Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn
493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
www.graceglenellyn.org
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Month of May 2017
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From the Pastor:

As we head into May, a lot of people are finding their schedules getting increasingly complicated because of the rush of various graduations they need to plan for, celebrate and attend.

Plus, Confirmations. A whole bunch of churches celebrate the Rite of Confirmation at the end of May, at Pentecost. And unfortunately, it gets caught up in the whole "graduation" mentality, with the attending idea that once a young person "graduates" from Confirmation, they can finally stop going to classes and worrying about whether or not they "have to" attend worship. (In one congregation, when I met with youth and asked them why they wanted to be confirmed, at least 50% answered, "So I can stop going to church. My parents said I have to go until I get confirmed; then it's my decision. So now they won't be able to hassle me about it any more." Which made me realize just how often we basically encourage our kids lie about their faith so we'll feel good.)

I'm desperately wishing we could *culturally* re-imagine confirmation, and stop making it a "program" of "classes" and requirements that students perform, accomplish, and finish. (If Luther saw what we've been doing in this country for the last 100 years, he'd be nailing stuff to our door.) In fact, I've pretty much dropped the "requirements" of confirmation. Because having a pastor "make you" attend a certain minimum number of worship services or classes or service projects so you can go through the rite—well, experience and research both show that this doesn't accomplish much for our kids any more. The one thing it's really, really good at is driving far too many of them away.

It has always been the case that some of our youth are very attentive to the faith of their family. They come to church, whether they are scheduled to be an acolyte or not. They study scripture because they want to understand it. Some of them come because, even though it isn't their favorite thing, *they respect their parents' faith and want to participate for the sake of that faith*, knowing that they'll get something important out of the discipline. Kind of like school and music practice.

Other kids are here because their parents feel an obligation to make them come, even though the parents don't find much value in attending themselves—but a sense of guilt or shame drives them to make the kids get confirmed. They look for the requirements, and do the minimum to get through one more commitment in a life already overwhelmed with responsibilities. While these kids are here physically, they are pretty much checked out emotionally and spiritually. So they show up with a combination of exhaustion and resentment that's pretty hard to crack through. And far from being angry about that, I find myself just feeling really sad for the kids trying to manage all the pressure in their lives, and for the parents who didn't get much from their own confirmation experience other than the sense that "you have to."

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Grace To You

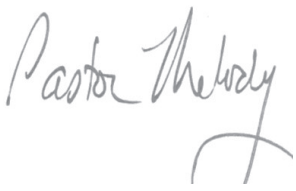
Proclaim, Build, and Serve

From the Pastor
Continued from Page 1

And then there are all the "hidden" kids who never get confirmed, because they live with autism or a learning disability or a mental or emotional illness that makes it almost impossible for them to manage the pressures of the traditional program with its attending social and mental dynamics. (And there are *always* "dynamics.")

All of which should lead us to ask ourselves *why* confirmation is important, and *how* we should be going about it.

So let me say clearly: ***I believe confirmation is vitally important to our youth***—but *not* as an accomplishment or a graduation. I think the material we present is helpful and good, and I'm grateful beyond words for the support of Dominic LoGalbo, who has faithfully taken on such a big piece of the teaching and done a truly terrific job of it. But we still struggle to keep our kids engaged, and I think the faith of our young people is too important to content ourselves with a program that doesn't result in kids wanting to be here more. Becky Ficarella (our Children's Ministry Coordinator) and I (along with pretty much every other pastor and lay leader I know) have been talking a lot about what best draws our youth and nourishes their faith, and how we can make that a life-long and congregation-wide mission. More on that part of this conversation next month.



HOLY COMMUNION FAITH MILESTONE INSTRUCTION

Following the 10:30am service on April 30, all 2nd Grade Students and their families are invited to receive Holy Communion Instruction. We will begin with lunch together, bake communion bread, and study the hows and whys of Holy Communion. Plan to be at Grace until 2:00pm for this event. Celebration of this Faith Formation Milestone will take place during 10:30am Service the following Sunday, May 7th.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

On May 15th, our 8th graders will affirm their baptismal vows at the 10am service. Please come and join our youth as they celebrate this important faith milestone. There will be a reception for our confirmands between services.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE CORNER

Our May **FAITH AND FRIENDSHIP LUNCH** will be the last gathering until September, so hope you can make it!! We will get together **Wednesday May 17** at 11:30 as usual. We plan to have a cook out, weather permitting, followed by another "What it means to be Lutheran" class as we continue to recognize the Reformation Anniversary.

