

GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC
email: gracenalnewton@aol.com website: www.gracelutheran-newton.org Church Office: 704-462-1035
Volume 224, Number 9 **SEPTEMBER 2021**



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021

9:15 AM SCS LEARNING HOUR
10:30 AM WORSHIP CELEBRATION **WITH SPECIAL GUESTS**
12:00 PM COVERED DISH LUNCH IN FELLOWSHIP HALL/
PICNIC SHELTER



SEPT. 6TH



SEPT. 12TH



SEPT. 22ND

From the Pastor's Perspective...



Dear Brothers and Sisters at Grace Church,

Well, it is time for Back to School, and Fall is right around the corner. That means it's also time for Rally Sunday. This year, Rally Sunday will be packed with excitement of celebrating back to the Learning Hour. We will return to our Sunday classes at 9:15 (teaching will begin around 9:30) as we enjoy the fellowship and a great time of learning.

At Grace, we are blessed with three adult classes – The Pastor's Class, The Skull Class, and the Travis Class. There are classes also for our little ones to enjoy and learn about Jesus. We give thanks to God for these great opportunities for learning and being together.

Worship on Rally Sunday will feature Candice Heathcock as our guest pianist who will lead us in worship. We will also have a musical quartet led by Wayne Hedgepeth. These four men will bring us great harmonies as they share the Good News in the gospel hymns they will sing. That will be followed by our celebration of the Word and Sacrament. Following worship, we will be blessed by the good cooking and tasty dishes of our congregational members as we gather for a covered-dish luncheon in Fellowship Hall and under the outdoor shelter (weather permitting).

Rally Sunday will be a great Sunday of celebration, learning, worship and good food. Let us give thanks to God for this great blessing in the life of the Grace congregation. I hope to see you there!

In Him,
Pastor Gil Gilbert

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR SEPTEMBER

- ❖ Acolyte Herb Travis
- ❖ Greeter Cindy Bivens
- ❖ Lector Herb Travis
- ❖ Communion Assistants Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Ushers Mike Hall and James Hall
- ❖ Altar Preparation Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Offering Tabulators Todd Childers and Johnny Moss

*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 SEPTEMBER



- 9/05 Todd Childers
- 9/12 Kim Parker
- 9/19 Kay Hatchett
- 9/26 Kay Hatchett

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 bulletin 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 AUGUST, 2021

	8/01/21	8/08/21	8/15/21	8/22/21
Learning Hour	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Worship	45	50	49	42
General Fund Offerings	\$3,276.00	\$5,766.00	\$1,751.00	\$1,031.00

Needed Each Week = \$3,268.54

General Fund **Offerings, July 2021** = \$12,046.53

General Fund **Expenses, July 2021** = \$12,124.75

Difference = - \$78.22 (expenses exceeded offerings)

THE FRED T. FOARD SENIORS will meet at noon on Wednesday, September 1st at Blackburn Baptist Church. The meal will be furnished. All seniors are invited to these gatherings.

THE MEN OF GRACE will meet on Saturday, September 11th at 9:00 AM at Four Peas in a Pod Restaurant on Highway 70 in Conover. Please come and bring a friend!

COVID PROTOCOLS FOR GRACE CHURCH

What a time we have had these past 18 months with the COVID pandemic. We had absolutely no worship, meetings or classes for almost 3 months during the height of this plague. We began having worship again in May, 2020 without any problems. Two families have contracted COVID, but weathered the illness without any additional problems. We thank them for their thoughtfulness in staying home for at least the 2 weeks following their illness and they are now doing fine.

At the Leadership Board Retreat in July, the Board discussed and reviewed the NC Protocols for places of worship. Any place where people gather together poses a risk for COVID-19 transmission. All places that congregate people in an enclosed space should create and implement a plan to minimize the opportunity for COVID-19 transmission. The Board passed the resolution that we should continue the current guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at Grace.

The NC Department of Human Resources urge all pastors and staff to become vaccinated and to encourage members of their congregations and faith community to become fully vaccinated as well. While the effectiveness of masks has not yet been determined with scientific data and what has been presented about the effectiveness of masks conflicts with other studies, the Board decided that mandates would be futile. Therefore, we announced in worship that all worshipers should have the choice of wearing a mask or not. They are being made available in the Narthex each Sunday morning. Pastor and Communion Assistants should wear gloves and masks while distributing the sacraments until the current danger has subsided.

At Grace, we want to affirm that we all continue to be mindful of the precautions we need to practice: keeping distance from others; frequent hand washing; using hand sanitizer when entering the sanctuary and upon leaving, and using good judgement when shaking hands or hugging. We are a loving congregation with great members. We will continue to be mindful of the health and welfare of our brothers and sisters in Christ at Grace.

