

GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC
email: gracenalcnewton@aol.com website: www.gracelutheran-newton.org Church Office: 704-462-1035
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**PLEASE JOIN US FOR
WORSHIP EACH SUNDAY**

AT 10:30 A.M.

Invite your neighbors!

Invite your relatives!

Invite your friends!

**AND WHILE YOU'RE HERE...
CATCH THE
EXCITEMENT!**



**RALLY SUNDAY
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH**

9:30 AM – Learning Hour for All Ages
10:30 AM – Worship Celebration and
Special Guest
12:00 PM – Covered Dish Lunch in
Fellowship Hall/Picnic Area

From the Pastor's Perspective.....



“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

Bad Habits are Good to Break! “Pastor, I couldn’t believe how easy it was to stay home on Sunday mornings. All of a sudden it became a very bad habit I just had to break!” A parishioner said this on a recent Sunday. He had gone on vacation for two weeks and was away from worship. He then came home, became sick, and was away from worshiping another two weeks. But then something interesting happened . . . he continued to stay away from church! This was not a normal habit for him. He was active in the church, attending faithfully every week. Now, a new habit started: staying away from church. This new habit was also a very easy habit to start.

We are now over a full year after the start of the pandemic. I realize many stayed away at the beginning of the pandemic for health concerns. Many members at Grace have serious medical conditions and were concerned about being exposed to Covid. Now, a year later, many of us have been vaccinated, and many more still need to be vaccinated, but we are still missing many of our disciples. Only you can determine for yourself whether you are staying away from church because of a medical concern, or if you are staying away from church simply because staying away has become a bad habit.

If it is a bad habit, may I suggest to you that would be an excellent habit to break! We have a great reason to make a habit of being in worship on Sunday mornings. When we are in worship, Jesus Christ has a habit of doing wonderful things for us. For example, Jesus is in a good habit of forgiving your sins whenever you need them forgiven. Jesus is in a good habit of speaking to you through His Word whenever you need to hear it. Jesus is in a good habit of coming to you physically in the Lord’s Supper every single week because He wants to be near you. It is a good habit for us to see Christ every week in Word and Sacrament. It is a good habit for us to stay among the company of saints here on earth, and to rejoice in song and praise with all the saints in heaven! There are some saints here at Grace who need you as well.

We realize during this past year a lot can happen. If you are having difficulty coming to worship for health reasons and would like me to bring you communion at home, feel free to reach out and call the church office and I would be honored to serve you. Otherwise, we hope coming to worship becomes a “habit” for all of us. Being together in church is truly a good habit I hope none of us break! See you in worship! God Love You!

Blessings!

Pastor Gil Gilbert, STS

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR AUGUST

- ❖ Lector – Stormy Shull
- ❖ Communion Assistants – Rick and Cindy Bivens
- ❖ Ushers – Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Altar Preparation – Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Offering Tabulators – Todd Childers and Sheila Drum

*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



8/01	Helen and Harvey Leatherman
8/08	OPEN
8/15	OPEN
8/22	Kim Parker
8/29	Belinda and David Wilfong

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 JULY, 2021

	7/04/21	7/11/21	7/18/21	7/25/21
Learning Hour	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Worship	42	46	39	50
General Fund Offerings	\$6,121.00	\$1,906.00	\$1,581.00	\$2,601.00

Needed Each Week = \$3,268.54

General Fund **Offerings, June 2021** = \$9,563.00
 General Fund **Expenses, June 2021** = \$10,845.20
 Difference = -\$1,282.20 (expenses exceeded offerings)

VBS WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS as you can see by the attendance totals below. This year's theme was a treasure hunt based on the Gospel of Matthew, and area Lutheran Churches were invited to participate. Many thanks go to those who worked tirelessly to make this year's VBS such a fun learning time for all!

