

grace notes

The June Newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church

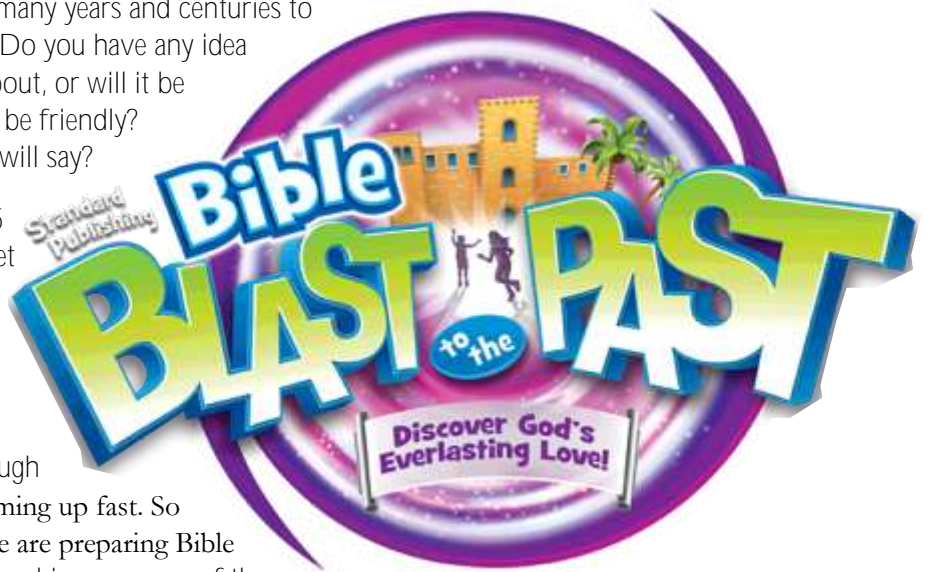
It's Time to Blast into the Past!!

Grace's Vacation Bible School Starts on June 15

Hey Grace Kids! It's time for us to use our Grace Lutheran Time Machine to travel to the past! It's going to be an exciting trip as we go back past many years and centuries to meet some famous people who lived long ago. Do you have any idea who it will be? Will it be someone you know about, or will it be someone who is a complete stranger? Will they be friendly? Scary? Nice? Hmm...What do you think they will say?

These are exciting times as the kids of our 2015 Bible Blast to the Past Vacation Bible School get ready to take a wild and exciting ride into the past, and we want you to come and enjoy all the fun!

It's not too late to sign up for our trip to the exciting Bible times on June 15-19th. Even though it's the first full week after school is out, it's coming up fast. So we're working hard now to get things ready: we are preparing Bible lessons, planning crafts, organizing games and cooking up some of the best snacks we've ever served at VBS!



What Will Vacation Bible School Be Like?

What will our trip to the past be like? Well, each day at "Bible Blast to the Past VBS", Grace kids will start out at Blast to the Past Bash with songs and drama. At the Timeless Truth Tent, we'll meet some famous people from the past. Down the road from there at Discovery Ruins, our kids will create craft projects, enjoy snacks, and then go outside to play games at the Backtrack Bazaar. At the end of the morning everyone will return to the Blast to the Past Bash for a final blessing and song!

What will our kids study in the past?

- Day 1 they will learn that God's love is **INCREDIBLE!** God showed His love in amazing ways—to Moses, to the Israelites, and to us!
- Day 2 our VBS kids will learn that God's love is **FAITHFUL!** Just as God showed His love by being there for the spies and for Rahab, our kids will

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Vacation Bible School - **cont'. from pg 1**

know he's He's always there for them too!

- Day 3 our VBS kids will learn that God's love is INVINCIBLE! By meeting David they will know that just God's love never failed David, it will never fails them!
- Day 4 everyone will learn that God's love is UNCONDITIONAL as we meet woman who had done many bud thing, but Jesus forgives her! In her story our kids will learn no matter who they are or what they've done, God loves everyone just the way they are!
- Day 5 our VBS kids will learn that God's love is REAL! Just as God's love changed everything by freeing Peter from prison, God's love can change anyone's lives!

How Can I Register my Children?

