

Grace Messenger

September 2021



GOD'S GRACE ABOUNDS

STEWARDSHIP MONTH: GRACE ABOUNDS!

September is Stewardship month at Grace, a time for us to think about how we can best use our time, talent, treasure, and testimony for God's glory in and through the ministries of Grace.

Our theme this year is "Grace Abounds!" Not only does our congregation abound in its many efforts, but the grace of God is also a never ending force in our lives as well. Each week will highlight one way in which God's grace abounds in Grace Church.

Week one will feature our high school youth. They will be in charge of the entire service, and will share how God used them to make His grace abound while on their recent mission trip.

Week two will emphasize our abounding discipleship ministries. You will learn how to "Grow in G.R.A.C.E." along our discipleship pathway.

The third week will be filled with music, because Grace abounds with many talented musical people and ensembles. We are calling it "Music Sunday."

The final week is Consecration Sunday, and our theme will be how Grace abounds in its generosity. On this day you will be invited to bring to the altar your "Estimate of Giving." This card projects the amount you plan to give to the ministries of Grace in 2022. From the combined totals of those cards we will build our 2022 budget. Your estimated giving is just that: an estimate. If circumstances change, you can easily adjust it.

Before the month begins you will receive a copy of the Time and Talent booklet in the mail. By reading through this, you will find many opportunities Grace for serving in our congregation and beyond to the community at large. Complete the signup sheet in the center and bring it back to worship on the last Sunday of September (Consecration Sunday). We will collect them at that time as well.

Adult Sunday School will follow the "Grace Abounds" theme as well. Join us in the fellowship hall each week for those special sessions.

2022 ESTIMATE OF GIVING

Financial support in the form of a pledge is an expression of praise and thanksgiving to God.

"Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Pledges are the promises made by individuals and families to financially underwrite the congregation's expenses. On September 26 those in worship will be given the opportunity to complete and submit "Estimate of Giving" pledge cards for 2022. Based on the total anticipated giving for next year, the 2022 ministry plan (budget) will be prepared.

September 26 is Consecration Sunday 2021. During both worship services on that day, those in attendance will be given the opportunity to submit their pledges, their "Estimate of Giving" cards, and Time and Talent sign-up forms. Please come to give thanks and praise to our Lord for all He has entrusted to us!

2022 ESTIMATE OF GIVING CARD Take one step up for Christ and His Church!

In response to God's love and as a commitment to Christ and the mission of Grace Lutheran Church,
I/we offer this estimate of giving for the year 2022 Operating budget:

\$ _____ per week per month per year (please check one)

This card represents a faith estimate. It can be changed at any time by notifying Darla Kalifoot,
Church Administrator

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

KAIROS MINISTRY

I have had the incredible experience of going into prison 10 times with the Kairos ministry weekend and watching God calling out to those that would listen.

On each Kairos weekend, there are 3 groups of men in the room. The first is the outside team of about 40 men who have been preparing for this weekend for a couple of months. We have asked for help preparing about 3000 dozen cookies and financial support of about \$6000 dollars to buy the food and supplies for the weekend. We have met about 10 times for about 4 hours each preparing to build a close and cohesive team. We each hand write a letter to each of the participants welcoming them to the weekend. Some members of the team are then busy buying the food and supplies for the meeting.

The second group of about 20 men are prison residents who have been through the weekend from the inside and are now serving and sharing their experience with the new residents.

And of course, the final group is about 40 residents, the participants, who are what this weekend is all about. Many of them are wondering "what have I gotten myself into" and, at the same time, anticipating the great food that they have heard is a worthy goal for attending the weekend.

Each team member is assigned one specific participant to welcome to the meeting. We write a special letter to this person before the weekend so he will anticipate meeting us in person.

As we get to know these participants, one of the things that many tell us is how they blame others for their situation: the judge, the prosecutor, their lawyer, the witness that lied, their family that didn't stick with them, other men or gangs in the prison, or, in the other direction, they blame themselves for messing up their lives and in many cases their wives' and children's lives.

Because of this blaming, Kairos first focuses on forgiveness and then the ultimate forgiveness, the abounding grace of God. This is expressed in God's word, Romans 5:20 (The Message):

"All that passing laws against sin did was produce more lawbreakers. But sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call grace. When it's sin versus grace, grace wins hands down. All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that's the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end."

