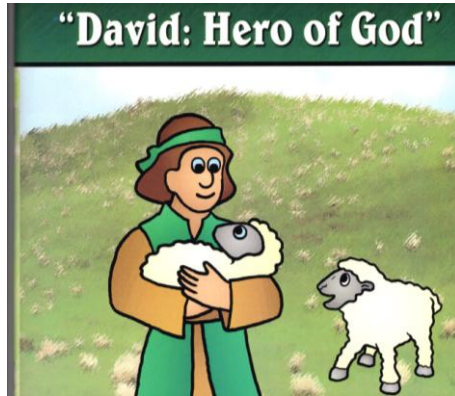


GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC
Volume 219, Number 8 **August 2016**

Vacation Bible School
for ALL ages
July 31 - August 4
5:30 Meal
6:00 - 8:00 Classes



Homecoming

Bring a friend with you!
Sunday, August 28th
Rev. Harvey Bloom, preaching
Covered dish lunch following worship

From the Pastor's Pen...



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at Grace...

Why is it we often think that summer will be a time to slow down and take it easy? As the saying goes, "the lazy hazy days of summer" seem to convince us that summer is a time of a slower paced life style when we can just lay back and take it easy. That has not been the case this summer and I pray each of you will take part in all of the exciting activities planned for the summer and fall months.

The first week in August we will welcome our annual Vacation Bible School with classes for all ages, including adults, as we study the life of David - shepherd, King and a man after God's own heart!.

In August, Pastor Steven King from Bethel Lutheran Church in Lincolnnton will come to Grace to lead worship and preach as he and Pastor Gilbert will be participating in a Pulpit Swap on August 14th. Pastor Gilbert will be preaching at Bethel for their Homecoming Sunday.

On August 28th Grace will celebrate Homecoming Sunday with Pastor Harvey Blume preaching. He has already commented that he hopes there will be lots of people in worship and a table with lots of delicious food following worship. Grace has the best cooks in the county! We agree on that!

On Saturday, August 27th, we are asking that volunteers come to help paint the closet in Fellowship Hall to waterproof this storage area. Mold and mildew continues to invest this storage space and we need to take care of that ASAP! So please make plans to come on August 27th to finish this important work.

I look forward to seeing each of you in worship and at all the other activities at Grace. August will be a great month for witnessing, worship and celebrating the Good News of Jesus Christ among us.

Blessings!
+ Pastor Gil Gilbert

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR AUGUST

- ❖ Communion Assistants - Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Ushers - Carl Beam, Ricky and Cindy Bivens, James Hall
- ❖ Greeter - Glennie Beam
- ❖ Altar Preparation - Malinda Leatherman, Debi Pisko
- ❖ Children's Church - Nancy Leonard, Bobbie Jo Wright
- ❖ Nursery - Nancy Leonard, Bobbie Jo Wright
- ❖ Offering Tabulators - Carl Beam, Mike Pisko

Please be mindful of your commitment to serve. If you are unable to fulfill that commitment, be reminded that it is your responsibility to find someone to serve in your place.

FLOWER CHART FOR AUGUST



8/07 - OPEN
8/21 - Kim Parker

8/14 - Christine Norman
8/28 - Grace Lutheran Church

If you wish to give the flowers for a given Sunday, please list your name on the chart in the narthex. *You are responsible for ordering the flowers from a florist of your choice; we do not have a standing order with any florist.* The liturgical color of the day is listed to assist you in selecting flowers appropriate for that Sunday. You should contact the Church Office so that the correct information is placed in the bulleting for that Sunday. Please notify the Church Office the Thursday prior to your selected Sunday. You can call the Church Office between 9 AM and Noon each weekday, leave a note on the desk, or send an email to let us know the occasion or memoriam for this wonderful gift of beatification of the worship.

ATTENDANCE AND GIVING TO OUR LORD’S WORK FOR JUNE/JULY 2016

	6/26/16	7/3/16	7/10/16	7/17/16	7/24/16
SCS	31	29	32	45	40
Worship	77	80	77	93	79
General Offering	2,064.75	5,765.00	1,496.00	2,688.00	1,374.50
Learning Hour	19.05	22.15	236.41	33.00	220.00
Building Fund	0.00	136.00	110.00	190.00	0.00
Use of Fellowship Hall	50.00	0.00	25.00	50.00	0.00

General Fund Checking Account Balance as of 6/30/16 is \$(26,268.16)
(Brackets indicate a negative balance).

