

AUGUST, 2016 • VOLUME 15, NO. 8

My! OH My! Where is the Time Going?.....by Pastor Ken

When you find yourself reading this month's newsletter we will be in the eighth month of the year. Yes the date is around 08/01/16! We are into August and the time to think about all of our wonderful fall programming is NOW!

One area that I would like us all to think about is our tradition here at Grace known as **Prime Time**. Prime time is in many ways our "Family Time."

How many of you in your own busyness are finding time to eat as a family on a

regular basis? If you are like most families, family meal times are getting less and less frequent. So, my proposal is that we, as a community, take a real look at this special time as a chance to be together as a family and share in the fellowship with the rest of your Grace Family.

Yes, Prime Time is a time for our many youth choirs, bell choirs, and confirmation to learn while providing a meal but it is also so much more. The fellowship and the comradery that is shared during this time indeed make it **PRIME TIME!**

One way to share this time is to become a part of a Prime Time Meal Team! Join with some friends and get creative and share in your cooking talents, I know there are some wonderful cooks in our midst, share those talents. It is a whole lot of fun and we are here to assist you in thinking about what might be possible. A Prime Time Meal Team Sign-up Sheet is on the back Activity Board! Sign Up today and let's get to cooking up some Prime Time Fun!

(Prime Time meals are served from 5:15-6:15PM every Weds starting Sept 7)



GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS- Mark your calendar for September 11, God's Work Our Hands Sunday! As a part of this day focused on service, we will again be assembling 100 school kits for distribution by Lutheran World Relief. These kits help to make school possible for children around the world.



We need your help to collect the supplies needed to create these kits. Starting July 30, please visit the bulletin board in the narthex to see what items are needed. Back to school sales are starting, so it's the perfect time to help provide the school kit items. Cash donation are also welcome to fund non-donated items.

It is a huge help to have all of these items returned to the church by August 31 in order to allow time to purchase any additional items needed. Contact Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia (815-338-5194, mbmartinbellavia@gmail.com) with any questions about the school kits.

We are looking for service projects, and if you would like to be a site team leader, please contact Pastor Amanda.

PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE— Preschool will be hosting their annual Open House on **August 6th from 10:00 a.m. to noon**. This is a great time to see the classrooms and meet some of the teachers and learn about all the wonderful things the preschool has to offer. Please share this information with families that have younger children so they may see all the good works we do here at Grace.



My Neighbor is Muslim.....by Pastor Amanda

A few weeks ago, in the appointed gospel reading we heard a lawyer ask Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). Jesus replied with the story often referred to as "the Good Samaritan," and by the end of the story, the one who was a neighbor was the one who showed mercy. Our neighbors are many and great, and we are blessed with the opportunity to be cared for by neighbors and to care for our neighbors as we strive to be ones who show mercy.

At the 29th Annual Northern Illinois Synod Assembly this June, one of the resolutions adopted by the assembly is "My Muslim Neighbor," which makes the following commitments: that the Northern Illinois Synod "repudiate the hostility and hatred aimed at Muslims" and commit itself to opposing, preventing, and eliminating Islamophobia; and that members of the Northern Illinois Synod be encouraged to educate themselves about the beliefs and practices of our Muslim neighbors; and that the Northern Illinois Synod make available a list of some useful resources for understanding the Islamic faith; and that congregations of the Northern Illinois Synod in communities with an Islamic presence, be encouraged to reach out to engage our Muslim neighbors in friendship, in conversation, and in cooperative effort."

I invite you to join me for an upcoming small group on Monday evenings where we will share in conversation around a study called "My Neighbor is Muslim: Exploring the Muslim Faith," a resource prepared by Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. I hope you will join together for this introduction to the Muslim faith as we learn about topics such as The Five Pillars of Islam, Islam & Jesus, Islam & Jews/Christians, Islam & Charity, Islam & Violence, Islam & Finance, and Islamic State.

Please sign up in advance on the Activity Board if you are able to join this small group so we can have the book/study guide available. Grace's "My Neighbor is Muslim" small group will meet for six weeks at 7 p.m. on Mondays, August 22 - October 3 (*we will not meet on Labor Day, September 5). I hope to see you there!