Jim Leonard, Financial Stewardship Committee

PASTOR'S REFLECTION – GROWING IN "C"

Over the past three months, you have become reacquainted to our "Growing in G.R.A.C.E." discipleship pathway. Each letter in the name of our congregation equates to a different, essential quality of a disciple of Jesus Christ. This pathway was designed to be a tool you could use to understand how to become a faithful follower of Jesus.

So now, let's do a quick review of what we've discovered so far. The letter "G" stands for "Growing in God's Word." The letter "R" stands for "Re-telling Your Faith Story." The letter "A" stands for "Applying Your Spiritual Gifts."

This month we focus on the letter "C: Cultivating Accountable Relationships." Disciples of Jesus work to develop spiritual friendships with other Christians, knowing that it is through such relationships that we learn how to walk in faith, especially in those times when we face trials and temptations.

God created the church as a community, not an island. That is, God meant for His people to be engaged relationally with other Christians. That only makes sense, right? How can we love one another, pray for one another, serve one another, if we never see one another?

But disciples don't just build relationships; these are accountable relationships. In an accountable relationship, each Christian assumes a bit of responsibility for making sure the others in that relationship continue to remain faithful and grow in their faith.

Here's how you can make this happen. First, begin to build friendship-style relationships with people in our congregation. Make sure you know those who sit near you in worship. Go out to eat with others in church. Spend time at fellowship gatherings listening to and getting to know the people at your table.

Second, we encourage you to participate in a life-to-life group. This is the term we use to describe small clusters of people (usually 3-4) that meet together weekly for a more focused time of Bible study and spiritual growth. These triads can use specific curriculum or just meet around an open Bible to read and talk about what the Scriptures say.

By doing these two things, you are building the relationships that will keep "Growing in G.R.A.C.E.!"

A Message from your 2021 Nominating Committee

The Grace 2021 Nominating Committee would like to invite members, who have been active for a period of at least one year, to nominate potential candidates to serve on next year's Grace Council. Please be sure to obtain prior approval from the person being nominated and then forward your nomination in writing to one of the Nominating Committee members by the end of September.

This year's Nominating Committee consists of Judy Cary, Cindy Casto, Kevin Kreider, Dean Settles, John Smoot and Beth Szekacs. Please feel free to contact one of us with any questions you may have.

LIFE AFTER COVID

I am beginning to receive a number of questions about "life after COVID" at Grace, so I thought this forum might be a good place to address a few of them.

Will you continue to livestream worship? Yes. Our foray into livestreaming had nothing to do with COVID in the first place. We made the decision two months before our own shutdown to move into the video realm as a way of remaining connected with Grace families who could not attend. That's still our primary goal.

Will we go back to the way we used to do communion? At some point, yes. But not yet. That is still the place within our corporate life where close contact happens, so we have opted to continue to use the plastic cups and have our communion assistants gloved.

Will we go back to passing the offering plates? I don't think so. Sharing your offering as you come forward for communion seems to be working quite well.

What about bulletins? We don't plan to bring those back. The weekly production of a bulletin is both costly and labor intensive. Everything that was in the bulletin is now available in another electronic format. The announcements are projected prior to the service. QR codes give us access to the Worship Resources and Sign Up Central. Our order of worship is pretty consistent too.

How do we get prayer requests to the pastor? The fastest way is to email them to me during the week. Please indicate that you would like it to be included in the worship service. The Grace App is also a very efficient way. I am copied on every request made there. And you can always hand a note to me or one of the ushers on Sunday morning.

And finally ... what about fellowship? Our post-Sunday School fellowship time returns in September. Thanks to all who volunteer to make that happen!

OUTREACH

THE SPRINGFIELD MANOR

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church has been present at the Springfield Manor (The Manor) for many years. We have been active there through our Agape Guild, Bible Study, monthly Sunday services, barber services and more. But why does Grace care about the Springfield Manor?

First and foremost, the residents are God's children and they need the presence and peace that can only be realized through the love of Jesus Christ. Jesus gave us his example, spending his instructional years preaching and teaching among the poor and needy.