NOTE: The financial report will be in the newsletter each month and will be not be published in the weekly worship bulletin. Because the newsletter is distributed the last Sunday of each month, the attendance and giving figures for the last Sunday will be carried over to the next month’s newsletter.

THE FRED T. FOARD SENIORS will meet at Noon on Wednesday, August 3rd, at Blackburn Baptist.

MEN OF GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST will be held on Saturday, August 13th, at 9:00 AM at the Blue Moon.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL begins July 31st and will continue through August 4th. Many exciting and fun things are planned and there is something for everyone from 1 - 100! We hope to see you and a few friends beginning each night at 5:30 with a meal. The menu is - Sunday: Hot Dogs/Hamburgers; Monday: Pizza Night; Tuesday: Taco Tuesday; Wednesday: Jersey Mike Sub Sandwiches; Thursday: Chicken Tenders and Potato Wedges. A need for the week supplied by the congregational members is fresh fruit and homemade cookies.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY, love and prayers are extended by the People of God at Grace to Jackie Jarrett and her family on the death of her aunt, Nina Eckard and to Faye Lane and her family on the death of her brother, Hubert Setzer. May God comfort all who mourn.

HOMECOMING AT GRACE WILL BE CELEBRATED Sunday, August 28th. The Guest Pastor will be the Rev. Harvey Blume. Pastor Blume was the Interim Pastor here at Grace some years ago. We will want to welcome him back to Grace for this Homecoming Celebration. A Covered Dish lunch will follow the 10:30 Worship in Fellowship Hall and the Picnic Shelter. So make your plans now to come to Homecoming and invite former members, neighbors and friends.

THANK YOU to everyone for the nice birthday cards. I will always remember each one.

- Lorene Heavner

FLORAL VASES have been received and we are very thankful for the donations, especially those from Susan Setzer's collection of dozens of glass vases. Small bud vases are still welcomed for the Iris Sigmon project. At this time we have sufficient numbers of the larger vases for other uses. Thanks again. (JH)

WITH HOMECOMING FAST APPROACHING our choir will be working on an anthem for that particular Sunday. The Grace Chancel Choir will resume practice on Wednesday, August 10th, at 6:00 PM. The choir is counting on a few new recruits from the congregation as they begin their new season. Full or part time help is most welcome. (JH)

PLAYGROUND AREA had some boards that needed attention so our children could play safely. Thanks to Don and Nicky Jarrett for replacing those boards. (JH)

THANK YOU to Geraldine Jarrett for the donation of a 12 cup coffee maker for use in Fellowship Hall. This will give us two working coffee makers of this size for use at smaller events versus the large coffee brewer. THANKS Geraldine. (JH)

DONATIONS FOR ECCCM should be placed in the plastic tub in the basement which has the yellow label, "ECCCM". Be sure you place your donations in the intended organization's receptacle. ECCCM needs your continuous help to keep the Food Pantry and Homeless Shelter supplied. They are asking for items for children (toys, blankets, and clothing), food, toiletry items (shampoo, tooth paste, tooth brushes, combs, brushes, etc.) and grocery bags. Any items brought to the church for this ministry will be delivered to ECCCM. *Be reminded that they can no longer accept used egg cartons.* (JB, KH)

OCTOBER NOVEMBER HYMN SING is coming. The Hymn Sing has been moved to November 6th at 4:00 PM. We have received a few hymn requests but more would be much appreciated. List your favorites on the back of the Worship Today Form by title or hymnal with page number. They do not have to be found in one of our 3 hymnals. (JH)

COPIES OF THE NALC NEWS FOR JULY are available in the Narthex. The article from Bishop John Bradosky is entitled "Holy God, Holy Lives, Holy Spirit". Other articles cover the upcoming Convocation in Anaheim, CA, NALC Disaster Response working in West Virginia and Texas, reconfiguring of NALC staff offices, and missions around the world. Continue to be informed and uplifted by the works of the NALC.