PRAYERS—Please lift up these petitions in your prayers—*To become a praying member of the Friends in Prayer, please submit name and e-mail address to dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org.*

World: Bishop Eaton, Bishop Wollersheim; those serving in military conflicts, Arusha Town Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (our companion parish), Scott Bunch serving in the military, Spc. Michael Picard, Army Reserves, Corps of Engineers, deployed to Kuwait (friend of the Laird family)

Woodstock: Pastor Ken Gibson & his family; Pastor Amanda Bergstrom & her family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Lyle Bungard, Bob Clemons (friend of Cathy Meyer), Margaret Cutts (cousin of Marge Birk), Ken DeVogelaere, Marge Dierksen, Verna Eslick, Jerry & Tannie Fiorina (parents of John Fiorina), Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Maroulla Hahne (friend of Martha & Bill Fleck), Patrice Hoover, Mary Hurst (friend of Deborrah Evanoff), Lynell Ingram (friend of Kathy Stone), John Johnson (brother of Jerry Johnson), the Kamps family, Diane Knowles, John Mahoney, Sue Murphy (friend of Martha & Bill Fleck), Jon Nattress (brother of Bill Nattress) Roberta Nielsen, Don Nusbaum, Carol O'Brien (sister of Bill Larsen), Gloria Ogle, Arne Olson, Ferd Raffel, Shawn Rank (son of Bert & Carol Rank), Jean Reed (mother of Mary Hoyt), Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), Stanley Russell (father of Sheri Conover), Dick Schroeder, Ellen Schulz (daughter-in-law of Diane Schulz), Bill Seger, Eleanor Setser, John Sorensen, Doris Sunday, Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahan), Ellie Mae Thompson (Great niece of Gladys & Ken Renner), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Eileen Weide, Karen Wells, Bud Winter, Ruth Zirves

Sorrows: Sharon Stahlecker, Dick Walters

Joy: Baptism of Koa Albert Schmarje

If you wish to add a prayer request for this newsletter, please call the church office at 815-338-0554. Your prayer concern will run for one week and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* e-mail and phone teams may also be submitted by telephone to the church office or by e-mail to Gracewoodstock.org. Due to confidentiality laws, hospitals no longer notify churches or pastors when a member is hospitalized. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or is admitted to the hospital, please call the church office at 815-338-0554.

INCLUDING A CHOIR EXPERIENCE IN OUR LIVES-

We are looking for singers, chimers, ringers, dancers, and players to add to our choirs, teams and instrumental opportunities at Grace as we near the beginning of another choir year. If you enjoy singing or being part of a musical team, that is reason enough to join. There are other reasons, too! Studies show people who are “in” music are healthier and happier.

Participating in music at Grace enhances your worship experience and that of the congregation. You will find that as you participate in a Grace music team you also become part of a community of people who care for and support each other. You will find that the musical experience becomes more personal than it can be in larger community or school choruses or bands/orchestras. You may have to try it or talk to present members to better understand this aspect.

The variety of age appropriate music chosen is selected because you are part of the “organism” that will bring it to life in worship. Because this is church, we can more fully talk about what the texts can mean for us in our daily Christian lives. Your musical abilities will be developed and enhanced by talented musical directors. There are also contemporary vocal teams, our band, and visual/sound support opportunities that happen all year round and are open to you.

You will feel the joy of Jesus and love of God and your excitement will help lift up all who hear (and see). This can be a family thing and participation starts at age 4 and there is no upper limit. Here are the start-up dates now planned:

-Wednesday, August 24, Chancel Choir begins and rehearses each week from 7-9 pm in the sanctuary. (The time will fly by!) Open to those who sing from grade 9 through adulthood.

-Wednesday, August 31, Revelation Ringers, our bell choir for ringers grade 9 into adulthood rehearses weekly from 6 – 6:45 pm

-Wednesday, Sept, 7 in conjunction with the start of PRIMETIME, our chime choir and three children’s choirs begin. Grace Chimes (starting grade 2), with its unique musical sound is also our training ground for membership in our children’s bell choir (Room 102). Children age 4 through grade one are also welcomed into Cherub Choir, those grades 2-4 into Messengers, 5th and 6th grades into Joyful Sound (all meet in the choir room in Grace Center) and dancers who will meet in the upper level narthex.

-Sunday, Sept. 11 is the start for our grade 7-8 Youthful Spirit Choir (choir room) followed by Graceful Ringers our bell choir for grades 4-8 (room 102) and rounded out by Laudate, Grace’s grade 9-12 choir (choir room).

New Praise Singers has two singing rehearsals (usually Tuesdays from 7-9 pm in the two weeks prior to the Sunday they sing (usually the first of each month) in the sanctuary and Saturday am with the contemporary band at nine o’clock. Lessons on instruments in the band are available free for those who will play regularly.

Become involved in this ministry where you can personally enhance the worship life of your family and the whole Grace congregation – and have fun in the process. Check the rehearsal list in this issue and add the start dates to your calendar.



