

June MESSENGER



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

2024



Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

By now I hope you all are aware that I will be taking "Extended Time Away" (ETA) over the next two months. In the academic world, the term for my ETA is "sabbatical," but here at Grace we have avoided the use of that word because of the accompanying expectation that something is produced during that time. In the life of the church, the goal is "rest and renewal," in keeping with the Biblical teaching about the purpose of the Sabbath.

I will be with you in worship on Sunday, June 2, but once those services have concluded my six-week ETA begins. I will be back in the office on Monday, July 15, hopefully renewed and rested, but definitely ready to catch up on everything that happened while I was gone.

In my absence a team of six individuals will be bringing the Sunday morning message. Four of those are part of this congregation: Pastor Larry Bannick, Pastor Dan Powell, Sandy Thompson and Michelle Kouse. I praise God for providing in this way. These four will cover the middle four Sundays, in the order listed. Bookending the sabbatical sermons are

Wally Martinson (a local leader of a non-profit) and Pastor Jeff Morlock (from the North American Lutheran Seminary). Other lay people will cover other portions of the worship service as we have done in the recent past when I've been on vacation. I am grateful for each of those who have been willing to serve.

There are two key things you need to know. First, I will not be checking my email or carrying my phone while I'm gone. I plan to totally disconnect from everything. So, if there is an emergency of any sort, you need to contact Darla Kalifoot or Sandy Thompson. They will relay your situation to the person who is responsible for handling your issue in my absence.

Second, I am returning. Several people have expressed concerns that this sabbatical is a signal that I am resigning, retiring or experiencing major health issues. Truthfully, I am tired (not retired, just tired.) I have pushed as hard as I can push for about as long as I can do it as through the COVID years, and mostly functioning as a solo pastor without an associate. I'm ready for a break.

Pastors Reflection cont.

I am so very grateful for Grace's provision of this ETA. I was eligible to take it in 2022, but we were just coming out of the pandemic, and we were in the search for an associate pastor. It was a terrible time for me to even consider taking time off back then. Thanks be to God, now is a great time for it. We are coming off one of the most fruitful years in the history of this congregation, and we have key staff members and volunteers in place, trained and equipped to manage things in my absence.

In addition to catching up on some much-needed sleep, I will be spending a portion of time away reading (I have a whole stack of books), writing (I have two book ideas germinating in my head) and listening to God's voice. Karen and I will take the vacation we were supposed to take in 2020 (which was canceled by COVID) and I will work on developing a hobby (other than work).

Resting does not come easily to me. I chafe if I have to sit still for any extended period of time. I am genuinely praying that I can slow down enough in six weeks that I can be fully rested and, more importantly, that I can hear what God wants to say to me when I am quiet. I ask your prayers that these goals can be met.

Blessings! And I will see you on July 15!

June Outreach Corner



NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN
SEMINARY

Save the Date: Sunday July 14th: Our Breakfast Break will feature Pastor Jeff Morlock from the NALS. He will be our guest Pastor for the day and will lead Sunday school in helping us to learn more about what the NALS is doing to help fill the shortage of new Pastors available to take a call at

our NALC churches. Come and hear more about how each of us can help to foster the call in our youth, young, or even older adults who may be struggling to discern this path for their future.



Disaster Response

Natural Disasters are happening at an ever-increasing rate. From floods to hurricanes to tornadoes. The NALC Disaster Response team is busy year-round helping the victims of these disasters all over the United States and currently their warehouses filled with supplies to respond are already empty from the recent fall and spring disaster events. During the month of June, we will be collecting Flood Buckets and Health Care Kits to help the Disaster Response Team continue to help the victims of these disasters. Please see the Narthex display or the Grace website for directions on what and how to pack one of these kits so we can help them refill their warehouses. See Sandy Thompson or Steve Schumacher for more information.

Property Sale Update

As of the writing of this article in mid-May, there is nothing new to report on the sale of the west-end property. The development company that approached us about the possibility is still working to get access to the property, and has not at this point done any additional planning for this project. The next move is theirs to make. We will keep you informed if there is any news to share. But for now, nothing is happening.