Coffee hour in the fellowship room continues between services providing a variety of refreshments, coffee and coffee cakes. We always welcome volunteers to help make this happen. If you think this might be a place you could help out, please talk to any coffee hour volunteer, or call the church office. When the 9:00 summer worship schedule begins, we will have coffee hour following worship.

HOLY COMMUNION FAITH MILESTONE MAY 7TH AT 10:00AM

Holy Communion Sunday, when we celebrate those young people in our congregation who have completed the Faith Milestone of instruction in the gift of the Lord's Supper, will be Sunday, May 7.

Young people participating in this Faith Milestone will have met with Pastor Melody, Becky Ficarella, (our director of youth and family ministry) and their parents/families for a workshop on April 30th that explores the meaning of the sacrament in a variety of ways.

Holy Communion Instruction is meant both for young members who have never received communion, and for those who have already been receiving the sacrament (following the ELCA's decision in 1997 to re-open the Lord's Table to baptized people of all ages, as was the original practice of the Christian Church). In this celebration, we want to emphasize that we never earn the right to receive the sacrament by our work or understanding, because it is always the free gift of God. But in this milestone, we celebrate our children's growing in faith and rejoice in their deepening relationship with Christ, and with the Church. Such a celebration is appropriate for those who have been receiving communion for years, and for those who are receiving it for the first time.

Children & Youth Ministry

Wednesday Night Events

May 3rd: ***Shine On Wednesday & Ignite Wednesday***
Come join the end of year celebration with dinner, dessert, & games!
5:30pm-7:00pm

May 10th: ***Ignite Wednesday Dinner and a Movie: "The Lion, Witch, & The Wardrobe "***
Dinner at 5:30pm and the movie showing from 6pm-9pm

May 17th *8th Grade Confirmation Dinner and Rehearsal*
5:30pm-7:00pm Dinner and rehearsal for the 8th Grade students and their family.

Thursday Morning Play Group

Parents and Caregivers of babies and young children are invited and encouraged to join us on Thursday mornings in the Narthex from 8:30am-10:30am. We enjoy coffee and fellowship while the children enjoy a healthy snack and fellowship too! We will meet May 4, 11, 18 & 25th. See you there!

Sunday Morning Faith Formation

Spark, Shine 1& 2 Groups (Preschool-5th Grade)
9:15-9:30am Fellowship and Crafts (Gathering Room)
9:30-10:00am Classroom Instruction
10:00-10:15am Music Rehearsal (Gathering Room)

May 7th Faith Formation 9:15-10:15
May 14th Last Day of Faith Formation: End of Year Celebration! Bagels, Juice & Fruit with a Mother's Day Craft
See you next year!

Ignite Confirmation 9:15-10:15
May 7th Wrap Up of Confirmation Year with Pastor Melody
May 14th Last Day of Faith Formation: End of Year Celebration with Breakfast & Games

Special Sunday Events in May
May 7th Holy Communion Sunday 10:30am Service
May 14th Project Linus Blanket Blessing 8 & 10:30am Services
May 21st Confirmation Sunday
9:15-10:15am Cake and Punch Reception for 8th Grade Confirmation Students
10:30am Confirmation Service

Save The Date!

Vacation Bible School 2017: ***Welcome to Camp Grace! June 12th-16th: 9:30am-12:00pm***
Please reach out to Becky Ficarella if you are able to be an adult volunteer!

With thanks!
Becky Ficarella
630-469-1555 x17
bficarella@graceglenellyn.org

GROUNDS CLEAN UP

Your Landscape Ministry team is planning their annual grounds clean up for the exterior of the church. Clean-up will take place on **Saturday, May 13 from 9am-Noon.**

Please join us as we spread mulch and spruce up the grounds to create a welcoming first impression for members and guests attending our Confirmation Sunday, summer worship services, and programs. If able, please bring your own gardening tools and a wheelbarrow if you have one. We have a long list of items we would like to accomplish so all hands are welcome. Thank you.

