

GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC

Volume 218, Number 9

September 2015



September 13th

Breakfast at 9:00 AM

in Fellowship Hall

9:30 Learning Hour for ALL ages

ALPHA Bible Study Begins September 17th

**Contemporary Worship
September 10th**

Quilting Ministry Continues



Grace Senior/Adult
Activities Group will
meet September 16th



From the Pastor's Pen...



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at Grace Church,

In this month of September we celebrate cooler weather, changing colors of the trees and Rally Day. What is Rally Day? It's just for kids isn't it? Taking the last question first: No, rally day isn't just for kids. Just like VBS, it is for everyone in the church. Now I'll answer the first question so you can see why it is for everyone. Webster's Dictionary defines "rally" as:

- 1) a verb "to draw or call together for a common purpose"
- 2) a noun meaning "a renewal of energy in joint action"

During the summer months, our many activities, including vacations and graduations, and simply taking a retreat continually draws congregation members away from each other - especially on weekends. Summer can also be a spiritually draining time. You start the summer with the good intentions of sticking to your Bible-reading schedules. Good intentions of worshiping regularly. Good intentions of attending Learning Hour Class on Sunday morning. But the reality is that summer's hectic schedules can easily derail us from those good intentions. Come the end of summer, we need "a renewal of energy" when it comes to spiritual matters.

It's hard to renew your energy on your own. But it's much easier in a group where the Holy Spirit is present. That's why we set aside one special day at the end of the summer to "rally" - to "draw together for a common purpose" seeking the Holy Spirit's power to "renew our energy" for worship, for digging into God's Word, for praying, for serving, and for witnessing.

On Sunday September 13th, we will be "drawing together renewing our energy for the common purpose" of growing in trust and obedience to Jesus Christ." We will be commissioning our Learning Hour teachers and leaders and it will be a great day to re-commit and re-dedicate ourselves as both kids and adults starting a new Learning Hour at 9:30. If it's been a while since you attended a Learning Hour Sunday School class, or you think that hour is just for kids, please consider it. There are two adult classes going on which will certainly peak your interest - a class on the Book of Revelation and the Pastor's Class where the Sunday scripture readings and life issues are discussed. Hope to see all of you on Rally Day!

Blessings!

+ Pastor Gil Gilbert, STS

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR SEPTEMBER

- ❖ Communion Assistants - Joe Biggerstaff, Ricky Bivens
- ❖ Ushers - Dan and Tricia Panek, Justin Whalen, Joe Whisnant
- ❖ Greeter - Stephanie Fulbright
- ❖ Altar Preparation - Debra Hefner, Betty Wilfong
- ❖ Children's Church/Nursery - Sharon and Katie Whalen

NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE as events occur, such as illness, surgery, births, weddings, funerals, etc. so that the prayer list can be updated, or information added to the monthly newsletter. All events are important in the life at Grace Church and can easily be shared with friends and neighbors by bulletin, newsletter, and/or phone tree.



FLOWER CHART FOR SEPTEMBER

9/06 - Brenda McConnell
 9/20 - OPEN

9/13 - Kim Parker
 9/27 - OPEN

If you wish to give the flowers for a given Sunday, please list your name on the chart in the narthex. The liturgical color of the day is listed to assist you in selecting flowers appropriate for that Sunday. You can also call the Church Office to have your name listed. Please notify the Church Office of the Altar Flowers by 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 memorial for this wonderful gift of beatification of the worship.

ATTENDANCE AND GIVING TO OUR LORD’S WORK FOR JULY/AUGUST 2015

	7/26/15	8/2/15	8/9/15	8/16/15	8/23/15
SCS	47	46	34	40	43
Worship	104	91	112	74	123
General Offering	1,660.00	3,941.00	3,445.00	1,737.00	1,516.00
Sunday School	24.75	21.00	17.50	16.00	122.00
Building Fund	25.00	60.00	195.00	90.00	100.09
Cemetery Fund				12.00	200.50
Use of Fell. Hall				60.00	
Columbarium Niche				50.00	
Memorial Fund (Howard Jarrett)					1,000.00

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, September 2nd at Wesley Chapel.

MEN OF GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST will be held on Saturday, September 12th at 9:00 AM at the Blue Moon.

