

grace notes

The newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church



A Time to Unite and Deepen

We have two big opportunities this fall to come together as a congregation to deepen our relationship with God, with each other, and with the community around us.

Bible Mania. One Day. One Story.

What do you think of when people mention the Bible? Is it *intimidating*? *Irrelevant*? Or, maybe just a good cure for *insomnia* (you know, boring)? These are common attitudes toward the Bible in our culture today. Believe it or not, they are common attitudes in our churches, as well.

At Grace, and as Lutheran Christians, we believe that the Bible is essential to understanding God, the world, and how we are to navigate this life and have a vibrant faith. Yet, many of us still don't feel like we have a good knowledge of what the Bible is and how it all fits into life in the 21st century.

That's why we've set aside **ONE BIG DAY** to tell the **ONE BIG STORY** of the Bible. Join us on

**Saturday, October 11,
9am – 3pm**

as Pastor Steve combines a little bit of craziness, some cartooning, lots of group participation, and some practical, real-life theology to guide us through **BIBLE MANIA**.

You will leave this one-day event with the ability to tell the big story of the Bible in a way you've probably never imagined. Plus, you will have some compelling thoughts about questions like:

- How do ancient stories connect with contemporary life?
- Can science and religion really go together?
- How does God speak through the Bible today?
- What is God asking us to do in our world?

Invite your friends and let's take this Bible Mania adventure together. (open to everyone from sixth grade and older)

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ALL ARE WELCOME TO GOD'S TABLE

Pastor Mark's Remarks

It was a scary moment. The anonymous caller stated in a matter-of-fact kind of voice that the Klan might try and burn down the church over the weekend, so we had better be on our toes!

I was aghast! Caught totally off guard by the ugly head of racism existing in of all places, the small community of Howell, Michigan, about 40 miles from Detroit! I had heard rumors that the state Grand Wizard lived nearby, but that had been all I had heard...just rumors. But now that Grace (yes..the church was named Grace, too) was hosting overnight, a group of African American women marching from Detroit to Lansing to protest the cuts to state welfare and social programs, the rumors had suddenly become very real.

I was alone that weekend. My supervising pastor was on vacation and unreachable. I was unsure of what to do. After all, I was a beginner pastor with little or no experience! I called the local sheriff's office to ask for help, but they told me they couldn't protect us unless someone was actually committing a crime. They simply advised me to hide the protesters' support vehicles away from the church, and keep those sleeping in the building away from the windows. When I got off the phone I wondered just how strong the influence of the Ku Klux Klan was in the community.

Later that Saturday I stood amid 75 exhausted and frightened African American women with their children milling around our darkened Fellowship Hall, not knowing what to say. A few of the Grace members had put up heavy curtains over all the windows and moved the furniture, bedding, and supplies to the center of the room. Fortunately we had found a few places to hide the vehicles and we had enough food donated to feed a small army.

I remember the embarrassment and sorrow I felt as I tried to explain the threats we had received. I told them about the rampant racism existing in this small little town. Then I reiterated the sheriff's advice to remain in the building at all times, and away from the doors and windows. I expected a bad reaction from the group, but there was little. Maybe they were too exhausted from the day's march of 15-20 miles or maybe fear and prejudice were something they lived with on a daily basis. I don't know. But it didn't take long for them to fall asleep. I, however, didn't sleep a wink that night. I constantly prowled looking for anything or anyone outside the church. It was weird to feel so unsafe and at the mercy of hidden hate and prejudice. I wanted to apologize to those women for the people of our community, but I didn't know how to begin. Fortunately, nothing happened that night. The threat never materialized. In the morning we got the women and children up, dressed, fed, and on their way. Frankly I was *so* thankful that nothing had happened.

But that horrendous experience of unwelcome and inhospitality towards a group of people with a different skin color from mine has stuck with me ever since.