It's not too late to register to go to our "Bible Blast to the Past VBS." All you have to do is go to <http://www.graceandover.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Registration-2015.pdf> and download the registration form, or stop by the church or the Welcome Center for more information.

How Can I help?

1. Pray for the Lord to bless our VBS Outreach. Pray for health, good weather, and for the Spirit to grow faith in the lives of the students and staff!
2. Donate items for our VBS Project
3. Donate food and craft items – contact the church office.
4. Donate financial gifts to help offset the cost of our biggest outreach ministry to our community.
5. VOLUNTEER! No matter how many days you have available, there's a place for you!

Get your VBS gear ready. There's just a week left! See you at the Time Machine!



Vacation Bible School Celebration Sunday
Sunday ■ June 21 ■ 10 a.m. Service

Smart Driver Course to be Offered at Grace

Improve your skills and knowledge and learn about the effects of aging and medication on driving along with suggestions for overcoming limitations.

Course completion may qualify you for insurance discounts if you are 55 or older; check with your insurance company.

Bring your driver's license and AARP Member number (if member) to class. No driving or



AARP Real Possibilities

June 23 & 24, 2015
5:00pm to 9:00pm
A light dinner will be available
(A freewill offering for dinner would be appreciated)

tests. The course instructor is Dan Scott a member of Grace Lutheran Church. For more information or to sign up please contact Kris at 763-421-6520. AARP Costs: Cost per participant: AARP Member: \$15.00 and Non-AARP Member: \$20.00 (Make all checks payable to AARP Smart Driver Course), these costs include all course materials: Smart

Driver Guide Book and completion certificate.

Attention All Ladies

ADVENTURE is waiting for you this summer -- Please join us for a women's BEGINNER Boundary Water Canoe Trip July 29 – August 2. No prior camping or wilderness experience needed, and women of all ages from 18 to 115 years young are welcome to join us.

We will spend two nights at a fully modern cabin (running water and all) and three days/two nights on the trail. So whether you've portaged a million miles, or never sat in a canoe – this trip is for YOU! The cost will be determined depending on the number of participants ... and there are a few spots still available. So jump on board for this ADVENTURE – it will be a physical and spiritual adventure for sure!

Contact Sonja Birkeland
TODAY if you're interested!
651 442-9501 or
sonjathebirk@gmail.com



College-Age Summer Connection

If you are college age (that means those who have just graduated high school up through late 20s) and are looking for a place to connect and grow this summer, then join us on Tuesday nights from 6:00-8:00. We will gather at Pastor Steve's house for dinner, fellowship, and spiritual encouragement. Invite your friends. Contact Pastor Steve for more info. stevet@graceandover.org or Twitter @StevenPThomason

Deepening Your Spiritual Roots This Summer

Pastor Steve Shares Some Practical Tips

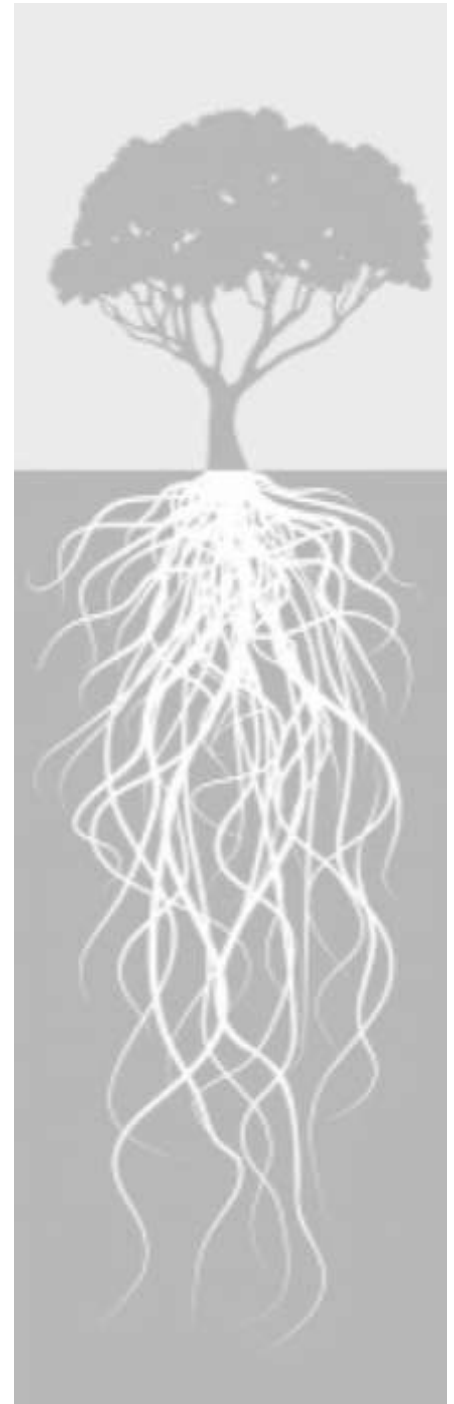
Summertime is a wonderful time of year in Minnesota. It is a time to shift gears and try to soak up some sunshine, get outside as much as possible, cook out **with neighbors, and hopefully...relax.** Here are some practical tips for deepening your spiritual roots during the summer. Pick one that resonates with you and give a try.