Adult Sunday School in June

June opens with the concluding session of our Life-to-Life Experience, as facilitated by Amy Fraker. This class has been designed to deepen your understanding of the Scriptures and to heighten your interest in continuing your walk with Jesus in a small group Bible study setting.

On June 9, Kristin Cline will facilitate a five week class titled “In Pursuit of Peter.” Following her wonderful class on the Apostle Paul last year, this will explore the places where Peter lived and traveled, starting by the Sea of Galilee where he labored as a fisherman--an unlikely disciple, but purposely called by Christ. Continue the journey to Jerusalem, Turkey, Rome, and other locations where Dr. Con Campbell meets people who provide insights into Peter's passionate personality. You'll see the life of Peter unfold through Scripture, interviews, and stunning on-location footage. The course runs through July 7.

Be sure to look for the “Discipleship Opportunities” pamphlet in the narthex. It provides a thumbnail review of all the Adult Educational experiences through the end of 2024. As always, if you have ideas for topics you would like to study (or facilitate), please share them with Pastor Brodbeck.

♪ Grace goes out to the Ballgame ♪ ♪



Everyone is invited to attend the Champion City Kings Baseball game on Monday, June 24. The Kings are scheduled to play the Johnstown Mill Rats and Grace's own Justin Maurer is on the Kings roster. Grace Sanctuary Choir members will be singing the National Anthem at approximately 6:25 p.m. before the game that begins with the first pitch at 6:35 p.m. In case of a rain cancellation, the game will be rescheduled at a later date. Come out, enjoy the ballgame, and

arrive before the first pitch for the National Anthem sung by members of the Choir. There will be more information and a sign up in the Narthex for those planning to attend. Please sign up by June 9th for group rate tickets

Barbara Blackburn

Sending “SonShine”



“Life’s simplest pleasures often bring the most profound joy.” (Quote unknown)

Several years ago, our Grace Card Ministry started an additional outreach to touch more lives. Our cards have been extended to anywhere they are requested.

We’ve sent “Sonshine” to people in Alaska who were affected by an earthquake. We’ve sent agape to a woman who was fighting cancer in Arizona. We’ve sent healing words with prayers to the state of Pennsylvania for a man who had undergone extensive surgery. We’ve sent well wishes to a retired pastor in Virginia who fell, broke his hip, and damaged some major organs.

I pray you see where this article is leading. Jesus has no boundaries. Our cards continue to be shared like an array of Love from God. He continues to direct us to reach out to hearts everywhere.

And although we do not do this to be recognized, people have reached out to us too. This picture shows Sunday school students wearing bracelets that were handmade and shipped from Arizona by one of our card recipients. We have been given monetary donations to our ministry. We were sent a box of handmade cards from a Texas couple who were so appreciative of cards sent to the husband, they wanted to create us beautiful cards to send out to others.

In following God’s lead, He has allowed us to see His plan in action. People are feeling His Love, and we are humbled and blessed to be instrumental in sharing Him with others. We give thanks and we give praise to our Most Holy Lord for using our ministry to show others how very much He cares.

To God be the glory! Great things He has done and continues to do! If you are not on the Card Ministry team, please know we welcome you to join.

Deb O’Neal

deb.oneal2nd@yahoo.com

Card Ministry Facilitator

Young At Heart



Calling all Young at Heart Members Ages 55 and up! If you haven't attended a Young at Heart event you are missing out on good Christian fellowship! This past month we bonded at La Comedia Dinner Theatre watching the musical "Plowing Thru", The Church Basement Ladies. We also attended the musical Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat. Our very own Terry Ankenman was the costume designer, and the costumes were beautiful. We attended the Jazz Band at High Street Methodist Church and watched the Memorial Day parade on the lawn of the Clifton home. On June 24th, the Sanctuary Choir will sing the National Anthem at the Champion City Kings game, see sign up in narthex by June 9th. We will finish the month on June 28th with a trip to LaComedia to see the Wizard of Oz musical. If you have any questions, please contact Roger Bentz or Sonya Ryhal.



Christmas in July!