The residents of the Manor are mostly people who have little or no family or friends to care for them, nor the wherewithal to buy even the bare necessities of life. Many have mental health problems of one kind or another, leaving them at a disadvantage to cope with themselves, others and their situation.

Some residents, however, exhibit hope, hope in God and salvation through Jesus Christ, and that is leading others to observe that and begin their own faith journey. Grace is there to help them in that journey.

I, and other Grace members, have observed a few of the journeys the residents have been on and have seen the void and pain that comes from being isolated and alone. Jesus has been filling this void with Grace's presence and companionship. I believe that this is one of Grace's callings, to not only continue our outreach efforts with The Manor residents but to expand our presence and participation, in the name of Jesus Christ.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" Matthew 5:16

Steven Schumacher

WORSHIP AT SPRINGFIELD MANOR RETURNS SEPTEMBER 12, 2021

Please join the Springfield Manor worship team the second Sunday of each month at 10:00 a.m. as Grace brings worship to residents who don't have the opportunity to praise and worship God. This hour will include a worship experience with these dear residents (upwards of 90% have no regular visitors]) followed by meeting and faith-sharing with them. Musicians are greatly appreciated by the residents and worship team. Please contact Steven Schumacher, piasspringfield@yahoo.com, or the church office if you would like to volunteer for this ministry.



SEPTEMBER OUTREACH CORNER

For the month of September, we would like to collect items needed for the ARK at the Children's Rescue Center. The following items are on their wish list: coffee filters - 8-10 c size, gallon & quart storage bags, aluminum foil, paper towels, toilet paper, plastic sporks, small paper plates, facial tissue, gallon of oil for popcorn popper, sterno cans - 6 hour wick, 8oz. cups, pre-sweetened "Kool Aid" mix, Band-Aids, dish soap, disinfectant spray, batteries - AAA, AA, C, cotton balls, nail files, cheap fake nails, black permanent markers, catchup/mustard dispensers. **Extra Wishes:** Homemade cookies, Apples (please hold until Sept 26th). Please place items in collection box in the narthex through September 26th.



LAY MINISTRY

LAY MINISTRY FUN CORNER

Our Ministry nod for September is **Parish Care**; Those with the gift of **Wisdom**, understand how life works and make decisions that are in harmony with God's will. And those with the gift of **Healing** understand it is not they who heal, but God working through them.

SEPTEMBER - BLESSINGS WORD SCRAMBLE

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. snecndedimr | 9. ichtenk |
| 2. ioyahptltsi | 10. opsseliphta |
| 3. roatecuh | 11. hetespn smytniri |
| 4. siumc | 12. nhicdrel ytsiinmr |
| 5. roihwsp | 13. hanodovstre |
| 6. natamoilcorp | 14. iahrsp reca |
| 7. tladu daintoecu | 15. yitnegesor |
| 8. yohut mitrsyin | 16. peyoptrr |

ANSWERS FOR AUGUST BIBLE TRIVIA:

1. Ruth the Moabite
2. Deborah
3. Miriam
4. Zion (city of David)
5. Twenty (in Galilee)
6. Philistines
7. Pentecost
8. Basket
9. Arrested him
10. The Gentiles
11. Blood, frogs, lice, flies, livestock pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and the killing of firstborn children.
12. Psalm 119

PARISH CARE MINISTRY

Grace members may participate in the following Parish Care Ministry activities:

Blood Pressure Screening: Once a month, team members offer blood pressure screening in the church office before or after church services. You must be an LPN or RN to serve on this team.

Card Ministry: Team members share the love of Jesus by sending personal notes and cards to comfort, minister and share in life's situations with God's family within and outside of Grace Lutheran Church

Christmas in July: Team members bake, package and deliver cookies in July to Grace "family" members who are homebound or live in residential care facilities.

E-mail Prayer Chain: This team receives prayer requests via email and prays for these people and their situations.

Meals on Call: Team members provide meals on an established schedule to families in need due to extended illness or crisis.

Prayer Support Team: Team members gather for times of focused and intentional prayer for the church, its ministries and the larger community of Springfield.

Visitation Ministry: Team members visit, call and stay in contact with Grace "family" members who are homebound or live in residential care facilities, sharing Holy Communion as requested.