COPIES OF THE NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN SEMINARY newsletter are also available in the Narthex. The focus is mainly on the 2016 Commencement as well as a few other updates from the NALS.

LATVIA ORDAINS ONLY MEN. On June 3rd, the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL) approved a motion to change its constitution, restricting service in the ordained ministry to men only. The Latvian church is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, of which more than 80 percent of member churches ordain women. In an official statement, the LWF said it "is saddened to see the ELCL depart from a shared journey and common practice among LWF member churches. The LWF expresses its solidarity to women, who by virtue of this decision may feel marginalized and hurt in their dignity." Going forward, LWF representatives will discuss with the Latvian church the implications of this decision. -"Living Lutheran" magazine, April, 2016

2016 LUTHERAN WEEK will be held in Anaheim, California, August 9th through August 12th. The Women of the NALC will have their Annual Gathering on August 9th. The Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology will be on the 9th and 10th. The NALC Mission Festival and Convocation will begin August 10th and conclude on August 12th. Please keep all those that gather for this marvelous time of worship, learning, fellowship, and business of the NALC in your prayers. (KH)

TO KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST NEWS around the Church there are several online resources. If you do not have access to the internet maybe a family member or friend could show you some of the resources. The following links are very informative.

North American Lutheran Church - NALC <http://thenalc.org>

Carolinas Mission District <http://carolinasnalc.org>

Women of the NALC - WNALC <http://thenalc.org/congregationally-focused-womans-ministry>

Samaritan's Purse www.samaritanspurse.org

THOSE SERVING AS NURSERY ATTENDANTS AND CHILDREN'S CHURCH LEADERS are asked to record those attending both of these events each Sunday morning. There is a clipboard with an attendance sheet attached. Please list first and last names if at all possible. At the end of worship the sheet can be placed in the Church Office mailbox or on the desk in the Church Office. Volunteers are greatly needed to serve in these areas. Please notify the Church Office if you would like to help. (JH)

NEW COMMUNION PRACTICE COMING. During the last meeting of the Leadership Ministry Board, it was decided that there were so many favorable comments concerning the 'Communion by Table' in the Chancel on Pentecost Sunday, that we would begin that practice once a month, on the first Sunday of each month beginning in August. Ushers have been instructed of this change and will be there to assist those who need assistance stepping up to the Chancel area on those selected Sundays. It remains the policy that if, for whatever reason, you are unable to come to the Altar or walk down the aisle to receive the elements during the distribution, you should stand in your place, or let an usher know, immediately after the Pastor and Communion Assistants have communed at the Altar. This way, the Pastor and Assistant will know you are desiring to receive the elements before the Adult Choir communes. (PG)

PRIEST MARTYRDOM IS A WARNING TO THE WEST

by Sean Fitzpatrick of Crisis Magazine



On Tuesday July 26, the feast day of St. James the Greater, less than two weeks after a rampaging Islamic terrorist killed 84 civilians with a truck in the south of France, Fr. Jacques Hamel was celebrating Mass in a quiet Normandy church in Sainte-Etienne-du-Rouvray. Two militants backed by ISIS burst through the doors. The attackers forced the 86-year-old priest to his knees. They stabbed him in the chest and slit his throat and beheaded him. After praying aloud in Arabic around the

altar, they stabbed one of the petrified and pleading congregation of five, two nuns and three laypeople. When police arrived, they attempted negotiation for the hostages but, in the end, the murderers were gunned down by sniper commandos. All along, as the Normandy killers carried out their bloody crimes in the name of the Islamic State, they repeatedly cried out “*Allahu akbar*,” meaning, “God is great.” Though their cries do not proclaim the greatness of the One True God, they do proclaim a great warning to the West. The threat of Islam is come again, as it has in ages past, and it is sounding a warning to the Western nations to cling to the God of life and love in the face of death and hatred.