July 25 th Kickoff	Mon. - July 26 th	Tues. - July 27 th	Wed. - July 28 th
82	79	79	79

THE MEN OF GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST will be held on Saturday, August 14, at 9:00 AM at Four Peas in a Pod Restaurant. Great food, great fellowship, and fabulous prayer!

TO THE YODER FAMILY IN NORTH CAROLINA: The descendants of Conrad Yoder will hold their annual reunion on Sunday, August 8, 2021 at St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Maiden, NC. Prior to the business meeting, there will be a covered dish lunch at 1:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall of St. Martin's Lutheran Church, the former parish of Rev. Robert Anderson Yoder (Pastor 1898-1900; 1901-1905). The time together will conclude with a brief memorial service at the Conrad Yoder Family Cemetery.

GRACE CHURCH RECEIVED A NOTE OF THANKS FROM FRANCES AND STANLEY ALLEN for the caring attention given to Rita and Ricky and their families during the loss of both parents, Betty and Reid Lynch, and they hope their memorial gift will help in some loving way.

THE LEADERSHIP MINISTRY BOARD ON RETREAT

The Leadership Ministry Board of Grace will be taking a retreat on Saturday, July 31. Pastor Gilbert will be the facilitator, and the Board members will take time to discuss and set goals for the coming year.

What exactly will the Board members do on this retreat? As on every retreat, it will be a time of prayer and Bible study to ask God for His guidance and provision as the Board begins this time of discernment and planning. This particular retreat will be somewhat different from past retreats as the Board will discuss congregational evangelism, the effects of the Covid pandemic, worship attendance, goals for the church building and properties, as well as other business items the Board will need to address pertaining to property and maintenance. There will be some organizational planning and training for those new now serving on the Board.

We ask that the congregation continues to pray for every member of this Board throughout the year. Their task is vital to the life of this congregation. A report of the retreat will be published in the September newsletter.

SHOEBOX SEASON IS HERE!!

Now more than ever, children need hope! As the world struggles with the coronavirus pandemic, we are praying for even greater opportunities to reach boys and girls with the Gospel. We want to let them know that God loves them and has not forgotten them!

The best way to get involved is to pack a shoebox yourself. As you specially select each item, packing a shoebox becomes a blessing for you as well as the child who receives it. Be sure to include a note and a photo!

If packing a traditional shoebox just isn't an option for you this year, we can do it for you! We are carefully monitoring local, state, and national guidelines to help protect the health of those involved in collecting, processing, and delivering shoebox gifts. You can check the Operation Christmas Child COVID-19 landing page for regular updates—it's the best way for you to stay informed. Thank you again for partnering with us this shoebox season to bring Good News and great joy to children around the world!

Franklin Graham

EARTH'S POPULATION STATISTICS IN PERSPECTIVE

The population of Earth is around 7.8 billion. For most people, it is a large figure, that is all. However, if you condensed 7.8 billion in the world into 100 persons, and then into various percentage statistics, the resulting analysis is relatively much easier to comprehend.

Out of 100: 11 are in Europe, 5 are in North America, 9 are in South America, 15 are in Africa, 60 are in Asia, 49 live in the countryside, 51 live in cities, 12 speak Chinese, 5 speak Spanish, 5 speak English, 3 speak Arabic, 3 speak Hindi, 3 speak Bengali, 3 speak Portuguese, 2 speak Russian, 2 speak Japanese, 62 speak their own language. 77 have their own houses, 23 have no place to live. 21 are over-nourished, 63 can eat until full, 15 are under-nourished, 1 ate the last meal, but did not make it to the next meal. The daily cost of living for 48 is less than 2 USD (2 USD). 87 have clean drinking water, 13 either lack clean drinking water or have access to a water source that is polluted. 75 have mobile phones, 25 do not. 30 have internet access, 70 do not have conditions to go online, 7 received

university education, 93 did not attend college. 83 can read, 17 are illiterate. 33 are Christians, 22 are Muslims, 14 are Hindus, 7 are Buddhists, 12 are other religions, 12 have no religious beliefs. 26 live less than 14 years, 66 died between 15 - 64 years of age, 8 are over 65 years old.