THE GRACE SENIOR/ADULT GROUP will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, September 16th from noon until 2:00 PM. The menu will be meatloaf, green beans, roasted potatoes, rolls, and fresh fruit cup. There will be activities and time for fellowship. All are welcome. (PB)

ADDRESSES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS are requested. The Church Office, as well as others in the Congregation, wants to stay in touch with students away from home. Please give mailing addresses and email addresses to the Church Office for those away from home. (KH)

DAISY/BROWNIE TROOP will begin their meetings on Monday, August 31st in Fellowship Hall. They meet from 6:15 - 7:15 PM most every Monday. All girls in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade are invited to attend. For more information you can contact Teresa Beevers at 828-455-3412. (TB)

NEW NALC SHIRTS ON SALE

The new NALC Polo Shirts are on sale from the Church Office. They are available in gray or red with the NALC logo on the front and the church name GRACE on the sleeve. Each shirt is \$30 and come in adult sizes small, medium, large, XL, 2 XL and 3 XL. Order forms are also in the Narthex along with a few sample shirts on display. Show your NALC spirit and get your shirt today! (PG)

SPECIAL THANKS TO:



- * Debi Pisko and John Jacobs for the power washing of our walkways and buildings;
- * Bill and Joy Heavner, Don and Nicky Jarrett, David Wilfong, Gil and Karen Gilbert, Doug and Jackie Jarrett, Herb Travis, Mike and Debi Pisko, Steven Pisko, Harvey and Gary Leatherman, and Rick Bivens for being our hard working crew on Clean-Up Day.
- * Rick Bivens and Gary Leatherman for filling the holes in the parking lot with new asphalt;

- * Geraldine Jarrett for the beautiful flower arrangements that adorn the front doors of the church;
- * Pastor John L. Yost (and his wife, Brenda) who was our guest Pastor for Homecoming and for all who prepared some of the most delicious food in the world;
- * Rick Bivens, Mike Pisko and Herb Travis for their carpentry skills in shortening the pews in the sanctuary so wheelchairs will have a comfortable place in worship;
- * The families who gave special gifts and memorials to purchase the new Kawai Sanctuary Piano;
- * Eric Martin for sharing his talents on the trumpet for worship on Homecoming;
- * All the teachers, helpers and kitchen volunteers, who made VBS 2015 such a great success with an average of over 90 in attendance each evening (Sunday -Thursday). Thanks to Nancy Leonard, Pat Dietz, Sharon Whalen, Frankie Crouse, Lynette Momier Tricia Panek, Stephanie Fulbright, and Pastor Gilbert for serving on the VBS Planning Team. (PG)

THROUGH THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

we welcomed into the Family of God:

Mitchell Jarrett Martin who was born on July 17th to Eric and Jodi Martin and baptized on August 9th.

Jonathan Matthew Jacobs who was baptized as an adult on August 23rd.

Michael Alan Scronce who was born on July 20th to Shelly Scronce and baptized on August 30th.



RECIPES ARE STILL NEEDED FOR THE NEW COOKBOOK! We hope all of the great cooks in our midst will join in the project. Send your recipes to Karen Gilbert at mrspasgil@aol.com. For those that do not have access to a computer, forms are available in the Narthex to submit your recipes. Please be specific as to measurements and cooking times. All recipes must be submitted by **October 1st**. Publication will hopefully be by Christmas. Volunteers are needed to physically assemble the cookbooks. If willing to help with this, please contact Karen Gilbert or Joy Heavner. (KG)

THE LEARNING HOUR

The Learning Hour brings excitement as we start a New Year with the children of Grace Church. The teaching concept will connect the children with the Church Year all tied to specific Sundays throughout 2015-2016. We hope the children will grow in their knowledge of the church year and its impact on the church's worship. For Rally Day we would like the children and leaders to wear their favorite sports attire (football, soccer, baseball, etc.). (TP)

THE QUILTING MINISTRY IS GROWING

Lutheran World Relief asked the Church to support the earthquake victims in Nepal by making and shipping quilts to LWR. This was about the same time that Grace was considering making quilts and starting a quilting ministry. (God's timing is always perfect!) Pastor Gilbert asked Lois Reynolds to come to Grace to lend support in getting the ministry started. Lois was instrumental in starting the quilting ministry at Pastor Gilbert's prior congregation. Now that same ministry has grown to Trinity, NALC in Concord, Point of Grace, LCMS in Cornelius (where the Reynolds' worship) and now Grace, NALC in Newton.

Those who have been seen at quilting days at Grace and are part of the Quilting Ministry are co-leaders, Kandra Johnson and Sandra Powell along with Jackie Jarrett, Juanita Haas, Helen Smith, Karen Gilbert, Frankie Crouse, Melinda Leatherman, Nancy Leonard, Linda Stapula, Sue Tarnovich, and Stephanie Fulbright. If you desire to be a part of this meaningful ministry of outreach, or if you have materials to donate, please contact one of the co-leaders or listen for announcements in the Sunday bulletin as to meeting times and quilting days which are usually held on Saturdays. (PG)

Another outlet for the quilts is the NALC Disaster Task Force. LWR only serves foreign countries. A disaster relief effort has been started to serve places in our nation that are struck by disasters. They are in great need of quilts as well. Quilts can be sent to NALC Disaster Task Force, 810 Main Street, Caldwell, OH 43724 for now. They are more than happy to receive quilts with religious symbols or messages in the material (unlike LWR). More will follow on this disaster relief in future newsletters. (KH)