The Normandy tragedy and the martyrdom of Fr. Hamel is only one of a horrifying string of recent bloodbaths. This attack, though, is somehow more horrifying than the indiscriminate death of 84 people under the wheels of a truck in Nice. It is more horrifying because it is more symbolic. Instead of mass murder, it was murder at Mass. The war against the West is a war of religion. It is a war between Islam and Christianity. But when faith is lost, as it largely is in the West, in both Europe and America, the brash confidence of ISIS strikes is discouraging and disarming. The bold acts of brutal Muslim terrorist extremists are a disheartening blaze of barbarism in comparison to the lukewarm melting-pot of values at the end of a glittering LGBTQ rainbow. It is a terrible truth that jihadists are willing to die for their religion. It is an even more terrible truth that Westerners barely have a religion to die for. There can be no confidence in comatose lethargy, contentious communities, concentrated materialism, or collective atheism. In the wake of the Nice attack, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls alarmingly said that France had better get used to living with terror, and that is the only conclusion for a civilization that has surrendered, and surrendered to a falsehood posing as the truth—and forcing itself upon others as the truth.

Islam is not so much religion as it is paganism, for both fail to understand the true nature of the Divine. God is a God of life, love, self-sacrifice, and self-revelation. He is a God of condescension. Islam bases its faith not on the familiar interaction of God and man, but on the prophets, the “warners,” as the Quran calls them, who call all men to the contemplation of the distant unity of God. Though they are prophets, they are not intercessors or intermediaries. In Islam, there is nothing that unites man and God. The warners are nothing more than guides, as removed from God as any other mortal. There is only one source of illumination and that is from God—not from any man, however holy he may be. The God of Islam is an isolated God, illuminating the spiritual world by his light alone as he reigns on high, alone. This is the God of Islam—and he is forbidding and far away. It is the reverse image of the Holy Trinity, which is diffusive, light-giving and life-giving. It is the opposite of what men’s souls naturally desire, and what God, in his benevolent mercy and care, has given to his creatures. The blind rage of Islamist extremists is, in fact, a warning against Islamic blindness—a religion that is content with a terrible distance between God and man and, therefore,

deals in terror. The rise and rage of ISIS bespeaks this misconception of the God who gave his life for man and unites his life to the lives of men every day.

Fr. Hamel bled at the altar where God's blood was shed. It is this intimate majesty and mystery that the Islamic State wishes to destroy more than anything, for it is the polar opposite of what they have given themselves to—and their actions are a warning for the world. Though the horrors seen in France, Germany, the United States, and elsewhere can be a profound deterrent and a discouragement from trusting blindly in God and his will, it is a challenge to accept that, even in permitting evil, God can and will bring about the good. God *is* great, and that means he will not leave his creatures to the devices and divisions of death and evil. To all whose minds and hearts are open, the universe clearly bespeaks the action of such a God; a God of love and of life; a benevolent Being whose goodness is reflected in the works of charity, not the works of hate.

This is the God of the Christian West and the wider Church. It is not the God of Islam. The fear that such murders and mindsets ignite are warnings that they are not of God, and its perpetrators are the warners. The god of Islam is an isolated and isolating god who dwells apart on a lonely star. The God of Israel is a Friend and Father who reveals the secrets of his Inner-Life with his creations in acts of beautiful assimilation. It is never his will that terror be brought upon humankind. Be warned of those who speak and act otherwise. Though atrocities such as the ones perpetrated in Normandy are meant to be terrifying while glorifying the God of Islam, they actually serve to give Christians warning and a greater cause to rejoice in the true God, finding solace in his Nature which is life-giving and not death-dealing. This is the Catholic peace that can and should arise out of the duress of Islamic terrorism. As the Quran says, "There was no nation but that there had passed within it a warner." With every terrorist attack, the warning sounds. ISIS is the new warner of the nations. Faith in the Church must re-ignite and gain strength. As Fr. Hamel has shown, the crown of martyrdom hovers over all. All uncertainties and hardships, though there are many, pale in comparison to confidence in Christ the King. Nothing good can be accomplished without travail, as the Cross has shown. Nothing worth doing is free of peril. Accepting persecution is the challenge of this age. Fr. Hamel has shown the world the way. May his soul rest in peace.

