
May 2019

Grace Notes

Grace Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Desk. . .

This will probably be the strangest newsletter article I've ever written – and probably one of the strangest you've read in a while...

Over the last two months our congregation participated in an on-line survey (called a **Congregational Self-assessment**) from **Re:Vitality** (a part of the LCMS' Office of National Mission that works to help revitalize Lutheran congregations). Hopefully many of you recall answering the several pages of multiple choice questions. One of the high points of May is going to be Saturday morning the 4th when English District Mission Executive **Rev. Derek Mathers** is HERE at Grace to share the results of that survey and to help us work through questions like "What does this mean?" and "Where do we go from here?"

Now the STRANGE part is that I can't share any of that with you... because the newsletter deadline is BEFORE May 4th! (Also because I haven't seen the results of the survey either, and don't know exactly what Pastor Mathers will say or what ideas will come out of our time together.)

For those of you who weren't able to make it on May 4th, I hope to have a recap for you in the June newsletter so that you can hear about the insights from Pastor Mathers, the ideas we generated in our discussion, and the plans we're considering about putting what we've learned into action. The reason all this (reporting back to everyone) is so important is because for the survey and Pastor Mather's visit with us to be truly beneficial it needs to lead to action; for something... to change, improvement, or alter our understandings. As Jesus said in Luke 11:28, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" It doesn't do much good if it just goes in one ear and out the other, as yesterday's news becomes today's trash. As with God's Word or a doctor's report – same with the report/discussion with Pastor Mathers.

So the strange message for the month is let's take to heart all the words from Pastor Derek Mathers (and from God working on your hearts through him)...though I don't yet know what that will be.

In Christ,

Pastor Josh

April Official Pastoral Acts:

6 sick/shut-in visits
7 private communions
3 circuit visitor activities
3 leadership meetings
2 family visitations
1 pastoral care visit

| Upcoming Sermon Texts | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| May 5 | John 21:1-19 |
| May 12 | John 10:22-30 |
| May 19 | John 16:12-22 |
| May 26 | John 16:23-33 |

Join us in the weeks ahead as the **Sunday morning Adult Bible Class** studies God's view of issues related to murder, war, just and unjust war, and Holy Wars in the Old Testament.

Pastor Josh will be out of town Tuesday, May 14th through Friday, May 17th at the English District **Professional Church Workers Conference** at Risen Christ Lutheran Church in Plymouth, Michigan. If you need to urgently contact him during that time, please call his cell phone.

May Birthdays

Bev Hines 5/04
David Gerstacker Jr. 5/09
Logan Folley 5/12
George Martin 5/15
Kathy Sklarek 5/18
Susan Walker 5/20
Kathy Knipper 5/27
Elijah Moldenhauer 5/31

May Anniversaries

Wayne & Donna Perron 5/14
Dale & Megan Swanzer 5/25
Ron & Jan Mertz 5/29
Ken & Robin Jones 5/31

* If we accidentally forgot your birthday or anniversary, please tell Pastor and we'll add it to our list.

From the President

This spring sure has gotten off to a soggy start. If, like me, most of your property is a bog working on becoming a swamp then a lot of your outdoor activities have been postponed. When things finally dry up be careful not to overdo it trying to catch up.

The surveys are all in for the ReVitaliTy Congregational Self-Assessment offered by the English District. Our meeting with the District representative is May 4th. During this meeting the representative will go over the results and offer guidance for going forward in our service to God.

We will need to reflect deeply on how these results might change the course of our church. We all have God given talents and time that might be used to help one of the District's suggestions blossom. Let us all work together to find the path God wants us to take.

From the Vice-President

“Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today....”

Words we don't want to hear. But these words don't refer only to people. They refer to a church also: in our case, Grace Lutheran Church! How so? Attendance at Easter Service in 2019 was 83. Not bad, considering that there were 71 in attendance in 2018, but a severe drop from 2014 when Grace had 114 congregants in attendance, an alarming decrease of 27 per cent. For those who remember: “Where Have All the Flowers Gone”?