- **Read and Journal.** Hey, sometimes the basic practices are still the best. Take 15 minutes each day, either in the morning, or before bed. First, breathe deeply a few times. Second, ask God to speak to you by pointing out one idea on which to ponder. Third, read the passage of scripture. Fourth, write a simple response that records the one thought that jumped out at you. Fourth, thank God for the time together and ask God to bring this idea into your mind throughout the next 24 hours. If you need help **figuring out what to read, I've mapped a simple reading plan through the Psalms at www.stevethomason.net called "A Month of Psalms."**
- **Take a Creation Walk.** Go for a walk and pay special attention to all the natural things in your environment. Even if you are walking in a concrete jungle downtown, notice how the weed pushes its way through the cracks of pavement. **Meditate on how God's creation pulses with life. Give thanks to God as you walk.**
- **Walk across the Street.** One of the greatest ways that we can encounter God is by simply meeting and listening to our neighbors. So many neighbors wave and smile through closed car windows, but never take the **time to listen to each other's stories. Try to meet one new neighbor this summer...and actually listen to their story.**
- **Unplug.** We live in a noisy world. See if you can go for 24 hours without using any digital devices: no TV, cell phone, tablet, etc. Use the time to either meditate quietly, or get together with friends and family for a game night. **For bonus points...see if you can do it for three days in a row!!! You'll be surprised at the positive spiritual benefits from this practice.**

I'd love to hear your ideas for how to stay deeply rooted during the summer. Send me your thoughts at stevet@graceandover.org

Blessings

Pastor Steve



Calling All Local Artists

If you enjoy visual art—drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, animation, film making, video production—then we need to connect. We would like to create a space for local artists to find creative partnerships and dream ways to bring more art into the church and community. The first step would be to create a monthly art gathering for the purpose of fellowship, dreaming, and art-making. The second step would be to pull together an art show as part of our Octoberfest celebration at Grace this fall.

If you are interested in this group, please contact Pastor Steve at stevet@graceandover.org or Twitter [@StevenPThomason](https://twitter.com/StevenPThomason)

Summer Worship

Summer...a time of vacations! Summer...a time to relax! Summer...a time to slow down and enjoy family, friends and the great outdoors.

Yet...summer is also a time to enjoy a different type of connection with God and his people. As Pastor Steve mentions in his article, traveling in the great outdoors gives many opportunities to see the beauty of God's creation and celebrate his goodness in the warmth and sun of summer! Most of all, summer's slower pace gives us the opportunity to worship together as families and spend the whole day focusing on the goodness of God!

By the time you get this Grace Notes, we will have already started our first summer worship series entitled: *The Heart's Cry: A Study on the Book of Psalms*. After the Psalms, we will look at a portion of Martin Luther's

Catechism as we consider The Apostles' Creed. Finally, we'll end our summer worship series with sermons based on questions you might have. We will be passing out cards in June worship services to get ideas for the August Questions From the Pew Series.