NEW BIBLE STUDY TO BEGIN IN SEPTEMBER

The ALPHA Course began some years ago in London England by a Barrister who felt the people of his congregation were drifting from the faith. Many had done just that. So he developed a basic course called ALPHA (the first letter in the Greek alphabet) to assist folks who had drifted away from the faith, as well as newcomers to the Christian Church with this simple course on Christianity. ALPHA is a series of interactive sessions that freely explores the basics of the Christian faith in a friendly and honest environment. No pressure. No follow up. No charge. The ALPHA Course runs in churches, homes, coffee shops and bars all around the globe.

The First ALPHA class will be held at Grace on Thursday's beginning on September 17. Pastor Gilbert will be offering two teachings each week: the morning Bible study at 10 AM and the same teaching on Thursday evenings at 6:00 PM to make it easy for anyone to attend. Each class will last about an hour and a half, with a video presentation and a time of discussion where you can share your thoughts. It covers topics such as, "Who is Jesus?", "Why and how do I pray?", and "How can I resist evil?". The ALPHA Course is typically a 10 week course with a full Saturday about halfway through the course. To register (please do...so we can order enough materials) indicate your desire on your Worship Today Form on Sundays or call the Church Office to reserve your place. This course is not just for Grace folk only, but for anyone in the community. So invite your friends and neighbors to come along with you. Keep watching for announcements in worship. More details to follow. (PG)

PASTOR GILBERT TO PREACH AT NEW JERUSALEM REVIVAL

For many years, New Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Hickory has hosted a Tent Revival for the entire Catawba County area. On September 27-29, the Tent Revival will be held and Pastor Gilbert has been invited to be the Guest Preacher for this year's revival. The Revival begins each evening at 7 PM at New Jerusalem Lutheran Church on Startown Road and the entire community is invited. Invitations have been sent to all the congregations in Catawba County so come and support this wonder opportunity to be 'revived'. It will also be a great opportunity to invite others to meet and hear Pastor Gilbert and invite them to come to worship at Grace. (PG)

NEW EVERY MEMBER RESPONSE CAMPAIGN TO BEGIN IN OCTOBER

A new EMR Campaign will be distributed to every member of the Grace congregation in early October. This is to insure that every member has the opportunity to volunteer for certain ministries within the congregation and to express your generosity and giving back to God for His work at Grace Church. Every member will receive a packet with a Time and Talent form listing all the ministries of the congregation. Members are to check those ministries they are interested in and would like to volunteer. Also in the packet will be a Response To God's Love Card on which you will list your proposed giving for 2016. This will give the Finance Team and Leadership Ministry Board some idea as to how to plan for the coming year. We hope to have 100% participation with this campaign so be on the lookout for more information to come. (PG)

REQUESTS FOR FAVORITE HYMNS are now being taken for the Union Church Annual Hymn Sing to be held October 25th at 4:00 PM. Invite friends and neighbors for a great time of song, fellowship, and praise to our Lord. List your favorites on the back of your Worship Today Forms by name or hymnal and page number. If you have a favorite that is not in any of the hymnals in the pew just list the name. Joy will find the music and words. The "Brothers Biggerstaff and friends" will join us again this year by "picking" and "strumming" and singing some of their favorite songs. And there will be a little time for "solo" performances as well. Mark your calendars. (JH)

HELP NEEDED AT SAFE HARBOR

The heartbeat of Safe Harbor is meeting women where they are in their need, helping them experience the great love that Christ has for them through His people, walking with them on their journey to a whole and productive life. The beauty of this ministry is that we often have the opportunity to develop deep relationships with our guests, gaining the trust that is essential for us to have a credible voice in their troubled lives.

Supporting Safe Harbor through your prayers, volunteer service, and financial donations makes these life-changing relationships and supportive programming possible. We offer our deep gratitude to those who partner with us in this exciting work, and we invite you to call or come by to find out more about the work of "anchoring lives to Christ."

They need a large or industrial washer or dryer in good shape or new. Also they are in desperate need of all types of school supplies (pencils, colored pencils, markers, notebook paper, spiral notebooks, scissors, glue sticks, crayons, pencil boxes, etc.). A basket will be placed at Grace in the basement for collection of these items.

Safe Harbor really needs volunteers to be mentors, drivers, cooks, Bible Study leaders, or a helper in many other ways. You can make a big difference whether you have a few hours a week or a month. Please call Christy at Safe Harbor, 828-326-7233, for more information or to volunteer.