Continued on page 3

A Note from Pastor Steve

Continued from page 2:

Although I had attended a city high school in Pittsburgh that had been closed two times because of racial riots, I wasn't prepared to face racism in this middle-class comfortable suburban city of Howell! And yet it was there! Huddling with those African American women in that Fellowship Hall so long ago changed me. It made me particularly sensitive to the need for Christians to be an instrument of hospitality, welcome, and grace that permeated the life and ministry of Jesus. The parable he told about the wedding feast where people from all walks of life are welcomed, stands as a great response to hate and prejudice, no matter where we experience it.

Perhaps this is why I'm so excited about the upcoming *Loving Generously* series coming at the end of the month. Based upon the Parable of the Wedding Feast, I believe it will encourage us to live our lives celebrating the generous love God has shown everyone as it challenges us to welcome everyone to his table of love and forgiveness.

I hope you will make it a priority to attend all of the *Loving Generously* worship series. I also hope you will consider joining in further discussion and exploration in our *Loving Generously* small groups offered during Sunday Evenings@GRACE as well as in homes of our members throughout the week. There will be more information available on the website or call the church office.

In the meantime, join me in praying that the Lord will truly transform us as we all learn how to love generously!

In Him,

Pastor Mark

It is my privilege to serve two ministries at Grace. On the one hand, I get to equip and encourage Catechism, Own Your Faith, and High School students and leaders. On the other hand, I get to equip and encourage adults in spiritual formation. These are both exciting and rewarding ministries in their own right.

What really excites me is when these ministries get to come together for maximum synergy! That's what is happening this fall. Youth and adult ministries are coming together in two ways.

The first is through BIBLE MANIA. This one-day event is energetic enough, but deep enough, to engage adults, high school students, and middle school students. I am really excited to offer this learning experience to everyone.

The second way this is happening is through our *Loving Generously* series. Our high school Dojo tribes follow the Narrative Lectionary every Sunday, but when they engage in the *Loving Generously* small group material, they will be doing the same small group experience that the rest of the church will be doing at the same time.

Yes, this is a double advertisement for these two events (read the Front Page article), but that's how important I think these two events are to the spiritual health of our congregation. There is great power when we find moments of alignment where parents and students are doing the same spiritual formation activity within the church.

Please pray that nothing will keep people—adults and students alike—from participating in these two important events.

Loving Generously

We have a huge goal this fall to get everyone involved in a **small group for 5 weeks** to experience the series called **LOVING GENEROUSLY**.

Do you remember Frank Donovan and Ray from the *Living Generously* series this Spring? They are back in five episodes to help us explore what it means to actually obey Jesus' command to love one another.

Look in the bulletin, or online, to register for a small group that will follow up on the video and sermon for that week. Here is the outline for the series.

Loving Generously Coming to Grace

We have a huge goal this fall to get everyone involved in a **small group for 5 weeks** to experience the series called **LOVING GENEROUSLY**. Do you remember Frank Donovan and Ray from the *Living Generously* series this Spring? They are back in five episodes to help us explore what it means to actually obey Jesus' command to love one another.

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Loving Generously: Giving Ourselves One to Another

- **Banquet: Tearing up the Place Cards that Separate Us**

Scripture: Luke 14:13-14

Jesus tore down the barriers that separated people.
Who are you inviting into your life?

- **For Sale: Blessing vs. Burden**

Scripture: Matthew 19:16-22

As we give ourselves to God, we give ourselves to one another.

What do you own and what owns you?

- **Kind: Loving those who are Different from Me**

Scripture: Proverbs 19:17

We are called to a love that crosses barriers: social, economic, cultural, and ethnic.

- **Called: Sharing Christ's Suffering and the Suffering of Others**

Scripture: John 15:18-19

Loving like Jesus can lead to persecution.

- **One to Another: Being United with Christ to show His Love**

Scripture: Matthew 7:12

Giving yourself to loving everyone God puts in your path.



A 5 WEEK CINEMATIC JOURNEY OF BIBLICAL LIVING FROM Rhemedi**a**

This series is an excellent opportunity to grow deeper in your faith, connect to others in our congregation, and learn how to truly love your neighbor. Invite a friend and let's love one another in a deeper way!