As part of our summer worship experience, we offer a Sunday morning **Children's Worship Bible Time** during sermons as a way to help our children connect with God on their own level. Each week the children will focus on one of the Ten Commandments.

Something new is coming to Grace during the summer months...a time of food and fellowship outside on the patio after the Sunday morning services. In addition, special "food and fellowship" events are being planned for the Saturday 5pm services as well.

DRINK DEEPLY - from the Psalms

June 6/7	Who is Like the Lord?	Psalm 113
June 13/14	A Raw Psalm	Psalm 69:1-16
June 20/21	The Lord is My Light	Psalm 27:1-6
June 27/28	Waiting for God	Psalm 40:1-10
July 4/5	Praise the Lord!	Psalm 146

WHAT WE BELIEVE – Credo

July 11/12	What is a Creed?	I John 1:1-5
July 18/19	God of Creation	I Cor. 1:10-25
July 25/26	The Way of Jesus	I Peter 3:8-17
August 1/2	The Ministry of the Church	I Timothy 3:14-4:11
August 8/9	NIC AT NIGHT – Special Children's Musical about Jesus and Nicodemus	

QUESTIONS FOR THE PASTORS

August 15/16	Your Questions
August 22/23	Your Questions
August 29/30	Your Questions
September 5/6	Your Questions

Please join us as you are able! If you can't make it, please take time to connect with us on our website. (Each week the sermon is available to download and listen! In addition we will continue to offer daily devotions for you to journey with us, no matter where your summer takes you!



A Big Thank You!

Just 1 More 5K

Our heartfelt THANKS to the incredibly talented and energetic Ministry Team, led by Angie Hanson, who hosted the Just 1 More 5K Race at Bunker Hills Saturday, May 16. What a beautiful day for a run ... and with awesome results!



With God's blessings, and this team's dedication, we raised nearly \$9,000 which will support our outreach ministry to Haiti, helping to build a medical clinic as part of the City on a Hill project.

THANKS to the 308 participants – runners & walkers!

THANKS to the 75+ Grace volunteers who helped on race day with registration, water & food distribution, musical entertainment, set up and clean up, and the list goes on!

THANKS to the Grace family for your faithful support and encouragement as we strive to be a 'ministry of grace in the heart of Andover... and beyond!'

Donate BOTTLED water ... and support HOPE 4 YOUTH this summer!

Please join the VBS kids in collecting cases of bottled water during the month of June. Simply bring your donations to the Welcome Center in church lobby by **June 28**. Then we'll deliver water to the Hope 4 Youth drop-in center in Anoka, which provides a safe place for youth experiencing homelessness.



THANKS for sharing God's grace in such a simple & 'tangible' way . . . as a bottle of water!

St. Paul Farmers Market

Every Tuesday afternoon, from 2 - 6 pm, farmers/ producers from across the metro area come to Grace to sell wonderfully fresh vegetables, fruits, breads, jams, meats, plants and a host of other home-grown or produced items to our friends and neighbors around our church. It is a great opportunity for Grace to provide space for community connections, fresh produce, and grassroots support for our local farmers...plus, the food tastes great! Every week it seems as though there are more and more vendors showing up in the parking lot.

What is offered this month?

According to the official St. Paul's Farmers website, when you visit the market you will find: asparagus, rhubarb, green onions, radish, spinach, cabbage, green beans, kohlrabi, peas, strawberries, bedding flowers. Since none of the items are grown outside our state, offered produce is determined by the growing season.

A bit of History

In 1853 St. Paul was indeed a frontier town. Dirt streets, log cabins and steamboats were the order of the day. As early as 1852 the Minnesota Pioneer newspaper called for an organizational Farmers' Market. A Market House, a two-story brick building, was constructed at Seventh and Wabasha streets. It was St. Paul's first public market. While fresh produce was only available during the season, dairy products, flour, cakes and candies could be purchased year-round.

In recent years, the St. Paul's Market has developed satellites markets in various locations throughout the twin cities. The Andover Market at Grace is one such location. The Market Association allows only fresh, locally grown produce to be sold--directly from the grower to the consumer.

For over 150 years The St. Paul Farmers' Market has been proud to enjoy the support of the community. That tradition of support continues today.