REGISTRATIONS FOR VIA DE CRISTO WEEKENDS are now being accepted. For more information or to register for an upcoming weekend, please speak with Sherry Biggerstaff, Sheila Drum, Don or Nicky Jarrett, David or Iris Sigmon, or Pastor Gil or Karen Gilbert.

UPDATE: The Constitution Task Team (Gene Biggerstaff, Randy Fulbright, Herb Travis, Rick Bivens, and Pastor Gilbert) have completed their assignment of updating the Grace Constitution following the guidelines from the NALC. The Grace Leadership Ministry Board received the Constitution and has approved all revisions and changes to the Constitution. It has recently been forwarded to the NALC National Office for review and approval by the NALC. Once the Constitution is approved and returned to Grace, it will be distributed to all members of Grace to be approved at the Annual Congregational Meeting in November.

DID YOU KNOW???

* *Did you know...* Jackie Jarrett is our key person for keeping the Fellowship Hall kitchen stocked with paper products, garbage bags, cleaners, and makes the kitchen functional? Well done, Jackie! Thank you.

* *Did you know...* Sandra Powell and Kandra Johnson are the co-leaders of the Quilting Ministry at Grace Church? Over 30 quilts have been made since the ministry began in July. These quilts will be shipped to Lutheran World Relief for the earthquake victims in Nepal. Dedication of these quilts will be during worship on Rally Day. Anyone desiring to donate materials or to join this great ministry of cutting, sewing, (much can be done at home) and assembling quilts should contact Kandra or Sandra to volunteer.

* *Did you know...* D&M Cleaning Company (Tommy, his wife, Glenda and daughter Regina) that cleans our church facilities every week are also members of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church? If you see an area that needs additional attention, please leave a note for Kathy in the Church Office for our cleaning folks.

* *Did you know...* Don and Nicky Jarrett are responsible for cutting the grass and keeping the lawn areas of the church looking so nice? Great job, Don and Nicky!

* *Did you know...* the Administrative Assistant to the Pastor, Kathy Hefner, is married to a Lutheran pastor (Rev. David Hefner) and that she is a trained accountant? (PG)

THE CAROLINAS LUTHERAN WOMEN (CLW) COUNCIL invites all women to our fifth annual meeting on Saturday, October 3, 2015 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 225 Morgan Street, Troutman, NC. Registration begins at 9 a.m. We encourage each congregation to send representatives. The Theme for the day is "Treasures from Heaven" based on Matthew 6:20-22. Please complete one Registration form per attendee, \$7 registration fee per person (includes lunch), and mail **by September 20, 2015**, to LaVaughn Beaver, 1040 Asa Lane, Salisbury, NC 28146. ***Please make checks payable to Carolinas Lutheran Women.*** The Registration form can be obtained from their website (www.carolinaslutheranwomen.org) or by contacting Grace's Church Office. ***In-Kind Gifts*** have been designated to split between My Sister's House and South Caldwell Christian Ministries. Please bring paper products such as toilet paper, paper towels, Kleenex, gift cards or checks. ***The Convocation offering*** will support The Samaritans Purse. (KH)

REQUEST FOR MENUS when hosting meals at the church has been received. Due to dietary restrictions it is helpful to some, if the menu for an event can be published in the newsletter and/or bulletin prior to the event. Thank you for your help in being considerate of others needs.

VBS A GREAT SUCCESS

The VBS numbers were great. We had wonderful classes and great volunteers. The volunteers (total of 47) included kitchen staff, class staff, floaters, crafts, storytelling, music, quilters, etc. The participation in all areas was a blessing to our church. There were 117 registered. Actual attendance was 94 on Sunday, 96 on Monday, 88 on Tuesday, 89 on Wednesday, and 96 on Thursday. All should be proud and thankful for such a wonderful week of learning about Paul. Ask any of those who attended and they can tell you a lot about Paul. We encourage all to attend next year. We can all do something to make next year better than this year. Hard to think that is possible. Believe it can be - and it will.

On Sunday, we had water games and tie dyed t-shirts. For supper, we had hamburgers and hot dogs. On Monday, we opened with a supper of pizza. On Tuesday, we had Taco Tuesday. On Wednesday, we had Subway Sandwiches. On Thursday, we had chicken tenders and fixin's from Lowes Food, and we had our ice cream Sundaes. Thanks Pastor and Karen for the sundaes. We had a small closing on Thursday. The kids told about what they had learned and sang the songs they learned as well.

On Thursday, the 5th Grade - High School classes delivered meals they had prepared and quilts they had helped make to the Women's Shelter. All food not used for meals was donated to the shelter also.

Many thanks to all who helped make this a wonderful VBS from the Christian Education Ministry Team and Nancy Leonard, Lynette Momier, Stephanie Fulbright, Frankie Crouse, Pat Dietz, Tricia Panek, Pastor Gil and Karen Gilbert. (NL)

GOLDEN YEARS SUGGESTIONS

Some of us have reached our golden years, and some of us have not. But these suggestions should be read by everyone. They have been collected from many a senior, each with his or her own piece of advice. Some you know, some may surprise you, and some will remind you of what's important. So read well, share with your loved ones, and have a great day and a great life!