What has been the one constant at Grace Lutheran Church for over 30 years? Who has been the source of incredible love for children at Golden Rule? And finally, who is the best cook in the whole world? The answer is easy for all of us at Grace and beyond. It's Cathy Stoll!

It's with great joy and a huge serving of sadness that we gather to celebrate the ministry and retirement of Cathy who has been our cook at Golden Rule. For anyone who has ever come into the building on a week-day, and suddenly smelled incredible aromas, you knew immediately that Cathy was on the job preparing another meal for the children. Cathy has faithfully cooked meal after meal to fill the students with wonderful food. However, more than the good taste of the food has been the great amount of love Cathy has served along with it! Truly Cathy has been a blessing of love to all the children!

Come join us in honoring Cathy Stoll on her retirement from Golden Rule Child Care. She has been "Cooking up Love" for 34 years. We will be thanking her for all she has done for the many families who have been a part of Golden Rule. The celebration will take place in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, November 9th following the 10:30 worship service until 1:30. We would love to have you join us!

Retirement Party
Honoring Cathy Stoll
Sunday—November 9th
11:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

September Grace Lutheran Church Vision Board Meeting Notes

The September 9th, 2014 Grace Lutheran Church Vision Board was held at Greg Ackerson's home.

The Bible Study for the evening focused on [Romans 12:9-10](#) – “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love, honor one another above yourselves.” Our discussion centered upon how we can be more inclusive to newcomers. The surprising part of the discussion was about “cliques” within a church. They are important and necessary, especially to help people feel connected to each other. However, the challenge for our leaders is this: the need to intentionally invite newcomers and regular attendees into the “cliques,” because it gives them a sense of belonging. We finished up by wondering how we might equip our leaders to leave every worship service with a determination to spend the first 3 minutes in the Narthex connecting with someone they don't already know...perhaps even to a first-time visitor.

The Financial Report was positive and we gave thanks for the generous increase in summer regular offerings of about 4.5%! In addition, many of the summer building projects have been addressed:

- LED bulbs have been installed in Narthex, Worship Center, and Fellowship Hall; (This will be a great savings in energy costs!)
- Hallway TV Monitors have been upgraded and replaced;
- New sound board for the Worship Center was purchased, installed, and equalized;
- New side speakers have been installed;
- New 80" flat screen TV purchased and installed in Fellowship to replace aging and dull projector and screen;
- Parking Lot Lights have been partially repaired. We have received new fixtures to improve the lights near the sidewalks;
- Building has been cleaned, carpets shampooed, and general repairs have been made;
- 16 New light-weight tables have replaced the old heavy tables in the portables and classrooms;
- Insurance Claim for the lightning strike has not been completed or submitted;

Pastor Mark asked the Vision Board for input regarding staff needs in preparing the 2014-2015 Operating Budget. In addition, the Church Staff is starting to develop the various goals, objectives and strategies for their ministry areas. The Budget will be presented at the November Meeting.

The Vision Board heard an update from Pastor Steve on his Deep in the Burbs PhD project. The Board also discussed how to better connect with newcomers and further discussed website wording regarding requirements for those who want to be married at Grace.



WOMEN of FAITH Conference

Awaken your spirit and revive your faith at the Women of Faith Conference, entitled *From Survival to Revival*.

This day and a half event will be held at Xcel Center in St. Paul, MN on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17 & 18. You'll be inspired by uplifting music, honest sharing, powerful Bible teaching and extreme laughter. Discover new joy and a fresh sense of purpose, as you listen and learn from other women of faith!

Gather your group, call your friends, and put your family on notice. It's time to plan for this Women of Faith Conference, *'From Survival to Revival!'* Read more about it at womenoffaith.com or contact Jeannie Hellmann at Grace.



Our Goal = 600 Volunteers and 100,000 MEALS

Grace volunteers will be cooking up a storm (well, actually, packing meals like crazy) on Nov. 21 & 22 at Feed My Starving Children!