STS GENERAL RETREAT will be held September 20-22 at the Catholic Conference Center in Hickory. Inquirers, friends of the Society, etc. that are interested in attending may obtain information for registration through the link: <http://www.societyholyltrinity.org/generalretreat.htm> or through the Grace Church Office. (PG)

LAWN MAINTENANCE PERSON has been approved by the Leadership Ministry Board. Ernie Bowman has begun mowing the church, parsonage, and cemetery lawns. Thanks again to Don and Nicky for their faithful service. (KH)

LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY INVITES YOU to the 2016 Annual Faith & Spiritual Fair. This event will be held Tuesday, August 30th, from 11 AM to 2 PM in the Cromer Center, which is located on the University's campus. Grace Church will be given half of a 6' table for space to provide brochures, bulletins, souvenirs, homemade cookies, giveaways...anything you would like to present to the students. This fair will be an excellent opportunity for you to make all of our students aware of what your faith expression has to offer them as well as provide an avenue to build relationships that will have an impact on their lives forever. We need to RSVP by August 23rd, so please let Pastor Gil or the Church Office know if you are willing to share things about Grace at this Fair. (PG)

METHODISTS POSTPONE GAY RIGHTS DECISION

Amid protest, song and fears of a denominational breakup, United Methodists at their quadrennial General Conference in May decided to put a debate on human sexuality on hold. The General Conference is the denomination's top policy-making body.

Delegates from the U.S. and abroad, however, voted 428-405 on May 18th to allow the church's Council of Bishops to appoint a commission to discuss whether to accept same-sex marriage or ordain lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender clergy. The bishops said they want the commission to "develop a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph in our Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality."

In other action, delegates voted 425-268 for two of its bodies to disassociate from the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. The decision instructed the General Board of Church and Society and the United Methodist Women to withdraw immediate membership in the coalition, a pro-choice organization the UMC board helped establish in 1973.

Beth Ann Cook, a pastor in the Indiana Conference, said "the time has come to withdraw" because the UMC's positions on abortion differ from some of the coalition's policies. (MM)

ECCCM IS HOSTING a "Share the Harvest Banquet". This fund raising banquet will be held on November 12th at 6:00 PM at the Rock Barn Golf and Spa. The cost is \$75.00 and tickets are available at <http://www.ecccm.org/share-the-harvest-banquet/> or by contacting ECCCM. The evening will include a catered meal, silent auction, raffle, photo booth, and live music. One in five families in eastern Catawba County struggle with food insecurity. Your support of the Share the Harvest Banquet will help the ECCCM feed the hungry in our community. (PG)

NEED FUNDS FOR AN UPCOMING EVENT? Any member with a Thrivent policy can help provide funds for events held at the church, rather than using money from offerings. Any Thrivent member can now apply at Thrivent.com for a Thrivent Action Team along with other volunteer helpers to do a helping project for others or the church. These funds can be used for fellowship events, worship events, educational events, and service projects. They need to know the dates, the purpose of the event, and how others may benefit from the event. If the project is accepted, you will receive a \$250 Visa gift card to use as seed money for the event, tee shirts for up to 25 volunteers and a Thrivent Live Generously banner. Once the event is complete, you have to complete a form stating how many attended, the number of volunteers and approximate hours served. It is a relatively easy way to obtain funds for any project. If you have a Thrivent policy of any kind, please look into using this resource to help with events at Grace. Contact the Church Office if you have more questions as Kathy has applied for funds several times for events at Shiloh. (KH)

POPE FRANCIS' OUTREACH to the Protestant world will hit new heights this fall when he makes a two-day trip to Sweden to mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The Oct. 31-Nov. 1 trip to Lund and Malmo is being structured around the themes of "thanksgiving, repentance and commitment to common witness," according to the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation. Two-thirds of Swedes are members of the Lutheran Church of Swede (6.2 million), although participation is low. Organizers say the celebration's aim "is to express the gifts of the Reformation and ask for forgiveness for division perpetuated by Christians from the two traditions." (MM)