1. It's time to use the money you saved up. Use it and enjoy it. Don't just keep it for those who may have no notion of the sacrifices you made to get it. Remember there is nothing more dangerous than a son or daughter-in-law with big ideas for your hard earned capital. Warning: This is also a bad time for an investment, even if it seems wonderful or fool-proof. They only bring problems and worries and this is a time for you to enjoy some peace and quiet.

2. Stop worrying about the financial situation of your children and grandchildren, and don't feel bad spending your money on yourself. You've taken care of them for many years, and you've taught them what you could. You gave them an education, food, shelter and support. The responsibility is now theirs to earn their own money.

3. Keep a healthy life, without great physical effort. Do moderate exercise (like walking every day), eat well and get your sleep. It's easy to become sick, and it gets harder to remain healthy. That is why you need to keep yourself in good shape and be aware of your medical and physical needs. Keep in touch with your doctor, do tests even when you're feeling well. Stay informed.

4. Always buy the best, most beautiful items for your significant other. The key goal is to enjoy your money with your partner. One day one of you will miss the other, and the money will not provide any comfort then, enjoy it together.

5. Don't stress over the little things. You've already overcome so much in your life. You have good memories and bad ones, but the important thing is the present. Don't let the past drag you down and don't let the future frighten you. Feel good in the now. Small issues will soon be forgotten.

6. Regardless of age, always keep love alive. Love your partner, love life, love your family, love your neighbor and remember: "A man is not old as long as he has intelligence and affection."

7. Be proud, both inside and out. Don't stop going to your hair salon or barber, do your nails, go to the dermatologist and the dentist, keep your perfumes and creams well stocked. When you are well-maintained on the outside, it seeps in, making you feel proud and strong.

8. Don't lose sight of fashion trends for your age, but keep your own sense of style. There's nothing worse than an older person trying to wear the current fashion among youngsters. You've developed your own sense of what looks good on you - keep it and be proud of it. It's part of who you are.

9. ALWAYS stay up-to-date. Read newspapers, watch the news. Go online and read what people are saying. Make sure you have an active email account and try to use some of those social networks. You'll be surprised what old friends you'll meet. Keeping in touch with what is going on and with the people you know is important at any age.

10. Respect the younger generation and their opinions. They may not have the same ideals as you, but they are the future, and will take the world in their direction. Give advice, not criticism, and try to remind them of yesterday's wisdom that still applies today.

11. Never use the phrase: "In my time". Your time is now. As long as you're alive, you are part of this time. You may have been younger, but you are still you now, having fun and enjoying life.

12. Some people embrace their golden years, while others become bitter and surly. Life is too short to waste your days on the latter. Spend your time with positive, cheerful people, it'll rub off on you and your days will seem that much better. Spending your time with bitter people will make you older and harder to be around.

13. Do not surrender to the temptation of living with your children or grandchildren (if you have a financial choice, that is). Sure, being surrounded by family sounds great, but we all need our privacy. They need theirs and you need yours. If you've lost your partner (our deepest condolences), then find a person to move in with you and help out. Even then, do so only if you feel you really need the help or do not want to live alone.

14. Don't abandon your hobbies. If you don't have any, make new ones. You can travel, hike, cook, read, dance. You can adopt a cat or a dog, grow a garden, play cards, checkers, chess, dominoes, golf. You can paint, volunteer at an NGO or just collect certain items. Find something you like and spend some real time having fun with it.

15. Even if you don't feel like it, try to accept invitations. Baptisms, graduations, birthdays, weddings, conferences. Try to go. Get out of the house, meet people you haven't seen in a while, experience something new (or something old). But don't get upset when you're not invited. Some events are limited by resources, and not everyone can be hosted. The important thing is to leave the house from time to time. Go to museums, go walk through a field. Get out there.

16. Be a conversationalist. Talk less and listen more. Some people go on and on about the past, not caring if their listeners are really interested. That's a great way of reducing their desire to speak with you. Listen first and answer questions, but don't go off into long stories unless asked to. Speak in courteous tones and try not to complain or criticize too much unless you really need to. Try to accept situations as they are. Everyone is going through the same things, and people have a low tolerance for hearing complaints. Always find some good things to say as well.

17. Pain and discomfort go hand in hand with getting older. Try not to dwell on them but accept them as a part of the cycle of life we're all going through. Try to minimize them in your mind. They are not who you are, they are something that life added to you. If they become your entire focus, you lose sight of the person you used to be.