RALLY DAY IS SEPTEMBER 12

We will say goodbye to the summer as our children have gone back to school and there is evidence of excitement and order to the Fall season right around the corner. Rally Sunday is that time when we gear back up for all that God has in store for us at Grace. The Learning Hour will resume with all classes (9:15 - 10:15) and it will be a time for lessons, prayer, Bibles studies, and learning from God's Word for all ages. The Grace worship will also enjoy musical guests who will delight us with gospel hymns and songs. Worship will be followed with a big covered-dish luncheon in the Fellowship Hall and in the outdoor shelter as we enjoy the delicious dishes from our first-class cooks in the congregation. It will be a great day in the life of the congregation so make your plans now to attend Learning Hour, an exciting time of worship, and then enjoy a belly-busting feast with great fellowship!

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Samaritan's Purse provides shoeboxes filled with small gifts to needy children outside the U.S. as a means of reaching out to children in their own communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Shoeboxes can be found on the back pew, along with labels and a listing of the items that can and cannot be included. The categories are girl or boy, and ages 2-4, 5-9 and 10-14. There is a \$9 postage fee for each box submitted. Please make your check payable to Grace Lutheran Church and place it in the offering plate. The goal this year is 150, and the deadline is Sunday, November 14th. We're off to a good start!

BEWARE OF VARMITTS ON THE CHURCH PROPERTY

The week prior to VBS last month, a snake (looked like a copperhead) was found curled up next to the steps leading down to the Fellowship Hall. Jeff Scronce bravely took a pair of limb cutters and killed the snake and disposed of it. Be reminded that this is the time of year for snakes to be active. If you see a snake on the church property, do not approach it, but move very slowly away from it. Please inform the Church Office of any snakes you might see. Snakes tend to strike when they see quick movements.

We also have been challenged by wasp nests around the doors to the church and hornet and yellow jacket nests in the ground. Five nests have been found by our lawn maintenance pro, Ernie Bowman, in the past month. Ernie has poured gas and insect killer into the holes he finds in the ground and is keeping an eye on them for further activity.

NEWLY ORDAINED NALC PASTORS NEEDED

There is a concern and passion in the NALC to raise up a whole new generation of pastors. Realizing how many NALC pastors will be retiring in the next ten years, it is encouraging to hear the goal at the recent NALC Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas of raising up three hundred new pastors. The challenge is to every congregation to raise up a new pastor, the challenge to retired and soon-to-retire pastors to continue to serve a congregation, and the variety of ways that have been laid out to prepare future leaders for the church. If you know of a young man or woman at Grace who has been considering the ministry, please contact Pastor Gilbert.

NEW CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

As we strive to be good stewards of our time and gifts, please be aware of the new Church Office hours Monday through Thursday 8:30 am – 12 noon. After an assessing of the work load our Secretary has to perform each week, it was determined that Fridays are very slow days and after an evaluation of her time, Pastor Gilbert and Secretary Pam Tallent have re-structured the office hours which will mean the Church Office will be closed on Fridays.

Please make a note of the new Church Hours, Monday through Thursdays, 8:30 am – 12 noon and CLOSED on Fridays.

CAROLINAS MISSION REGION CONVOCATION

The Regional Convocation will be held September 24 and 25 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 805 South York Street in Gastonia. Bishop Dan Selbo will be presenting more on the Ten Point Vision for the NALC. Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen, President of our NALC Seminary will also be presenting his vision for the seminary and the future of the NALC by the support future pastors.

Mission District meeting will be held, a vote on the spending plan for the District; as well as time for workshops and worship. There will be a variety of displays and vendors from SOLA Publishing, Lutheran Military Veterans, Lutherans for Life, ALPB, Gordon-Conwell Seminary and the North American Lutheran Seminary, and Lutheran Family Services will all be on hand. All congregations are being encouraged to send an offering with their delegate. Pastor Gilbert and Alan Shull will be attending and representing Grace.

BOARD NOTES

BOARD NOTES (from the regular monthly meeting held August 15)

Meeting held August 15 at 4:00 pm and called to order by Alan Shull, President

Excused were Johnny Moss, Matt Speagle

Devotions were given by Pastor Gilbert and scripture used to review the Board Retreat on July 31. Pastor Gilbert also distributed a survey which was an assessment of congregational life.

The minutes of the Retreat and July Meeting were reviewed and approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Candice Heathcock will substitute for Sandi Tallant on first 2 Sundays in September.

David Bloom has been contacted about completing the repairs to the front doors of the church.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

Learning – Thank You notes being sent to the area congregations that participated in VBS.

Property – Jeff Scronce seeking bids for painting sanctuary. Terry Scronce will be making repairs to the air leak in the well pump.

Worship – more members returning to Grace worship. Worship numbers continue to increase.

Outreach – canned food items are being brought to worship to feed the hungry.

Stephen Ministry – pew response cards are being placed in the sanctuary.

Hospitality – Rally Day will be held September 12.

Finance – Report distributed. Line item for the “Society of the Holy Trinity” needs to be amended from “Holy Trinity Membership”. Question concerning non-payment for supplies from Stephen Ministry. Referred to R. Bivens.

There being no further business, motion for adjournment was made and seconded.

Closing Prayer by Pastor Gilbert.

Next Meeting: September 19 at 4:00 pm in Lower Level Classroom.

Devotions: Shelia Drum Tabulators: Todd Childers and Libby Travis

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Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church NALC
4536 Hickory Lincolnton Highway
Newton, NC 28658