REV. STEVEN KING, GUEST PASTOR, COMING TO GRACE

On Sunday, August 14th, we will welcome Pastor Stephen King to lead worship and preach at Grace. Pastor Gilbert will be preaching for Homecoming at Bethel Lutheran (NALC) where Pastor King serves as pastor. This pulpit swap is a great way to promote unity and fellowship in our Carolinas Mission District congregations. Welcome Pastor King on the 14th and thank him for the proclamation of the Gospel. Born and raised in the Phoenix, AZ area, Pastor King served in the US Air Force from 1979-2007 and retired with the rank of Senior Master Sergeant (E-7). He earned an Associates in Avionics Systems Technology from the Community College of the Air Force and a Bachelors Science in Occupational Education from Wayland Baptist University. Pastor King was awarded a Masters of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA. He is married to Terry, and they have three grown children, Maryann, Krystle and Leanna and four grandchildren, Jessie, Wesley, Brett and Paige.

FIRST SUNDAY LUNCH AND SECOND SUNDAY BREAKFAST

In preparing for the upcoming months, the Church Office would like to verify those that will be preparing the meals on the first and second Sundays. Those listed below are ones that served those months the past several years. Please look at the list below and contact the Church Office with an email, a phone call, or a note on the desk to verify that you will prepare the meals. If you will **NOT** be serving again, we need to know that as well so another group can be recruited. It has been requested that the menu for each meal be listed in the newsletter and bulletin. They are due in the office by the 22nd of the month prior to the event.

	FIRST SUNDAY LUNCH	SECOND SUNDAY BREAKFAST
September	No lunch - Labor Day	Learning Hour Classes - Rally Day
October	Christian Education/ Learning Ministry Team	* Carl & Glennie Beam, Lorene Heavner, Gary Leatherman, Dan & Tricia Panek
November	* Grace Chancel Choir	* Pastor Gil & Karen, Joy Heavner, Don & Nicky Jarrett, Mike & Debi Pisko
December	Christina Education/ Learning Ministry Team	Biggerstaff's

* = Group has confirmed they will serve.

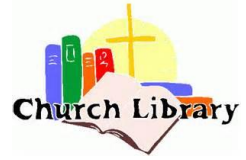
40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - WESTERN / EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA VDC

On September 24th, 2016 Western North Carolina Via de Cristo and Eastern North Carolina Via de Cristo will come together to celebrate 40 years of Via de Cristo in North Carolina! For those who have made a weekend, we look forward to seeing you there. A Registration Form is available on the WNC VdC web page (www.wncvdc.org) and is also available in the Grace Church Office. Please include a registration fee of \$5.00, payable to WNCVDC, to cover the cost of catering. After August 15, the fee will be \$6.00. Mail your registration form and fee to Ellen Goodman, 7770 Reed Mine Rd., Midland, NC 27107. We plan to provide transportation to this event with the Grace Bus, so please let us now if you are attending. Visitors and folks who have not made a weekend are encouraged to attend. See Pastor Gil or Karen Gilbert if you have any questions.

New Items for August



IT OUT!!!!



1. "An Old Fashioned Christmas" - Four new inspirational love stories from Christmases gone by.
2. "The One Year Bible Companion" - Questions and answers to help you make the most of your daily Bible reading.
3. "Making a Way" by Emily Davenport. Stories of the Deep South and how faith grows.
4. "Brighten the Corner" by Donna Goodrich
5. "Philippians - Joy in Christ" - A great Bible study.
6. "Transformed" - shaped by the hand of God.
7. "The Sacred Shore" by Janette Oke (fiction).
8. "Miracles" by Karen Kingsbury. A 52 week devotional.
9. "Halfway Up the Mountain" by Martha Smock.
10. "Then Sings My Soul" Book 2 by Robert J. Morgan. 150 of the world's greatest hymn stories.
11. "A Man Called Peter" by Catherine Marshall.
12. "He Began with Eve" by Joyce Landon.

All of the above books were donated by Joe and Lynette Momier. Thank you so much for these additions to our library! (SB)

WHAT ARE YOU READING THIS SUMMER? Reading in the dog days should never be dogged reading. Just as summer is for recreation, so also it is for recreational reading. Light reading material, however, should not be lousy reading material. The aim of reading is for enrichment even when it is for enjoyment. It is always preferable to engage in reading that is relaxing and stimulating rather than reading that is relaxing and stultifying. Readers at leisure should mind what they read for pleasure, for much can be reduced to pulp by pulp fiction. The good news is that the dime novel can be worth its weight in gold and the mystery thriller a mysterious edifier when written by the right writer. It behooves every reader, then, to learn to distinguish between drivel and excellent drivel.

