
June 2020

Grace Notes

Grace Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Desk . . .

By far the BIGGEST and most frequent question I've been getting lately is: "*When will we be resuming Sunday worship at Grace?*" The short answer is **Sunday, June 7th**. The longer answer is that starting in June we will resume Sunday morning worship – with several changes. These are only temporary. Many of them will be the same as was used for our March 15th worship service (the last time we all worshiped together in the sanctuary):

- There will be **one** divine worship service at **10:00 am**.
- People should kindly refrain from **shaking hands** or giving **hugs** at church.
- The entire worship service will be printed out on paper so that **no hymnals** will need to be used or touched. Hymnals, Bibles, and the red friendship pads will all be removed from the pews.
- The **Ushers** will not hand out bulletins or papers. Instead, items will be laid out for everyone to pick-up on a table in the narthex.
- Everyone entering church is highly encouraged to take a paper towel or napkin (available on the table) with them for possible use during the service for coughing or touching the pews.
- The **offering plates** will not be passed during the service – but instead will be placed by the main doors into the sanctuary, to be used before or after the service.
- When entering the church a **Greeter** will show everyone where the hand sanitizer is located and be ready to answer any questions or concerns.
- When possible, people are encouraged to maintain **social distancing** (6 feet of distance between each other).
- There will be **no coffee hour** or **Adult Bible Class** after the services.

The biggest area of change will be with **Holy Communion** – a sacred activity that draws us into deeper communion with God and one another. The following Communion changes will be implemented temporarily:

- Holy Communion will continue to be **offered at every Sunday** morning divine service.
- The **Altar Guild** will prepare Holy Communion using masks and gloves.
- Communicants will be invited to the communion rail where they will maintain social distancing (households staying 6 feet away from each other). Tape on the floor and communion rail will help mark off the 6 foot distance.
- Communicants will all stand and **not kneel** during Communion.
- Pastor, wearing gloves, will drop a **wafer** into the out-stretched hands of each communicant.
- Pastor, wearing gloves, will hand an **individual cup** (holding it from the top) into the out-stretched hand of each communicant (grabbing it from below).
- After being excused from the rail, the communicants will place the used individual cups directly into a **trash basket** located along the wall near the end of the communion rail.
- The **chalice** (or common cup) will not be used in worship for the time being.

Along with all that, there will be some extra changes to our regular Sunday morning gatherings. While these may not be natural or comfortable, we encourage everyone to mindfully do their best to comply.

- Please use the double doors under the portico (instead of the Fellowship Hall doors) to **enter** the church. We'd like people to refrain from using the Fellowship Hall, hallway, or kitchen.
- People are encouraged **not to gather in the narthex** (to socialize) before the worship service, but instead to walk straight into the sanctuary and find their seats. Our illustrious James Feddeck will be sure to have pre-service music that helps us to prepare our hearts for worship.
- Alternating **pews** in the sanctuary will be roped off. Households are encouraged to spread out throughout the sanctuary to maintain social distancing.
- As much as the weather will allow, we will be **opening all the doors and windows** before, during, and after the service to allow for healthy air-movement. Please dress accordingly.
- Wearing **masks** will be supported, but not required.
- **Children's Church** will be held during worship at the usual time (after the Children's Message). Parents (or someone from the same household) will be responsible for teaching their children in separate Sunday School rooms. All teaching materials and supplies will be provided.
- After the service Pastor will **greet people outside** under the portico. People are encouraged NOT to stay and fellowship inside in the Fellowship Hall, but instead to do so **outside** in the open air, where it will also be easier to maintain social distancing for all involved.

While these guidelines apply to those attending Sunday morning worship, there are other concerns and people to be considered:

- As is always the case, all people who are experiencing **flu-like symptoms** should stay home. If anyone in your house has a fever, please stay home.
- People who are at a **high-risk** for getting COVID-19 are encouraged to **stay home** from Sunday worship. According to the Lorain County Public Health, this would include anyone 65 years or older; anyone with chronic lung disease, asthma, a serious heart condition, a compromised immune system, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or liver disease.