The challenge is on for 600 Grace volunteers to pack over 100,000 meals to feed God's starving kids around the world! We want YOU to join us for this MARATHON packing event! We have reserved the weekend of Nov.21 and 22 – two shifts on Friday night and 3 shifts on Saturday – to serve at Feed My Starving Children.

- Friday, Nov. 21:
6 - 7:30PM
8 - 9:30PM
- Saturday, Nov. 22:
9 - 11AM
11:30AM - 1:30PM
2 - 4PM
- Start saving your pennies, and quarters and dollars to donate to FMSC
- Invite your friends and family to join this MARATHON packing event!
- Register online at fmsc.org or contact the church office 763-421-6520



Family Worship Weekend October 5th & November 2nd

Children will begin in Worship Services with their families and then be dismissed to SONday School after the Children's Sermon. The SONday School children will be sharing a special song in worship. Children may just come forward when it is time to sing.



We invite women of all ages to join one (or more) of the following women's opportunities at Grace . . . a place to connect with others, a space to be real, a time to be encouraged, and a chance to grow in faith and friendships!

Monday Night Group – This women's group meets from 7 – 8:30 pm Monday nights at Grace, beginning in September. Experience the encouragement of women while learning more about Biblical truths for everyday living.
Contact:: Joan Hackleman 763-753-4191
jhackleman1@yahoo.com

Ruth Circle – This Bible study group meets the first Wednesday each month at 1 pm at Grace. Come and join this gathering of ordinary women to learn more about our 'extra-ordinary' God.
Contact:: Jan Galvin 763-421-0668
cricket2005@usfamily.net

Grace Quilters - Join the laughter and camaraderie as beautiful quilts are made each Wednesday morning, 9 to noon, at Grace. Quilts are donated to those in need at local hospitals and women's shelters. Your time and talent will be a welcomed addition to this vital ministry.
Contact: Jan Galvin 763 421-0668
cricket2005@usfamily.net

Prayer Shawl Ministry - Do you like to knit or crochet? Then please join this ministry as we weave prayers into comforting shawls and lap blankets that will be given to people who are ill or home bound. This is a great way to share your talent & meet new friends.
Contact:: Bev Jovanovich 763 427-4122
grimebusters@q.com



GRACE 2 HAITI in 2015

TWO mission trips to Haiti are being planned:

- An Adult Mission Team will serve in Haiti, January 2 – 9, 2015.
- An Intergenerational Mission Team will travel to Haiti, January 17 – 24, 2015.

Experience and express your faith in new ways by joining a mission team, to be the hands and feet of Jesus as we build relationships and homes in Haiti. We invite you to join not only the emotional and physical adventure, but the spiritual journey as well. (Plus the weather will definitely be warmer in Haiti than Minnesota next January)

Please pray . . . Please ask questions . . . Please consider this opportunity to grow and serve!

Greg & Lori Ackerson will lead the Adult team in early January. Please contact Greg, grega@apex-co.us or Lori, lori.ackerson@allina.com, 763 390-7890

Chrissy Petersen and Emma Leger will lead the Intergenerational team, Jan. 17-24. Please contact Chrissy Petersen, chrisypetersen621@gmail.com, 763 234-5155 or Emma Leger, emma@legermn.com, 612 889-6916



SUPPORT GROUPS at GRACE

A caring support group will begin meeting at Grace on Sunday, Oct. 12 from 6 to 7:30 pm. All people of Grace are invited to attend - GriefShare. And please invite your friends, neighbors, co-workers or family members who may also be blessed. This small group will continue meeting weekly on Sunday evenings from 6 to 7:30 pm for several months.