So... if you have your own home, eat full meals and drink clean water, have a mobile phone, can surf the internet, and have gone to college, you are in the miniscule privileged lot. (in the less than 7% category). Amongst 100 persons in the world, only 8 can live or exceed the age of 65. If you are over 65 years old, be content and grateful. Give thanks to God and cherish life, grasp the moment.

PRAYER GROUP VS. HERB-I-CANE

Our Wednesday night prayer group was invited to a cookout at Herb and Libby's house. The grill was set up under the awning beside their new gazebo. We began to arrive by cars and so did the rain. We all thought, not a big deal; after all, the hamburgers were smelling so good and there was plenty of room in the gazebo. As we began to pray, talk and laugh with each other, the rain came down harder and we were getting wet, Pastor Gil, with Karen decided it was time to say the blessing. Great timing, because the weather quickly changed. God had arrived; but not driving a brand new shiny red super stock Dodge, he was riding on the wind with thunder roaring and lightning flashing, blowing the rain sideways. We all quietly watched in awe and amazement. He is still in charge! Cindy and I stood up and saw Herb just flipping that meat, because he said the grill temperature had dropped from 350 degrees to zero at that moment. Alan and Stormy were the first to run toward the house; they made it without falling (but there was some sliding), after all they brought the baked beans. Then all of us took a chance and followed them in their footsteps (yes even I was running). While inside as we dried off and began to eat, Mike and Debbie came in with cake. Lucky, the cat, got scared and was hiding in the next room. Too bad, he could have had some people food as Michael and Sybastian ran into each other, sending hamburgers, chips, and potato salad flying. Not to worry, our beloved mama, Shelly, came to the rescue and cleaned up the mess. Everybody and everything was okay. Harmony was soon restored when the watermelon that Todd brought was sliced up. With our stories told, blessings said, stomachs full, and hugs around, it was time to leave. We will remember that night as our special moment with God, for a long time to come!

Ricky Bivens

BOARD NOTES

BOARD NOTES (from the regular monthly meeting held July 18)

Meeting called to order by Alan Shull, President.

Gary Leatherman gave the Devotions followed by prayer.

Absent and excused: Shelia Drum, Michael Hall, Johnny Moss, Matt Speagle

June Minutes were read and approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Leadership Board Retreat will be Saturday, July 31 at the Catholic Conference Center.

Jeff Scronce will install a new directional sign at Blackburn Bridge Rd and Hickory
Lincolnton Hwy.

Chris Scronce has failed to complete the work on the front door as agreed. David Bloom
will be contacted to ask if he will finish the job.

NEW BUSINESS:

William Palmer asked for permission to install a grave marker for a family member. Board
will approve if he will submit a picture of what he is planning to install.

Chris Abernathy, our new custodian, is doing a wonderful job of cleaning the interior of
the church. Motion was made and seconded to increase her pay by \$50 per month.
Suggestion made to have a congregational pool party at the Elks Club sometime in
August-September. The shelter there would also provide for a covered dish. Will inquire.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

Education: Cleanup day was successful in preparation for VBS.

Property: Lab reports from Water Tech were returned. Water quality is good.

Praise/Worship: Worship Workshop went well. Signup sheets were made available. Need
more to be involved.

Stephen Ministry: Training class going well.

Fellowship/Hospitality: Rally Day is September 12 following worship and will include a
covered dish dinner.

Youth Ministry: Luther League will meet quarterly with a special event each quarter.

Finance: Reports were reviewed and motion made to receive as information.

Other/Red Flags: Congregation to witness and invite persons to worship more important
now than ever.

Motion made to adjourn. Seconded.

Next Meeting: August 15 at 4:00 Devotions: Pastor Gil

Tabulators: Todd Childers/Shelia Drum

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