Hope Guild News

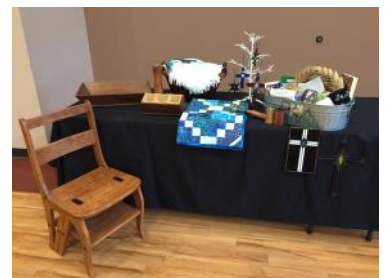
Operation Christmas Child will be setting out the shoeboxes Oct 3, 2021 for you to pick up and return to church no later than Nov. 21. Any questions can be answered by calling Agnes Smoot at 937-284-1009.

GRACE'S CHARITY AUCTION

December 4, 2021 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

If you knit, crochet, quilt, make stained glass, woodworking, cards, or other crafting skills, we need your talents!

Contact Janet Rice, janet.rice@grace-nalc.org, for more information.



PRAISING GOD WITH MUSIC

Praise God for all the dedicated musicians who give their talents back to God in our Grace Choirs. How wonderful it is to make music together and enjoy the fellowship of the choir families. The Sanctuary Choir and Grace Notes Handbell and Handchime Choirs enjoy participating in worship at Grace and representing our church in the community. This past summer, the choirs performed the National Anthem both vocally and instrumentally at three Champion City Kings baseball games. It was the first time Grace Notes provided the anthem and that was also a first for the ballpark. Thank you to all the choir singers and Grace Notes instrumentalists who participated.



Grace Notes Handbell and Handchime choir (top) and Grace Sanctuary Choir performing for the Champion City Kings

The choirs are welcoming new members who have God-given musical talents and a dedication to rehearsing together with the choirs. Rehearsals are resuming on Wednesday, September 8, Grace Notes at 5:30- 6:45 p.m. and the Sanctuary Choir at 7:00- 8:00 p.m. If you are interested, please contact the director, Barbara Blackburn (barbara.blackburn@grace-nalc.org or through the church office 937-399-6257) before attending a rehearsal.

A Fellowship Potluck is planned for the choirs and their families, including new and past members on Saturday, September 11, 5:00 p.m. at Grace on the patio, weather permitting or inside. Bring a covered dish and table service will be provided. Come and enjoy good fellowship and food with us.

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing." Psalm 100:1-2 (KJV)

GRACE ABOUNDS WITH MUSIC

On September 19, Grace will celebrate Music Sunday. The 8:00 and 10:45 a.m. Worship services will abound with musical blessings. We are thankful for all those who give of their time and vocal and instrumental talents back to God here at Grace throughout the year and on this special Sunday. We are grateful to all who come together in our choirs, Sanctuary, Grace Notes Handbells and Handchimes for your dedication and commitment with your regular participation to praise God together with your songs. We are blest by all who provide musical offerings- vocal and instrumental, solos, ensembles, Praise teams, and our Choirs. Thank you to all who participate in our Music Ministry at Grace.

Barbara Blackburn

HEARTFELT THANKS

What a nice 91st birthday experience to receive the benefit of the good wishes from the card ministry! Bob Ogden

We want to thank the Grace family for the abundance of prayers and cards sharing beautiful words of comfort and love since the passing forward of Stephanie Seech. God bless you, Craig & Cindy Witker

Thanks to all who sent encouraging cards to me in August. I don't serve for the recognition, but it is nice to receive kind words my Grace family. Amy Fraker

Dear faithful people of Grace, Your cards and messages have meant so much to uplift and comfort us during this time of mourning for our daughter, Stephanie. Thank you! Dick and Cheryl Leiss and Family



SAVE THE DATE

Make your appointment to be included
in the new pictorial directory!

PHOTOS WILL BE TAKEN ON SEPTEMBER 16, 17, AND 18, 2021

Schedule your appointment through the Grace app under the CONNECT tab or
call the church office, 937-399-6257.

Remember CHURCH
DIRECTORIES



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

**HELP & ENCOURAGEMENT AFTER THE DEATH OF A SPOUSE, CHILD,
FAMILY MEMBER, OR FRIEND**

You are welcome to begin attending our GriefShare group at any point. Each session is "self-contained," so you do not have to attend in sequence.

**Wednesdays 6:30 –8:30 p.m.
August 25 – November 17, 2021**

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



www.grace-nalc.org 937.399.6257

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Evangelical Lutheran Church



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