18. If you've been offended by someone - forgive them. If you've offended someone - apologize. Don't drag around resentment with you. It only serves to make you sad and bitter. It doesn't matter who was right. Someone once said: "Holding a grudge is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die." Don't take that poison. Forgive, forget and move on with your life.

19. If you have a strong belief, savor it. But don't waste your time trying to convince others. They will make their own choices no matter what you tell them, and it will only bring you frustration. Live your faith and set an example. Live true to your beliefs and let that memory sway them.

20. Laugh. Laugh A LOT. Laugh at everything. Remember, you are one of the lucky ones. You managed to have a life, a long one. Many never get to this age, never get to experience a full life. But you did. So what's not to laugh about? Find the humor in your situation.

21. Take no notice of what others say about you and even less notice of what they might be thinking. They'll do it anyway, and you should have pride in yourself and what you've achieved. Let them talk and don't worry. They have no idea about your history, your memories and the life you've lived so far. There's still much to be written, so get busy writing and don't waste time thinking about what others might think. Now is the time to be at rest, at peace and as happy as you can be! (PG)

12 REASONS WHY A PASTOR QUIT ATTENDING SPORTING EVENTS (OR EXCUSES WHY PEOPLE QUIT COMING TO WORSHIP)

1. The coach never came to visit me.
2. Every time I went, they asked for money.
3. The people sitting in my row didn't seem very friendly.
4. The seats were very hard.
5. The referees made a decision I didn't agree with.
6. I was sitting with hypocrites—they only came to see what others were wearing!
7. Some games went into overtime and I was late getting home.
8. The band played some songs I had never heard before.
9. The games are scheduled on my only day to sleep in and run errands.
10. My parents took me to too many games when I was growing up.
11. Since I read a book on sports, I feel that I know more than the coaches, anyway.
12. I don't want to take my children because I want them to choose for themselves what sport they like best. (PG)

ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS: Did you know you can obtain funds to purchase supplies for making quilts, supporting ministries of Grace Lutheran Church, or offering educational programs. Contact your Thrivent representative or go to their website (www.Thrivent.com) to be sure you are making use of all funds available to you for ministry.

- Lead a Thrivent Action Team for a cause you care about.
- Lead a chapter service team and apply for Care Abounds in Communities funding to help individuals or nonprofit organizations locally. (Doesn't apply to regions with Thrivent Member Networks.)
- Become a congregational advocate to help your church partner with Thrivent. Sign up online.
- Use Thrivent resources to lead a workshop in your church or community on timely financial and stewardship topics.
- If you're eligible, direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® to any of the more than 20,000 churches and nonprofits enrolled in the program. (KH)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NALC CONVOCATION

Kathy Hefner attended the NALC Convocation held in Dallas, Texas as the Delegate for Shiloh Lutheran Church. Her husband, David, also attended as the Pastor of Shiloh. Below is a summary from the Theological Convocation, the Annual Gathering of the Women of the NALC, and the NALC Convocation. The time was filled with very informative speakers and I really wish every member of the NALC could have heard it all. In attendance were 226 clergy, 180 lay delegates, and 175 guests for a total of 581.

Pastor Dave writes: "This year's Convocation was one of the best I have been to in a long time. The theme, "Martyrdom and the Sufferings of the Righteous", was timely and interesting and the speakers and presenters were excellent.

The Theological Convocation, held the two days before the NALC Convocation, was especially good. The speakers were geared to lay people as well as pastors, so all could benefit from the experiences of and expertise of the speakers. We heard lectures on Theology of the Martyrs (Dr. Paul Hinlicky), The First Martyrs of the Reformation (Dr. Hans Wiersma), Muslim Persecution of Christian Martyrs: Past and Present (Raymond Ibrahim), A Martyr for What Cause? Reconsidering 'Bonhoeffer and the Jews' (Dr. Michael DeJonge), and Martyrdom: An Obligation or a Choice? The Stories of Gudina Tumsa and Tsehay Tolessa (Lensa Gudina). If you would like to listen to these lectures you can go to www.thenalc.org, click on the black box that says "Find the time-delayed video of this event." Do the same on the next page. Then choose the lecture you want and click on it, and watch.

The NALC Convocation started with a "pre-session" Wednesday afternoon on Mission and Discipleship. Segments included: Where are we going and what does it mean to be a "Mission-driven Church?", Who is driving?, The Joys of the Journey, and Roadblocks or Detours?

Friday's sessions included workshops on "Disaster happens - How to prepare and respond", Lutheran Benefits Plan Update, Persecution of the Assyrian Church, Strengthen your congregation's communication, and "What's in your bag? Outcome based youth ministry".