Grief share is a special seminar and support group for people grieving the loss of someone close. Each evening includes a DVD presentation and group discussion time. You will have the opportunity to interact with others who have experienced a recent loss, learn about their journey and share your own experiences as well. This group may not take the pain away, but it just might lighten your load a little, only through God's grace and His loving people around you. Group facilitators will be Lynn Noren and Ann Lange. To learn more visit www.griefshare.org or contact Lynn at LNoren@rise.org 763 300-6297 or Ann Lange ann.lange@genmills.com 763 323-6868

SONday School Birthday Offering



Our Birthday Offering this year will be going to Heifer International to purchase flocks of chicks. \$20 can buy a flock of chicks which could be 10 to 50 chicks. Our offering total for September is \$14.74!

Did you know that a good hen can lay 200 eggs a year? Birthday offerings will be taken the 2-5 weeks of the month in Large Group. Kids can bring their money from home on those weeks and be recognized, receive a sticker, and a birthday pencils.



(*within the* **CHAOS**)

All women are invited to join us for the **WOMEN'S RETREAT** on Saturday, Nov. 1 from 9 am to 4 pm at Bunker Hills Activity Center, Andover as we seek some "**CALM within the CHAOS**" of life!

This 'CALM' retreat may bring you the blessings of Relaxation . . . Laughter . . . Time away . . . Good Food . . . Space to Breathe . . . Inspiration . . . Faith & Friendships!

Continental breakfast and lunch are included in the price of \$35 per person. Please purchase your tickets at the Welcome Center on weekends or in the church office during the week.

Bring a friend, neighbor, co-worker or family member with you as we seek "**CALM within the CHAOS**" of life! For more information, please contact any one of the ministry team members: Vickie Meade, Anne Weikle, Stacy Surratt, Betty Hartman and Jeannie Hellmann.



Women of all ages are invited to **W.O.W.** (Women on Wednesday). This Bible study and fellowship group will help each of us women to learn from (and lean on) God's word. We listen to and encourage one another, and we pray for and support each other. We remind one another that each of us is "blessed to be a blessing." And together may our response to God be a resounding "**WOW!**"

We meet each Wednesday at Grace from 9:30 to 11:15 am, throughout the school year. Save the date and invite your friends! Yes, childcare will be available for a small fee. For more information, please contact Jeannie Hellmann, jeannieh@graceandover.org

Hearts at Home Conference for Moms!

Need a little "Mom" inspiration? Want to understand what makes your child tick? Need some Christian encouragement and maybe just some time away? Then plan to attend the 'LOVE YOUR LIFE' Hearts at Home Conference in Rochester, MN Nov. 7 – 8. This Hearts at Home conference offers Christian support and inspiration for moms of all ages and in all seasons of mothering.

When you come to a Hearts at Home conference, the time is for YOU (not for the kids, but they will benefit too)! You'll feel refreshed by the laughter, the uplifting music and the honest sharing of many moms! During the conference weekend, you'll attend workshops that encourage you in whatever season of motherhood you're in. You'll hear speakers who have knowledge to help you through the long days. You'll meet other moms who will encourage you in this ministry of being "mom." And you'll pick up resources that give you insight and inspiration for the years ahead.

Details and registration information available at Heartsathome.org, or for more info, please contact Jeannie Hellmann, Jeannieh@graceandover.org 763 421-6520, ext. 122



“Grace Lutheran Children's Ministry”

“Like” our Facebook page and keep up with everything happening in Children’s Ministry here at Grace

You and families will find:

- Weekly lesson reviews for families
- Newsletters from SONday School
- Updates from Rockin Kids Bible Club

Latest events happening in Children’s Ministry



**First Communion Class
Saturday November 1st
9:00am - Noon.**

Pastor Mark and Kim DeVries teach students in 3rd grade and up about the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Children are then invited to receive their First Communion during worship on November 1st at the 5:00 service, or November 2nd at the 9 or 10:30 service. Bring a Bible, a parent, and a smile! Call the church office to sign up.

November Baptism Workshop

Saturday November 8

Baptism is an important step in the life of a family. A Baptism Workshop will be offered for parents who would like to have their child baptized here at Grace, on Saturday, November 8th, at 9:00am. During the workshop, you will have an opportunity to explore what Baptism means for you and your child, as your family takes this step in your faith journey. We will share with you, insights on raising a child who knows and loves God. The next Baptism Workshop will be January 17th, at 9 a.m. Please contact Monica Allen at monicaa@graceandover.org or the church office to sign up for the workshop.