- The **daily family devotions** and **Sunday sermon videos** sent out (by email or mail) will continue for the time being.
- Starting on June 17th Pastor will offer **private communion** at church on **Wednesdays** from 1-2:30 pm and 7-8 pm. These short (15 minute) services are especially designed for those in the high-risk group. It would be appreciated if people would contact Pastor ahead of time to “reserve” a time, but “drop-ins” are also welcome.
- The church will be **cleaned** twice a week, with a heavy emphasis being placed on disinfecting surfaces that are frequently touched.

I realize that some of these changes are certainly not ideal. We’d all prefer to get back to “normal” and have things the way we are comfortable with. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 virus is still alive and lurking within Ohio and so we must try to balance our desire to worship God freely as a community of believers with our desire to seek to protect ourselves and our fellow believers (and their families) from possible harm. So this is certainly a compromise – which may not make everyone happy, but will hopefully allow people the opportunity to worship God together in a safe setting. Remember, this is only temporary. We continue to pray that our great and powerful God would bring relief from this pandemic and protection for the vulnerable. The blessing before us is the opportunity to once again offer those prayers while joined together in God’s house – even as He strengthens us with His Word, Spirit, Sacrament, and shared fellowship.

In His Service,
Pastor Josh

PS Feel free to contact me if you’d struggling with what to do or how to decide about when to return to worship. I’m happy to help listen and shepherd.

May Official Pastoral Acts:

- 4 leadership meetings
- 1 circuit visitor activity
- 24 phone conversations

Upcoming Sermon Texts	
June 7	Acts 2:14, 23-41
June 14	Acts 2:42-47
June 21	Acts 3:1-10
June 28	Acts 3:11-26
July 5	Acts 4:1-22

Remember to email or call Pastor (graceoberlinpastor@gmail.com) if you have any **prayer requests**, and they will be included with the Sunday service and emails sent out to everyone.

Remember, **Sunday School materials** (for kids in the Children’s Church age-range) continue to be available each week for parents to use to teach their children every Sunday. You’ll find them on our church website at <https://gracechurchoberlin.wordpress.com/childrens-ministry/>.

Lutheran Women's League News

The Ladies will try to have a meeting in July, time and date to be announced.

It's that time of year again when **Love INC** is asking for school clothing donations. Their project titled "**Clothe-A-Kid**" is the answer for many families in the Lorain County area who need assistance in providing new clothes each school year. Are you interested in helping them? I need to know by June 14th if you are willing Love INC will provide us with each "kid" his or her size between July 15 and July 22. Shopping can be done from July 19 – August 8. Each "kid" should receive a minimum of 2 pairs of jeans, 2 shirts or polos, 3 pairs of underwear, and 3 pairs of socks. Love INC suggests spending from \$60 to \$90. *I will have additional information for you before you start shopping.* If you do not feel comfortable going to a store for your purchases, online ordering is an option. If school does not return to normal in the Fall, kids are still growing and will still need clothes that are new and fit. During this pandemic normalcy is what we all need.

If you would like to contribute the amount listed above but prefer not to shop let me know; someone will do the shopping for you.

Thank you. Call me with your decision ASAP at 440-774-1441 or email at carolyn1935@frontier.com

~ Carolyn Husted ~

June Birthdays

Norma Stechow	6/02
Colleen Karp	6/03
Carl Koch	6/06
Kathy Koepf	6/06
Elizabeth Thomas	6/07
Jen Moldenhauer	6/10
Karen Fridenstine	6/12
Mark Huston	6/16
Giovanna Bremke	6/16
David Jones	6/20
Carolyn Husted	6/25
Dave Metzger	6/26
Chris Koch	6/27
Miranda Scholl	6/27
Coralie Swanzer	6/28

June Anniversaries

John & Kathy Knipper	6/15
Robin & Glenn Turnbull	6/15
Pastor & Jen Moldenhauer	6/30

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

Buildings & Grounds News

- At this point the leaky roof at the parsonage has been repaired. Keep in mind that roof may be good for 5 years if we're lucky.
- Many thanks to the folks that helped with the spring clean-up Saturday.
- Just in time for people returning to Grace, the landscaping has been professionally re-done and it looks terrific!