Sunday Evening S'mores on Sundays evenings. Will you miss church because of the beautiful lakes up North? Come for S'mores, music and fellowship every Sunday night from 7:00 - 9:00, May 31st - August 30th, at the Grace Nightingale Property. You bring a chair, some water, a friend? and we'll provide the rest. See you there!

Celebrating the Gifts at Grace!

Pastor Mark's Remarks

I am constantly amazed at the wonderful gifts and abilities that people give at Grace. It's hard to imagine how we could have SONday School classes, Vacation Bible School, worship services, and the many outreach ministries at Grace without the incredibly valuable gifts of time from so many! In the same manner, I am sure we could not minister to such a large number of people without the financial gifts we constantly receive. And as I walked in the beautiful gardens or see the carefully mowed lawns, and see the difference a newly decorated room, or choir risers, or freshly painted walls has made, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude for all the gifts of time, talents, finances, and abilities given to this ministry of Grace! However, every once in a while, we receive a gift that overwhelms me and truly represents the heart of God's incredible grace, and I have to stop and talk about it.

In a few short years (two to be precise), Grace Lutheran will celebrate 50 years of ministry! Yes, back on September 10, 1967, Grace held its first worship center at Wilson Elementary School under the pastoral leadership of Norris Swenson. The church grew quickly and in two years the first building was erected. On the highest point of the roof, a cross was placed in order to let people know that the grace and love God shown in Jesus' death and resurrection had come anew in Andover. From those days until the end of last year, the cross has been an important reminder for those inside our walls as well as those in our community, that God loves his world!

During our most recent renovations, the cross had to be taken down. No one was quite sure what to do with it.

The cross symbolized years of significant ministry! It was an important beacon of hope in the community. Most of all, it was the visible sign of why a church exists - Jesus' death and resurrection. No one wanted to get rid of it. But what could be done with a rusty old cross? No one knew until a couple of our long-time members got to talking, sharing and came up with an entirely different location so it could continue to be a sign of love, forgiveness, and purpose to us, as well as those who drive by on Bunker Lake Blvd.

What a gift Dean Keller, Kent Swedberg, Phil Knutson, Alden Riley, and a few other Graceful Seniors have given Grace! These men gave their time, talents, and incredible abilities to attach the cross on the wall of our education building so that it is the first thing people notice as they drive into the parking lot. What a wonderful addition it now makes to our Prayer Labyrinth, gardens, and patio area. Suddenly, our

precious heritage as Grace Lutheran Church has become very real! It is something we can now touch and see up close. How can we ever thank these men who have given us such a gift!

So won't you join me in celebrating the gifts God has given us through each other. If possible, stop Dean, Kent, Phil, Alden or other members of our Graceful Seniors to thank them for this wonderful gift! They have certainly made a huge difference in our church!

Filled with deep gratitude!

Pastor Mark





June's News

SONday School

SONday School Birthday Offering



We finished the year with 13 Flocks! Our Birthday Offerings raised \$266.46 which will give flocks of chicks to 13 families around the world. Thank you to all the kids and teachers! Together we will make a difference!

Children's Summer Worship Bible Time

While we enjoy the sunny days of summer, it is also an opportunity to worship with the children of Grace. For the Sunday morning services at 8:30 and 10 a.m., we offer *Summer Bible Time*. Our theme for the summer is **"Where is God"**. Children will be in church with their families, come forward for the Children's Message with the pastors, and then they will be dismissed for a lesson in the Fellowship Hall. Children will return to worship after the Sermon. See Monica Allen, monicaa@graceandover.org or Kim DeVries kimd@graceandover.org if you have questions. There will be no Summer Bible Time on Labor Day weekend.

Summer Nursery

Nursery this summer will be offered at all services, 5pm on Saturday, 8:30 and 10am on Sunday. We have a fantastic group of volunteers who have served so faithfully all school year. Please show your appreciation of our volunteers, by signing up to help in the nursery. If families could sign up for one worship service, what a blessing that would be! To be a blessing, sign up on the blue sheets or the sign-up sheet outside the Nursery.