A Few Summer Reading Suggestions:

Me Before You by Jojo Moyes
The Life We Bury by Allen Eskens
The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins
The Wedding Dress by Rachael Hauck
Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi
The Light Between Oceans by M.L. Stedman
When I'm Gone by Emily Bleeker
Breakfast with Jesus by Ivan King
Outliers by Malcomb Gladwell
See Me by Nicholas Sparks
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Martha by Diane Taylor
A History of the Jews by Paul Johnson
The Nazi Officer's Wife by Edith Hahn Beer
It's Not About Me by Max Lucado
On Which Side of the Road Do the Flowers Grow? by Wendell E. Mettey
Scent of Lilacs by Ann H. Gabhart

THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS, a non-profit, inter-denominational Christian organization dedicated to assisting our persecuted family worldwide, will be offering a conference on Saturday, September 17th, in Concord, NC. Our brothers and sisters in restricted nations are ordinary people who face extraordinary challenges and circumstances. Yet by God's grace, they persevere! Come and meet some of them at this VOM Advance Conference. You will be touched by their stories and learn how God used difficult circumstances to help them grow in faith. Their testimonies will encourage and challenge you in your own walk with Christ. The conference is from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM at Pitts Baptist Church, 140 Pitts School Road NW, Concord, NC. The doors open at 8:00 AM for registration, prayer and resource area. Lunch is 12:00 - 1:15 PM on your own at area restaurants. There is no charge to attend. An offering will be received. Register at www.vomevents.com or by calling 1-800-747-0085. Come and hear Gracia Burnham from the Philippines, Dr. Hormoz Shariat from Iran, Sarah Liu from China, and Benny Mathews from India tell their personal stories of persecution. There will also be music and worship led by Amy Shreve. Perhaps we could fill the Grace Bus and attend this conference as a group to learn more about the persecution of Christians around the world and what we can do to help.

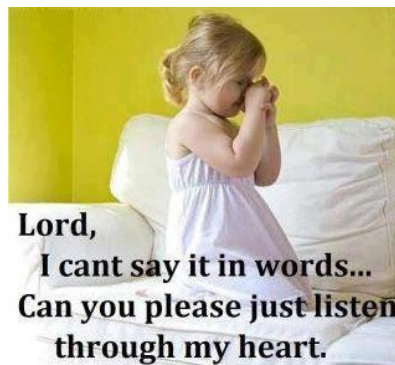
"It was our first VOM conference and an awesome one at that! It has inspired me to get back on board praying for my persecuted brethren." - Debra, Pinellas Park, FL

"I'm still processing everything from the weekend - there's so much there - but already I am so glad I went. It's so good to actually meet these brothers and sisters and to be reminded of the things the American church so easily forgets - that suffering is a normal (and needed) part of God's plan for Christians, that Jesus is all, that the goodness to which God has called us is impossible without Him, that He truly does do all things well."

- Anonymous, Auburn, ME

NEW BOWS ARE NEEDED to place on the Chrismon wreaths for our church windows. The material we're looking for is a red burlap type fabric. Bows that have been found thus far are about 5-6 inches wide at the top. If anyone spots this type bow or even the fabric in a craft or fabric store, please let Joy know. Another 10-15 of this type are needed. In addition, we're looking for red pillar candles - 6 inch height.

CAROLINAS LUTHERAN WOMEN'S ANNUAL CONVOCATION will be held Saturday, September 17th, at Faith Lutheran Church in Faith, NC. There is an \$8.00 registration fee which includes lunch. The day begins with registration at 9:00 and the Convocation will begin at 9:30. Contact the Church Office for a registration form. The theme for the day is "Reformation 500". (KH)



**Lord,
I cant say it in words...
Can you please just listen
through my heart.**

Grace Notes

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church N.A.L.C.
4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway
Newton, NC 28658