The four Core Values of the NALC and of Shiloh Lutheran Church are that we are Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded, and Congregationally Focused. That we are congregationally focused does not mean we can do whatever we want without remembering that we are part of a larger piece of the whole church. It means we are free to make decisions about our local ministry and outreach that suits our community, our size, our gifts and resources. It means the NALC will not tell us what we must do, but will respond to our needs as we make them known, in order to assist, train, support and encourage us in our ministry in the name of Jesus. Attending the NALC Convocation allows us to share in the joys and struggles of our brothers and sisters in North America and around the world. It is an opportunity to fellowship, worship, and grow in Christ together."

Kathy writes: "The Annual Gathering of the Women of the NALC was very enlightening as well as heart wrenching. There were 70 women in attendance. We heard speakers from India Transformed (Rev. Don Miles) on "Power Evangelism vs. Persecution - A new Mission Model in India", China Service Ventures (Ida Martinson) on "The Costs & Joys of Witnessing in China", and Elam Ministries (Carmen Hale) on "The Bold & Courageous Church in Iran". I had heard of many types of torture before, but learned of many new ones from all these speakers. We also witnessed the need for speakers to be very careful about what was said during their presentation and one even was escorted in the back door and had a bodyguard present. Some of the quotes that caught my attention:

- The non-Christians in India have many gods but when asked why they want to be a Christian they say "Your God does miracles, ours do not".

- They may destroy our church buildings but the church itself will never die because it is inside of us and we will continue to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord.
- Never get so caught up in the organization that we forget the mission (from Bishop Bradosky) There was so much information shared about many aspects of the NALC. I hope to share more information in future newsletters."

Next year's Convocation will be held August 10-12, 2016 at Wyndham Gardens in Anaheim, California. If you have wanted to go to southern California for a vacation, next year could be the year and you could spend a couple days serving your church as the delegate to the Women's Annual Gathering and the NALC Convocation. (KH)



New Items for September **IT OUT!!!!**

1. BLUE by Joyce Hostetter
"At the root of this story about loss and the healing power of friendship is the 'Miracle of Hickory', the real-life polio hospital built in Hickory during the polio epidemic of 1944." A **MUST** read for anyone that lives in Catawba County and a book for ALL ages.
 2. COMFORT by Joyce Hostetter
"In this carefully researched and moving sequel to BLUE, Ann Fay faces life with her characteristic resourcefulness, forging new relationships, and reevaluating old ones..." (Joyce Hostetter lives just "up the road" from Grace with her family. "The story of polio in Hickory captured her heart." Joyce has won many book awards for her books.)
 3. From Bad Beginnings to Happy Endings by Ed Young
"Feel like the odds are against you? Let God's grace lead you into a new future full of hope and restoration."
 4. Living Faith by President Jimmy Carter
"This is a book about the values and experiences that have shaped my life, and how the religious beliefs I inherited have been transformed into a living faith. But the core of this book is love." Jimmy Carter
 5. In the Company of Others by Jan Karon
 6. Anne of Green Gables Series - books 1 -8
 7. The Letter by Richard Paul Evans
 8. You Can't Walk on Water if You STAY in the Boat by Ron Birk
- (All the books listed this month were donated by Juanita Haas. Thank you Juanita!) (SB)*

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FROM SAMARITAN'S PURSE - CHRISTIANS IN NIGER

For Christians in Niger, rebuilding is not just about forgiving their neighbors and moving on. Now the church members, some who were once complacent in their faith, want to take those relationships a step further by sharing Christ with their neighbors. They aren't rebuilding the church just for themselves; they're rebuilding it to share with people who don't yet know Christ. "We hope to rebuild so that we can continue to show the love of Christ." "We hope to rebuild so that we can continue to show the love of Christ," Issa said. "We will not stop. We will continue with everything we've got in our heart." They also want to restore their good relationships with the people they see every day. For many, the Muslim neighbors are family members and friends.

"Our hope is that the Christian community continues to show that love of Christ to the community," Harouna said. One way some churches are ministering to their neighbors is through Operation Christmas Child. After Boukoki Church was burned, it held an event where it distributed shoeboxes to Muslim children in the area. Through the event, the children and their parents heard God's message of love and forgiveness.

Two-year-old Ava received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox at the Baptist Church at the Round Point. The church distributed gifts to the children of the people who had burned their building. "Even after the churches were burned down, we distributed OCC boxes to Muslims in the area, and we continued to bring them the testimony of love," Yakaya said.

Harouna, who used to pastor one of the burned churches, said he was recently invited as a speaker to a meeting between Muslims and Christians. He said it was the first time a meeting of that kind had happened, and he was allowed to share about his faith. Since the churches were burned, he has also had one-on-one conversations with Muslims to share the message of forgiveness. "It's not by running away from them that we can be able to share the Gospel, but it's by allowing those meetings," he said.