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. The Workshop will be held on Saturday, July 11, at 9 a.m. 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. Please contact Monica Allen at monicaa@graceandover.org or the church office to sign up for the workshop.

Do you want to make a difference in a Child's life?

Volunteer in either SONday School or Rockin' Kids Bible Club this fall! Teachers and substitute teachers are still needed for SONday School and Small Group Leaders would be very welcome for RKBC. Please pray about it and talk to Monica Allen or Kim DeVries for more information.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
Matthew 19:14

Grace Lutheran Church Summer Musical Camp

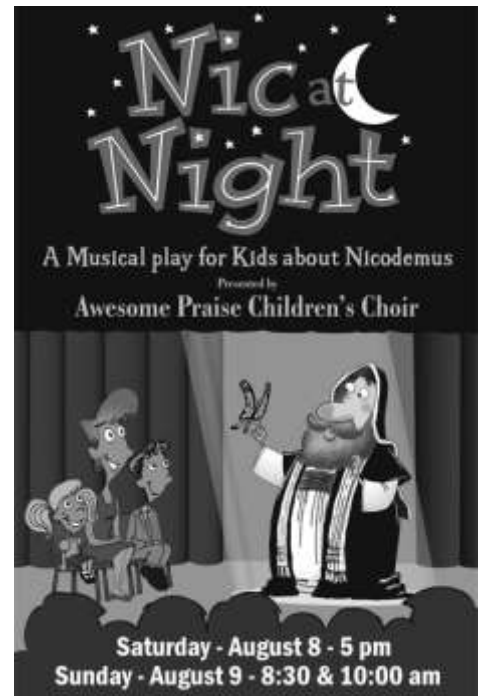
Monday, August 3 - Sunday, August 9

Join us August 3rd-9th for Nic at Night, a musical experience for kids entering 3rd Grade in the fall, through 9th grade completed. Nic at Night is a play within a play exploring the life of Nicodemus. Kids and youth will have a chance to share their faith through song, drama, dance, and art.

Registrations will be available online soon with specific dates and times. Check it out at: www.graceandover.org/get-connected/childrens-ministries/musical-adventure-camp/.

Musical Camp Auditions

Auditions will be held after VBS on Tuesday, June 16 and Wednesday, June 17 beginning at 12:45-2 pm. in Room 102. All cast members who would like a speaking or singing part do need to audition. Signup sheets with audition times are on the door to Monica and Kim's office.



Vision Board Notes

My Swan Song

By Alden Riley

Well, it has happened. My tenure on Grace's Vision Board is over. When I assumed this mantle three years ago, I could not help thinking to myself, what are you doing? Who did I think I was? The actress, Natalie Portman described it best upon attending Harvard "I had the imposter Syndrome". Like Ms. Portman, I thought to myself, am I smart enough? Am I worthy? Fortunately, I had the other six Vision Board Members and Pastor Mark to hold me up and keep me from making too many blunders.

The past three years have been very eventful in the life of Grace Lutheran Church.

- The most exciting was the installation of Pastor Steve as an ELCA Pastor, and being a part of that ceremony.
- The Free 2B Grace Campaign, and seeing all of the positive results from that.
- We were blessed with a visit from Bishop Ann Svennungsen. We shared with her the dreams and goals we had for our wonderful church. She in turn shared plans for the Synod.
- Finally, we revised our marriage policy. A decision we did not arrive at lightly. Only through many months of study, discussion and prayer were we able to reach the decision we felt was best for the future of Grace Lutheran Church in the Heart of Andover.

It is with sadness that I end my term. I will forever be thankful for this opportunity to serve God, and look forward to what plans he has for me in the future.

Thank You all for your support and trust. See you in Church

Alden

Welcome Our New Youth Director Kristi Larson



We are very pleased to welcome Kristi Larson to our staff. She will become our full-time youth director on June 22. Kristi grew up in Brooklyn Park, graduated from Concordia College in 2005 with a degree in communication and performing arts, and spent a few years as a realtor, before hearing the call to youth ministry. She has

several years of experience as a youth director in local ELCA congregations and has just graduated with an M.A. from Luther Seminary. Her degree has a dual emphasis in Children, Youth and Family AND Congregational Care.