– Dale Rider –

President's Message

The (annual) 2019 Congregational Statistics Report for Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (our actual corporate name) has been filed with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Most of you aren't familiar with this report, so

Let me share it with you: 122 baptized members
105 confirmed members
38 AVERAGE Sunday attendance

This is not a typographical error: **an average of 38 people INCLUDING children attended a Sunday Service in 2019.** Excluding the children from 2 families, the number is reduced to 31. Since children aren't counted among those "confirmed," the percentage of "confirmed" members attending Sunday worship is a pathetic 29.5 per cent!

We have a Board of Elders (numbering 2) assisting pastor in getting "confirmed" members who rarely attend Grace to come back into the "fold." Quite candidly, the above statistics show minimum benefit has resulted. In 2018, the numbers have been just as dismal: 31.9 per cent. To be told that "most churches feel the same crunch," is not acceptable...or it shouldn't be. Grace IS NOT one of "most churches." Now that we soon will safely (?) return to Sunday Service, we should try our best to get that "38 average INCLUDING children" to AT LEAST mid-high 40s for pastor's report submission for 2020.

If you should meet one of our "lost sheep" at Walmart, at a local restaurant, or at a movie theatre, for example, remind him or her that Sunday Service begins at 10AM with a coffee hour immediately afterward and we'd love to see them. Perhaps this will increase our (currently) sad attendance numbers.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." (Matt. 18:20)

Respectfully,

Fred C. Feddeck

GRACE 2020 Service Schedule

PLEASE BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A REPLACEMENT SHOULD YOU BE UNABLE TO SERVE

DATE	USHER	ACOLYTE	GREETER	Counters	Altar Guild
7-Jun	Kert Limpert	Donna Jones	Andy Karp	Jan/Kert Limpert & Donna Perron	Kathy Knipper
14-Jun	Dale Rider	Donna Jones	Andy Karp	Colleen Karp & Wayne Perron	Kathy Knipper
21-Jun	Dale Rider	Donna Jones	Jan Koepp	Bonnie Abicht & Lisa Lalonde	Karen Huston
28-Jun	Andy Karp	Donna Jones	Jan Koepp	Glen F. & Fred Feddeck	Karen Huston
5-Jul	Wayne Perron	Barb Hadaway	Tom Hadaway	Fred Feddeck & Donna Perron	Robin Turnbull
12-Jul	Wayne Perron	Barb Hadaway	Tom Hadaway	Colleen Karp & Wayne Perron	Robin Turnbull
19-Jul	Dale Rider	Barb Hadaway	Kert Limpert	Barb Hadaway & Glen F.	Carolyn Husted
26-Jul	Andy Karp	Barb Hadaway	Kert Limpert	Ron Mertz & Andy Karp	Carolyn Husted

Upcoming Church Events & Dates

- **Elders Meeting** Wednesday, June 3rd at 3:30 pm.
- **Council Meeting** Monday, June 8th at 7:00 pm.
- **Private Communion Services** offered at Grace every Wednesday from 1:00-2:30 pm and 7:00-8:00 pm starting June 17th.

Grace Graduate

Kaitlyn Kromer:

I am graduating from Lutheran High School West in the class of 2020. While I was there I was a part of the National Honors Society, played varsity softball all four years, and I was the stat girl for the wrestling team all four years. In the fall I will be attending Ohio University majoring in biological sciences (pre-med). My goal is to become a pediatrician in the future.

Ascension Lutheran Church in North Olmsted is offering a **Staycation Bible School** called "*Going the Distance with Jesus!*" to any children. You can register through their church website or by calling 440-777-6365 with the relevant information.