Some churches began ministering immediately after the attacks. While Issa and his church were staying in the gendarmerie base, neighbors noticed their joy despite their circumstances. This led one woman to accept Christ. Since then, his church is rethinking how they do evangelism and is planning to teach literacy and agriculture to people in nearby villages. Other burned churches have started providing wells and cereal banks in their villages. The churches will also show the Jesus film to their beneficiaries.

When asked how Christians in the U.S. could support their churches, some pastors expressed the need for funds to rebuild. All of them focused on prayers. "Let's pray so that our church can continue to keep at heart the will to express the love of Jesus to [the] community and that we continue to show the light of the Lord to the community," Yakaya said. "We cannot pray so that there will not be anymore hostilities toward us as a church, but among these people that are persecuting the church, there are some that God is calling to Him. So let's pray that the Lord will use us to be His tools to get them to the church."

Other pastors asked for prayers that their congregations would have courage while evangelizing. They also asked for prayers for their neighbors, that they would be open to the Gospel and receive Christ as Savior. Alan said persecution grows the church, so Christians should not pray for less persecution. Instead, we should pray that the church isn't afraid to stand up for what it believes. Pray with us as we seek to rebuild churches in Niger. (KH)



LEADERSHIP BOARD NOTES...

Highlights of the Leadership Board Meeting of August 9, 2015:

Devotions were given by Michael Pisko on Proverbs 14.

The Board spent time studying the first chapter of "The Emotionally Healthy Church" as recommended by Bishop Bradosky. Minutes of all July meetings were approved.

The Old Business revisited the revised Constitution with minor changes approved. Constitution will be forward to the NALC Offices for approval.

New Business: Voted to approve at least two attendants on duty for the nursery.

Worship and Praise: new piano has been ordered; additional funds were prioritized by the Board: new carpet, pews, and additional lighting (if needed). Contemporary Worship will begin again on Thursday, September 10 with a covered dish supper at 6:15 PM and worship at 7 PM in the outdoor shelter. Four pews will be shortened to make space for wheelchair worshippers. Two will be finished by Homecoming and work will be done by Michael Pisko, Rick Bivens and Herb Travis. Problem with bees in the back of the Sanctuary. Bee Keeper will be sought to remedy a solution. Comment to wait until cold weather to do any modification to structure.

Property: Clean Up Day scheduled for August 8 and 15. Storage Room in Fellowship Hall needs to have dehumidifier installed. Heat and Air inspected by technicians in church and parsonage. Units needed Freon.

Learning: First Sunday Lunch will begin in October.

Treasurers Report received and accepted as information.

Next Board Meeting is September 13, 2015



"Basically, we're looking for an innovative pastor with a fresh vision who will inspire our church to remain exactly the same."

Watch in October for:

Outdoor Movie Night on the Lawn

Reformation Celebration

Blessing of the Animals (10/3)

Treasurer's Report for

July

2015

YTD

General Fund	
Beginning Balance	17,150.35
Deposits	10,658.00
Expenses	11,066.16
Ending Balance	16,742.19
Memorial Fund	
Beginning Balance	24,899.41
Deposits	0.00
Expenses	4,916.65
Ending Balance	19,982.76
Building Fund	
Beginning Balance	-1,151.55
Deposits	442.08
Expenses	0.00
Ending Balance	-709.47
Cemetery Fund	
Beginning Balance	140,585.50
Deposits	0.64
Expenses	394.26
Ending Balance	140,191.88
Union Church Restoration	
Beginning Balance	44,832.11
Deposits	0.00
Expenses	26.53
Ending Balance	44,805.58
Playground Equipment Fund	
Beginning Balance	3,109.52
Deposits	0.00
Expenses	0.00
Ending Balance	3,109.52
All Funds	
Beginning Balance	229,425.34
Deposits	11,100.72
Expenses	16,403.60
Ending Balance	224,122.46

General Fund	
Beginning Balance	32,617.90
Deposits	73,445.94
Expenses	89,321.65
Ending Balance	16,742.19
Memorial Fund	
Beginning Balance	26,281.90
Deposits	1,335.00
Expenses	7,634.14
Ending Balance	19,982.76
Building Fund	
Beginning Balance	-2,118.08
Deposits	3,095.61
Expenses	1,687.00
Ending Balance	-709.47
Cemetery Fund	
Beginning Balance	89,418.20
Deposits	54,370.38
Expenses	3,596.70
Ending Balance	140,191.88
Union Church Restoration	
Beginning Balance	45,013.64
Deposits	0.00
Expenses	208.06
Ending Balance	44,805.58
Playground Equipment Fund	
Beginning Balance	3,109.52
Deposits	0.00
Expenses	0.00
Ending Balance	3,109.52
All Funds	
Beginning Balance	194,323.08
Deposits	132,246.93
Expenses	102,447.55
Ending Balance	224,122.46

Grace Notes

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

Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly