My concern is the number of people, especially Christians, who will go through their lives never once experiencing the joy of being a positive influence on the children and young men and women of our community and beyond.

In an attempt to gain additional perspective for you from the Grace members who have chosen to commit to the teaching within the body of Christ, I asked a few of our most recent teachers this simple question: Why do you teach Sunday School? Following is a summary of their thoughts.

"It is good for my soul."

"They are fun and I also learn from them because of the questions they ask and answer."

"I consider it an honor and a privilege."

"I remember the wonderful Sunday School teachers who taught me wherever I lived and appreciated their efforts". There came a time "for me to give back and teach the next generation at Grace."

It's "rewarding to watch their faith grow".

It was God thing when one of our vets first signed up at a previous church to "assist" in teaching, and they made her "lead." She has not hesitated to be involved with Sunday School ever since. It's her way of "honoring God", sharing about the Triune God with children. Her goal is always to "guide kids to know God and Jesus without any complications"... "their goodness and faithfulness towards us, learning about prayer and why we do it, opening doors to what being a Christian means, and that they can trust Jesus".

"It is so important for (all of) us to share our faith with them. Hopefully, some of them will become Sunday School teachers when they grow up."

Imagine being the person who triggers a kid to take a critical step forward in their Faith Journey, a step that ultimately leads to them returning the favor a generation from now. Let's help our young people get BACK TO BASICS folks, "Uncomplicate" our love of Jesus, and be the light that shines before others. Matt Rugh, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries

WHY I TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Why I teach Sunday School is quite simple – for *the love of God!* It is a special blessing for me to share with children how much they are loved through Bible verses, stories, songs, crafts and games; and, to let each child know that they are special to God, each of them in their individual way. A Sunday School teacher has the joy of helping each child learn to recognize and understand God's love. During the Sunday School hour, you have the opportunity to guide each child through your teaching, so they can decide to accept God's love and thus let it grow in their heart and soul. A Sunday School teacher gets to explain in an "age-appropriate way" why God: (1) sent his son Jesus to live and teach among us about his Father's love and how we all could best live our lives and (2) had Jesus (with no sin) sacrifice his earthly life so painfully on a cross, so that we could be forgiven all our sins. A Sunday School teacher gets to explain what a "Christian" *Christ-like* person really is, in a way each child can understand and relate to at their age, and to help each child understand that *they can choose to guide their thoughts and actions in a "WWJD" way*, by thinking What Would Jesus Do and therefore What Would Jesus Desire of *me to do*.

A Sunday School teacher gets to reassure the children that *God is always with them* in both good and not so good times, because God cares about them and He is there to love and support them and is always reachable by prayer. A Sunday School teacher has the privilege of letting each student know that as a fellow Christian, you care about them and look forward to sharing that one special hour on Sunday morning when you get to teach them. As a Grace Lutheran Sunday School teacher, I get to help each child understand that our church is not just a beautiful building but that Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church is also a congregation – a group of fellow Christians who worship and serve God together and thus care about each other like an extended family, God's family.

As a Sunday School teacher, you strive to set a good example of being a Christian through your words and actions not just in class and in church, but in your everyday life everywhere. I was blessed to have spent my childhood years watching and learning from fellow Christians at First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clifton, NJ. My mom, Sunday School & VBS teachers, Pastor, Assistant Pastors, Youth Group Volunteers, and fellow congregation members helped me develop my faith and understanding of what a Christian truly is and the way Christians serve God by serving others. Being confirmed at 14 years old, I was asked to help in the Nursery and teach Sunday School in the youngest classes, which I did until I came to Wittenberg University for my undergrad degree. (cont. on p. 3)

WHY I TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL (cont.)

I thank Gerry Koppenhaver for inviting me to Grace Lutheran when I returned to Springfield after Grad School, because my husband accepted a position of teaching and coaching at Wittenberg. I thank God that my children were blessed to grow up and in faith at Grace until their education and/or adult job(s) took them out of state. I thank God I have been a part of our Grace Lutheran family for decades and have had the blessing of teaching here and in a few local schools. It is a joy to watch our Grace children "grow" and a double joy to have the opportunity to teach the child(ren) of a parent(s) that I once taught. *God is so good* and you can't help but *feel moved in your heart and soul* when He provides the opportunity/chooses for you to serve Him and His little children, by planting seeds and helping their faith grow in a Sunday School class. -Deb Dawson

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

We would like to offer another session of Financial Peace University this fall, but want to determine the level of interest in the course first.

Financial Peace University is a nine-lesson course that teaches you how to save for emergencies, pay off debt fast, spend wisely, and invest for your future. The course does not aim to sell any particular financial services; rather it is filled with financial commonsense and biblical money principles that work.