Last Sunday (April 28th) there were only 28 people in attendance with a seminarian giving a wonderful homily. Very embarrassing to our church when one considers that “116 confirmed members” was the number reported on Grace's (2018) yearly statistical report. Are we here at Grace Lutheran Church the 2018 Super Bowl New England Patriots or the 2017 Cleveland Browns? You decide.

Worship News

Thank you to all those who have filled out and returned the short **2019 Midweek Worship Survey** that was placed in your church mailboxes. The results of the survey – along with any changes that come about as a response – will be discussed at the May Voters' Meeting.

Evangelism News

The Mission of the Month for May is the **Ministry to the Armed Forces** – specifically those who serve as chaplains across the world in the military. In coordination with this, on May 26th we will celebrate Armed Forces Sunday with a special insert in the bulletins. Any special missions donations that day will be sent directly to the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces. You can use the red "*mission offering*" envelope in your church envelopes box – or the envelope attached to the special insert - for this purpose.

There will be further information on this posted on the Evangelism Bulletin Board in the church hallway. For those of you receiving this by email, you can learn more about this by going to <https://www.lcms.org/ministry-to-the-armed-forces> , which has additional congregational resources and ideas.

Altar Guild News

Thank you to those who purchased Easter lilies to decorate the chancel area this year: Dale Rider, Carolyn Husted, Kathy and John Knipper, Barb and Tom Hadaway, Fred Feddeck and Robin and Glenn Turnbull.

Serving in May:

- 5 – Karen Huston
- 12 – Robin Turnbull
- 19 – Robin Turnbull
- 26 & 6/2 – Colleen Karp

~ Robin

Lutheran Women's League News

Hosting the May 2019 Community Free Hot Meal will be Donna and Wayne Perron.

Serving coffee in May will be:

- 7 Karen Fridenstine
- 14 Jan Limpert
- 22 Diane Senyek
- 28 Carolyn Husted

The women's breakfast will meet on Thursday, May 23 at 9:30 am at the Oberlin Kitchen located on South Main Street. Come and enjoy our conversation.

LWL will once again participate in Love INC (Love in the name of Christ) annual Clothe-A-Kid for school program. Information will be received late May or early June. Forms will be available in the Sunday bulletins.

There will be an important meeting for the LWL in May- date to be announced. Lots of important items and dates to discuss.

Another reminder: LWL and Grace Lutheran Church's annual rummage sale is scheduled for the last weekend in August or first weekend in September. (The city wide garage sale moved to the weekend of September 7th to allow for the college students to return). Please save your items for our only money-making project. Good place to get rid of your "we don't need this anymore" after finishing your spring cleaning. All money earned goes towards worthy causes.

The third Saturday of each month members of Grace Lutheran Church hosts the Free Community Hot Meal. Our council graciously set up a fund to help support those who wish to host the meal but perhaps need a little financial support. Just keep your receipts and give to Andy Karp for reimbursement. Thanks council! We still need volunteers for the months of November and December.

May 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|--------|--|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 • ReVitality Survey Results Meeting 9 am |
| 5 • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:40 am | 6 • Elder's Meeting 4 pm • Council's Meeting 7 pm | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 Mother's Day • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:40 am | 13 | 14 | 15 Pastor attends English District Conference | 16 | 17 | 18 • Free Hot Meal 5 pm |
| 19 • Worship 10 am • Voter's Meeting 11:40 am | 20 | 21 • OCS Food Box Delivery 2 pm | 22 | 23 • Women's Breakfast at Oberlin Kitchen 9:30 am • Mental Illness Support Group 7 pm | 24 | 25 |
| 26 Armed Forces Sunday • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:40 am | 27 Memorial Day | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

Upcoming Important Dates:

- May: LWL Meeting