MISTLETOE MAGIC - Grace Art: Photographers and camera buffs alike. We are collecting unique and interesting photos of flowers for this years Note Cards. These cards have been a favorite with our shoppers. Submit photos by September 15th so we can select, print and prepare cards. Questions, please contact Cathy Meyer at 815-338-0512 or tcmeier2@gmail.com.

GRACE DANCE MINISTRY- Grace Dance Ministry is expanding it's opportunities this year! Look for more information in coming weeks!

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: **MONTHLY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**-The deadline for the September newsletter is August 15. Send articles to : Tammy Baier at tbaier@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Office at 815-338-0554.
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A Little News.....from Pastor Ken

Recently someone said to me; “You seem so much happier these days Pastor.” I replied; “Well, thank you, indeed I am happier these days.”

Over a year ago now already, I shared news with all of you about my personal life that was very painful. Those were no doubt some of the hardest days of my life. I am not going to revisit all of that here, for there is simply no need, but I do want to share with you that things are much better in my life now, and I want to thank all of you for your prayers and support along the way.

In an effort to keep us all on the same page and hopefully avoid rumors, let me now share some good news with you. I have someone new in my life and that someone is Yvonne Nowak. Some of you may have already noticed the connection and others not. So, in the interest of transparency, I want all of you to know that, yes, I am seeing someone and if you see us together, it’s OK. I am in a better place these days for sure and together we have found new happiness.

Thank you for your prayers, love and support. God is Good.....

LUNCHES FOR LEARNING “Join the Graduation Ceremony at our School in Honduras in November !!

For the past five years Grace has been sponsoring a school in Honduras through the Lunches For Learning organization. By supplying lunches to the students they can stay in school instead of working menial jobs for food. We also recently raised funds to repair the roof on the school’s kitchen.

Every year members of Grace are invited to attend our school’s graduation. The trip is three nights. There are four different dates available. By signing up early you can pick any of the four provided they have not already been booked by others. In any case, if you do not have the recommended immunizations for Central America you should decide and arrange for them latest early August.

Several people can go and the cost is moderate, about \$1,000-\$1,300 per person total depending on the available airfare, and it is tax deductible. If you would like to go but cannot afford the cost, some funds can be made available. Just ask anyone who has been there before – Ric Larson, Byron Peterson, Andy Bellavia, or Pr. Ken, and they will tell you it was a most memorable and inspiring trip. Now is your chance! For further information contact Pr. Ken.

FIRST, WE GIVE OF OURSELVES: Giving in Generosity

This fall we enter into the final leg of our three year journey exploring discipleship and growing as stewards. We began our first leg with an emphasis on “Giving in Grace”. Year two was one filled with the meaning of gratitude as we centered our attention of “Giving in Gratitude”. Now, as we enter year three of this emphasis on discipleship and stewardship, we turn our attention to “Giving in Generosity”. Over the next number of weeks, we will explore the concept of generosity, both God’s and ours. What does God’s generosity look like? How do we live each day in God’s generosity? How does God’s generosity provide a model for our own? These are just a few of the questions we will explore together.

Mark These Dates on Your Calendar

September 3 & 4, “First, We Give of Ourselves: Giving in Generosity Kick Off Weekend

September 17 & 18 “Generosity Sunday” This is a special day providing an opportunity for the combined generosity of our congregation in sharing a gift for a ministry outside our congregation. Be watching for more news about this opportunity for generosity.

October 15 & 16 Celebration and Commitment Weekend. At this service we will celebrate God’s generosity and indicate how we will generously share our gifts in response to God’s grace and for our ministry of sharing this.

“Giving in Generosity” All Congregation Bible Study

Gathering around God’s Word enriches all we do. As we experience our conversation about generosity, we have the opportunity to share in an All congregation Bible Study entitled, “Giving in Generosity”. This is a four week study that will examine generosity from the perspective of God’s grace, God’s generosity, and how God’s generosity is model for our own. See the information desk, church website, and constant contact emails for these weekly Bible Studies.

GRACE COOKS COMMITTEE– Please remember that The Grace Cooks are here to provide meals when you are in a time of need. Life events such as illnesses, deaths and births can bring difficult times and Grace Cooks can provide meals to ease the stress. If you would like meal service, please give us the opportunity to support you! Call or text Gretchen Hutchens at 815.341.7544 or Katie Arana at 815.354.7258.