June is here but it is not too early to be thinking about our annual Christmas in July Ministry. Bakers get your favorite cookie recipes ready! We are excited to be continuing Christmas in July again this year. This is an important ministry for our Grace Family who are homebound. We need Grace's talented cookie bakers and volunteers to help with the delivery. Typically, our volunteers deliver and visit 2 to 3 members.

You will be able to sign up to volunteer in Sign- Up central to help deliver or to bake 4 dozen cookies for our Christmas in July packages. We will need the cookies to be dropped off to the church by 5 pm July 25th. We plan to deliver the cookies from July 26th through the 28th. Watch for the sign-up central the first of July.

We wish to thank all our past volunteers and future volunteers. Our homebound residents appreciate this meaningful ministry and look forward to it each year. If you have questions regarding Christmas in July please call, text, or email Mary Beth Stelzer at 937-215-8805, marybstelz@sbcglobal.net.

Revised Door Access Policy for Enhanced Safety

In our ongoing commitment to prioritize the safety and well-being of our church community, especially our children and youth, we are implementing a new door locking policy effective July 1, 2024.

Changes to Door Access:

1. **Sunday Morning Access:** To ensure enhanced security, the doors to the Children's and Youth wings will no longer be accessible on Sunday mornings. We kindly request all attendees to use the main front entrance when they arrive.
2. **Pixie Playschool Hours:** During Pixie Playschool sessions, access through the Children's wing entrance is restricted. For the safety and privacy of the children, and per the Playschool Safety Policy, we ask all church members to refrain from using this entrance while Pixie Playschool is in session. Your understanding and cooperation with these measures are greatly appreciated. By adhering to these policies, we collectively contribute to a safer environment for everyone in our church community. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding these changes, please don't hesitate to reach out to Sandy Thompson.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the safety of our church family,
Sandy Thompson, Grace Executive Director



Congratulations
AIDEN KOUSE

ON YOUR
AFFIRMATION OF
BAPTISM ON
MAY 12, 2024

Children's Ministry



Save the Date!!! VBS 2024

VBS this year will be Monday, August 5th through Thursday, August 8th. We are adding an extra day! We have also added some extra time; 6:00 until 8:30 pm. Our theme is Camping Out! We will have VBS Monday—Wednesday and Thursday, August 8th will be the cookout.

2024 First Communion

Congratulations to Chloe Walsh who received her 1st Communion on April 21, 2024



Letter from Leslie McKinney

We welcomed Troy Taylor Roth into our the Lord's family on Sunday, May 12, 2024. Troy is the son of Mathew and Lindsey Roth and the grandson of Jeff and Sue Butterfield.



Thank you letter from Shirl Settles

My sincere thankfulness for the loving support and kindness of our Grace family, with my Dean's passing forward. All the cards, texts, and phone calls have meant so much to me. It all helps me have strength going forward with my dear, beloved Dean. Dean always said he was in a win-win situation each day the Lord gives me breath of life and the day he calls me home.

In Christ's Love

Shirl Settles

Stewardship Article for June 2024

Walking with Jesusby Cathy Zernechel

Isaiah 30:20-21

Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying "This is the way; walk in it."

It seems like these days that the world is moving at a much faster pace than in the past. Families spend less time with each other and more time moving on to their next activity. There are many conflicts and diversions in our lives that takes us away from hearing what Jesus is guiding us to do. We forget to pause and reflect on the word of God.

I am presently reading a book called "Rhythms of Rest" by Suzan Johnson Cook. It is a collection of devotions for women on the move. In the first part of the book, the author talks about the Hebrew word, Sehlah. Roughly translated, it means to pause, to reflect.

When I started on the 5 x 5 x 5 New Testament Bible reading plan, I realized how little time I took to spend time in the Word and to pray each day about my day, to talk to God. To have faith that by pausing and reflecting, Jesus will show me the right path for whatever situation I may be encountering. Through faith, He has my back.

So whenever I become uncertain about which way to go on my journey, I take a deep breath, close my eyes, and say Sehlah, -- pause and reflect. To that, I add prayer. Then listen, Jesus is there saying I am the way, follow me.

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