The materials cost \$100. That sounds like a lot, especially if you are in financial stress. But don't worry! Through the generosity of those who have completed this course successfully, Grace has a scholarship fund that will cover the cost where needed.

If you are interested in the course, please contact Pastor Brodbeck at 937-399-6257.

IS GRIEF SHARE FOR ME?

"I've never been to a support group like this before. What should I expect?"

Most people quickly feel comfortable and accepted in their GriefShare group. They discover there are others who have the same kind of feelings they do and who understand the hurt they feel and the loss they have experienced. Here is an overview of the GriefShare experience:

You'll probably feel a little nervous about going to GriefShare the first time. Those feelings go away quickly for most people, usually during the first session they attend. GriefShare is a warm, caring environment designed to help you.

You'll discover there are people who understand your hurts, emotions, and painful experiences. When someone you love dies, it's common to feel isolated. In GriefShare, you'll find that you are not alone, that there are others who understand what you are going through.

You'll learn helpful, practical information that will help you recover from the pain of grief and loss. The GriefShare DVD videos feature top experts on grief recovery subjects and case studies of people just like you, who have been through the grief experience.

You'll have the chance to talk about your experiences. It can be very healing to tell others what you are going through. The support group sessions include a time to talk about what you've seen on the GriefShare videos and what is going on in your life. And while you have the opportunity to tell your story, there's never pressure for you to do so if you don't feel like it.

You'll begin to gain closure in your loss. It's sometimes hard to move on in life when you are still dealing with the grief and emptiness that happens after a loved one dies. You'll learn how to go through a healthy season of grieving, then begin transitioning to emotional and spiritual wholeness. We call this "your journey from mourning to joy."

The next session of GriefShare begins on Wednesday, August 25 at 6:30 p.m. The group will meet in the Grace Parlor. There is no cost, and this ministry is open to everyone in the Springfield community, so if you know someone who might benefit, please invite them to attend. For more information, call Pastor Tom at 937-399-6257.

NEW! GRACE PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

A pictorial directory is a powerful tool in our church to help each of us know each other better. Please make an appointment to have your picture taken at one of the sign-up locations at the church on one of the sign-up Sundays, OR YOU CAN SIGN-UP ON OUR CHURCH'S WEBSITE, www.grace-nalc.org, or you can click on the Facebook link. Your participation will help the church and yourself. Every family photographed for the directory will receive a copy of the directory and an 8x10 portrait at no cost. So please, sign-up today!

AUGUST OUTREACH CORNER

St John's Food Pantry- August is another of our months to serve at St John's Food Pantry on Wednesday mornings. If you are interested in helping to distribute food, please contact Judy Fredrich at 937-925-1177.

Habitat for Humanity- Former Fuller Center for Housing is now Habitat for Humanity of Greater Dayton. They are completing a build right here in Springfield at 1106 South Bell. Grace would like to help support this local project. During the month of August, we will have some 2x4's available to sign and put a Bible verse and/or congratulatory message on. We will also collect monetary donations to help the project. Please place these in the offering plate marked for Habitat for Humanity or give them to Sandy Thompson or Darla Kalifoot. If you are interested in helping with the building itself, please see Sandy Thompson, 937-605-0416.

LAY MINISTRY FUN CORNER

Our Ministry nod for August is **Hospitality**. Spiritual gifts are: **Encouragement** is the gift of offering consolation and inspiration to others in their joys and trials. and **Generosity**, those gifted with generosity do not expect anything in return.

August - Bible trivia

1. Who married Boaz and became the great grandmother of King David?
2. Who was the only named female judge?
3. This woman was a prophetess and Moses's older sister.
4. Where was the ark of the covenant housed before Solomon brought it to the temple?
5. How many cities did Solomon award Hiram of Tyre?
6. Ziklag is in the land of which people?
7. On what day did the apostles first speak in tongues?
8. How did Saul escape from those who wanted to kill him in Damascus?
9. What did Paul do to Barjesus?
10. Which group of people is righteous enough to inherit the Kingdom of God?
11. What are the ten plagues in order from Exodus?
12. What is the longest chapter in the Bible?



JULY ANSWERS BIBLE PEOPLE AND PLACES CROSSWORD

- | DOWN | ACROSS |
|------------|--------------|
| 1. Malachi | 2. Felix |
| 3. Peter | 5. David |
| 4. Paul | 7. Jerusalem |
| 6. Esther | 10. Joseph |
| 8. Moses | 11. Eve |
| 9. Job | 14. Matthias |
| 12. Elijah | |
| 13. Cain | |

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



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