WHY CHRISTIAN? CONFERENCE—Nadia Bolz-Weber and Rachel Held Evans curated a conference, “Why Christian?,” in Minneapolis last fall, and they will be hosting another conference in 2016 in Chicago. The conference invites speakers to respond to the question, ‘why Christian?,’ and “it’s a gathering of storytellers, a community sinners and saints drawn together by the stubborn hope that God is in the business of making all things new.” If you are interested in attending as a group from Grace, please contact Pastor Amanda. You can register online at <http://www.whychristian.net/> beginning January 1st, and spots will likely fill up quickly (last year’s event had 1000 participants and over 300 people on the waiting list). Registration is \$138 for the conference at 4th Presbyterian Church on Friday & Saturday, **Sept. 30 & Oct. 1, 2016**. Contact Pastor Amanda if you sign up to attend, if you have any questions, or for possible scholarship assistance for registration fees.

Luther, Pietism, and Bonhoeffer: Germany Study Tour January 4-25, 2017

Led by the Rev. Dr. Craig L. Nesson

Academic Dean and Professor of Contextual Theology and Ethics

Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

You are invited to participate January 4-25, 2017 in a study tour to Germany, focused on *sites related to the legacy of Martin Luther, German Pietism, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. In the year of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, this immersion will trace these three key threads of the Reformation heritage in relationship to their significance to present day realities in church and society. If you are interested in this trip, please see Pastor Ken for more information.

Coach Bus Trip – Million Dollar Quartet at the Fireside Dinner Theatre – Saturday, September 17, 9:00 – 5:30
Join us for this Tony Award Winning musical! Travel back to December 4, 1956 when Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash came together inside a recording studio. We have excellent reserved seats in rows C, D, & E. Deadline to sign up and pay is August 14. The cost of the trip is \$90.00 per person. For more information or to sign up see the Activity Binder. Questions: call Shirley Busse @ 815-338-9063

GRACE LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL— Fall 2016 Registration is now open! Classes are beginning to fill up.



Sessions are offered from 1 day a week up to 5 days a week for children ages 2 through 5. A registration form can be found on www.gracewoodstock.org, the Information Center or Education Foyer (downstairs). A completed registration form and paid \$50.00 fee guarantees your child a spot in our school. To schedule a tour of our preschool or for any questions, please contact Mrs.

Chris @ 815.338.0554 or at clearman@gracewoodstock.org. Be sure to **SAVE THE DATE...AUGUST 6TH, 2016...** Grace Preschool OPEN HOUSE!!

SENIOR LUNCH – August 23 at Noon -Could you use a little help around the house? Perhaps cleaning or shopping is just getting to be too much. Come and hear how “Visiting Angels” can help you remain in your home. Our menu is a Melon Platter, Greek Chicken Salad with Pita Bread, Dessert and Iced Tea & Lemonade. Cost is only \$5.00, so invite a friend. Please sign up in the Activity Binder by August 21 Questions, call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063

SAVE THE DATE: Kitchen Cleaning– Aug. 4...Preschool Open House–Aug. 6...Confirmation Parent Meeting–Aug. 24...Blood Drive– Aug. 28...Congregational Meeting– Aug. 28...Prime Time Starts– Sept. 7...Day of Service– Sept. 11...Adult Bus Trip, Million Dollar Quartet @ Fireside Dinner Theater. –Sept. 17...Rally Day– Sept. 18...Preschool Fall Family Fun Night– Sept. 30...Confirmation– Oct. 29

Here is your link to the Weekend Worship Participants:

Schedule:<http://www.gracewoodstock.org/WeeklyNews/Monthly%20Worship%20Participants.pdf>

**PREPARE THE WAY
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

Committed— \$495,156.06
Received— \$409,927.88
Goal— \$780,430.00

**UPDATED PHONE NUMBERS AND
ADDRESSES**

Please contact the church office if your contact information has changed, or you no longer have/use a landline phone. Thank you!

WACM COOKBOOKS

Cookbooks are available for sale at the Information Center. They are \$14.95 each and all proceeds go to support Woodstock Area Community Ministries.

Visit the Grace website for the most up-to-date information for all that is happening at Grace!

**2016 BULLETIN AND
PRESENCE LIGHT
SPONSORS NEEDED**

Sign-up is available at the Information Center. A month prior to your sponsoring, a form will be sent to you requesting information and a donation of \$20 for the Bulletins & \$10 for the Presence Light.

SUNDAY MORNING SWEET TREATS

Sundays are available immediately! Info/sign-up on the Activity Board. To volunteer for coffee set-up contact the office.

**CHURCH CLOSINGS AND EVENT
CANCELLATIONS**

- When severe weather arrives, Grace Lutheran Church will follow D200 closing and cancellations. Please check the Emergency Closing Center website or any of the radio stations listed on the D200 website for any severe weather cancellations.

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

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Office Hours: 8:30 am-3:30 pm, M-Th
8:30 am-12:00 pm, F