**Grade 3-5 Lock-in
November 7/8**

On November 7 at 8 p.m. – November 8 at 8 a.m., kids in Grades 3-5 are invited to a Lock-In. The evening will include games, crafts, snack, devotion, movie, and tons of fun! Kids may bring a board game, sleeping bag, pillow, and comfy clothes for sleeping. Please do not bring mp3 players, I-pods, or cell phones. Children must be able to stay the night. This is a great opportunity to bring friends! Help is needed for Overnight Chaperones, Evening Helpers, and Breakfast Chefs. If you child brings more than 2 friends, you will need to be an Overnight Chaperone. Cost of the evening is \$5 per child, If you sign up on Facebook you can pay at the door. Please contact Kim DeVries or Monica Allen if you have any questions. Registration forms will be going home in October.



Rockin' Kids Bible Club

What do Board Games, Kids, and the Bible have in common? RKBC on Wednesday nights. Each week, our Bible is themed around a favorite board game. We've studied the "Chutes and Ladders" of Joseph's life and we will be exploring Life, Trouble, and Candy Land as we meet Solomon and Moses!

Rockin' Kids Bible Club is so happy to have a great team of volunteers to work with our kids each week. If you would like to lend an extra hand on Malt nights, Craft nights, or with evening Hosts, please let us know.

Upcoming dates:

October 15th – No RKBC

October 19th–RKBC sings in Worship (details will be sent home with children or see Facebook)

October 29rd – Malt Night

November 9th – RKBC sings in Worship (details will be sent home with children or see Facebook)



What's New in SONday School



We are so excited to have the Kids back in SONday School! Their smiling faces and enthusiasm is contagious! We also are so excited to have 50 plus volunteers who teach, greet, help, substitute, provide drama, and make delicious food! Their commitment and joy at working with the children of Grace inspires us all.

Coming on October 11th and 12th, SONday School will celebrate a **Passover Picnic** as we continue our journey through Exodus. This will be morning for the 5 senses, as we see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. So come ready for a GREAT, BIG, PARTY! As we eat Passover foods, remember the journey of the Israelites from slavery, sing the Goat Song, and find the Afikomen.

The Wedding Banquet – November 1st and 2nd, the kids will celebrate the Wedding Banquet as part of Family Worship Weekend. Kids can invite a friend to SONday School for a special morning of snacks, crafts, and the parable of the Wedding Banquet. Be sure to say, "I CAN COME!" unlike the people from the parable Jesus told.

No SONday School Weekends

November 29/30

December 20/21



A special thank you to the wonderful and skilled hands of our Quilters here at Grace for sewing special "offering wallets" for our SONday School children!

On our first day of SONday School the children were able to decorate their wallets and make them their own. They then filled their wallets with their very own offering envelopes! We pray this will help our children learn that generosity means giving or sharing freely, of their time, talent, and possessions.

Give the LORD praise worthy of his glory! Come, bring your offerings. Psalm 96:8

Grace Lutheran Church

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A Ministry of Grace in the heart of Andover and beyond!

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LOVING GENEROUSLY

What did Jesus mean when He said, “Love your neighbor as yourself?” Have you ever stopped to consider that loving God and loving one another are inseparable? God loves us, and our response to His love is to love those around us, but are we to only love those like ourselves?

In the coming weeks, we hope to address some of these questions as we begin a new series entitled Loving Generously. This series is a continuation of the Living Generously series we did last year, and continues the story of the Donovan family as they learn what it means to love generously. Each week we will see a glimpse of their journey as they take risks, experience suffering and joy, and find themselves transformed by the call to love others like Christ loves us. You won't want to miss a single Sunday!

Please consider joining a small group of Grace people to further explore how we can support each other on this journey of generosity. More information can be found on our website: www.graceandover.org

Beginning September 27/28 at all services!