Beside all the impressive credentials...Kristi is LOTS OF FUN!!! She will bring a spark of enthusiasm and a deep and caring heart to our youth ministry.

Many people have asked questions like: “Why did we need to hire a full-time youth director?” “What about Pastor Steve?” “Is Tom Baker leaving?” These are good and fair questions, so let’s set the record straight. Neither Pastor Steve nor Tom Baker is leaving. Kristi is *joining* the staff, thus expanding our potential for ministry.

The expanded potential comes in two ways. First, we will now have 1.5 full-time staff for youth ministry, as opposed to the .75 that we had between Pastor Steve and Tom. Second, Pastor Steve will now supervise youth ministry and shift focus to adult ministry where he will begin helping to cultivate more spaces for adults to connect, grow, equip, and serve. This is a win/win for everybody.

Kristi will hit the ground running this summer as she will lead the summer Dojo for middle school and high school students (starts Wednesday, June 24) and will go on both Youth Mission Trips. Please pray for Kristi as she prepares to join us.



Fellowship Time



There will be a time of fellowship after all the Sunday Services this summer. Various ministry teams within the church are hosting this connection time. Please stop by the patio just south of the church doors after worship and join us for a light snack and some fellowship when you are able.

- June 7th Fellowship Team (Dennis and Dianne Grabowski)
- June 14th WOW Women
- June 21st VBS Team
- June 28th **Women’s Ministry Team**
- July 5th Fellowship Team

If your ministry team is interested in hosting a fellowship time, please contact Kate Morphew katem@graceandover.org.



All ladies are invited to join in these fun adventures as we go ‘around the town’ exploring & eating, chatting & connecting. Reserve these dates on your calendars - and then watch for more details coming soon. The whole idea is to have FUN & FELLOWSHIP with other ladies of Grace! Feel free to invite your sisters, neighbors and friends to join us also.

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thurs. July 23 | 10 am – 4 pm | Around the Town in Stillwater
We’ll meet at church at 10 am, carpool to Stillwater,
Enjoy lunch together
Shop at Mama’s Happy Store |
| Thurs. Aug. 13 | 5 – 8 pm | Around the Town in Anoka
We’ll meet at 5 pm for dinner at Billy’s restaurant
Shop during Ladies’ Night Out in Anoka
Meet for ice cream at Two Scoops at 7:30 pm |

For more information please contact Deb Stang, DebOdellStang@gmail.com, or Jeannie Hellmann, jeannieh@graceandover.org, or call the church 763 421-6520

The SUMMER “Challenge”



Here at Grace we are accepting the SUMMER CHALLENGE to pack lots of meals at Feed My Starving Children during the summer months, when their volunteer base is usually quite low!

Grace volunteers are invited (encouraged ☺) to join us for one - or all - of these packing events during this summer:

- | | | |
|------------|---------|-------------|
| Thursday, | June 25 | 6 – 7:30 pm |
| Wednesday, | July 29 | 12 – 2 pm |
| Wednesday | Aug 12 | 6 – 7:30 pm |

Invite your neighbors. Bring your school-aged children. Make it a summer FUN outing with Friends! If you’ve not done this yet, be brave and give it a try!

Your two hours of time and energy will truly be a BLESSING to a starving child! Reserve these dates on your calendar and bring your buddies. Register online at fmsc.org, sign-up during worship, or call the church office. Contact Jeannie Hellmann for more info.

Grace Lutheran Church

13655 Round Lake Blvd NW, Andover, MN 55304

A Ministry of Grace in the heart of Andover and beyond!
www.graceandover.org

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- **Grace's Garage Sale** - June 11th – 13th. This year's sale will benefit our Washington DC and Milwaukee Mission Teams and the children and youth who are going to Luther Point Bible Camp in July.
- VBS - June 15-19 - 9:30am –Noon - Ages 3- 5th grade (completed) We'd still love to have snacks donated!
- AARP Smart Driver Course - June 23 & 24 - 5 to 9 pm
- Feed My Starving Children - June 25 at 6:00 pm
- July 4th Saturday 5p.m. Service is CANCELLED. See you on Sunday morning at 8:30 and 10 a.m.