WOMEN OF GRACE

Our May meting will be held at **Mariano's in Wheaton on Saturday, May 6 from 8:00am-9:30am.** This is just a casual moment in the month to sit and connect with women of all ages from Grace Lutheran Church.

FAREWELL AND GODSPEED

On Sunday, March 19th at the 8am service we bid farewell and God-speed to Sharon & George Rokosh as they relocate to Crossville, TN.

Sharon and George have been active members at Grace; Sharon with Altar Guild and Social Events and George as Chairperson of the Property Team and all around handyman at Grace. We wish them good health and many happy years in Tennessee.

NEW MEMBER CLASSES

New member classes will meet from 7-8:30pm on the following Tuesdays in May: 9, 16, 23, and 30. New members will be received at worship on Pentecost Sunday, June 4, at 9am. If you are interested in joining our congregation at Grace, please contact Pastor Melody.

WEEKLY BUILDING USAGE

Sunday	8:00 & 10:30am	Grace Lutheran Worship
Sunday	9:15am	Faith Formation
Sunday	10:00am	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	5:00-6:00pm	Support Group (WOW)
Mon-Fri	9:00-1:00pm	Senior Service Center
3rd Monday	9:00-11:00pm	Food Pantry Brd of Directors
2nd Monday	10:00-11:00am	FP Volunteer Training
Monday	11:30-12:30pm	Support Group (WOW)
Monday	1:00-3:00pm	Food Pantry for Clients
Monday	1:00 & 7:15pm	Yoga Class (Narthex)
Monday	5:30-8:30pm	Highland Dancers (Gym)
2nd Monday	6:00pm	Finance Ministry
Monday	7:00-8:30pm	Adult Ed Bible Study
3rd Monday	7:00pm	Grace Church Council
Tuesday	1-3pm & 5-7pm	Food Pantry for Clients
1st Tuesday	9:30am	Social Ministry
1st Tuesday	11:00-1:00pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
2nd Tuesday	11:00-1:00pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
3rd Tuesday	11:00-1:00pm	Sr. Center Book Club
4thTuesday	11:00-1:00pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
Tuesday	3:00-7:00pm	Parish Counselor
4th Tuesday	4:00-5:00pm	FP Volunteer Training
Tuesday	6:00-7:30pm	Pill Bottle Project
1st Tuesday	6:00pm	Property Ministry
Wednesday	7:30-8:30am	Bible Study
2nd Wed.	10:00-Noon	Sr. Center Bingo
4th Wed.	10:00-Noon	Sr. Center Movie
3rd Wed.	11:30am	Faith & Friendship Lunch
Wednesday	1:00-3:00pm	Food Pantry for Clients
2nd Wed.	2:00pm	Prayer Shawl Ministry
Wednesday	1:00-7:00pm	Parish Counselor
1st Wed.	5:30-7:00pm	Shine/Ignite Youth Groups
3rd Wed.	5:30-7:00pm	Shine/Ignite Youth Groups
Wednesday	8:00-10:00pm	Support Group (WOW)
Thursday	1:00-3:00pm	Food Pantry for Clients
Thursday	1:00-7:00pm	Parish Counselor
1st Thursday	6:00pm-7:00am	PADS (Off-Site)
Thursday	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal
Friday	9-11am & 1-3pm	Food Pantry for Clients
Friday	6:30-7:45pm	Support Group (WOW)
First Saturday of each month (unless noted):		
Saturday	8:00-9:30am	Women of Grace (Off-Site)
First three Saturdays of each month:		
Saturday	8:30-11:00am	Sunflower Dancers
Saturday	9:00-1:00pm	Slanchogledi (WOW Room)

GRACE TO YOU ARTICLE SUBMISSION SCHEDULE

Submit articles and photos to the church office at info@graceglenellyn.org

June Issue	**Due May 3**
July Issue	Due June 7

Monday Evening Bible Class

Starting on **Monday, April 17, 7:00pm, the Monday evening Bible class will study *Parables, Stories for Life in God's World*** from the Kerygma series. Jesus was a master storyteller. His stories are deceptively simple on the surface, but contain levels of meaning that come to the surface with careful study. They are based in the culture of the time and place in which they were told, but also have a timelessness due to deep reflection of human nature. We can learn to understand God better, as well as ourselves, and deepen the relationship. As we explore these stories, we also come to see the effects of our action or inaction in the world. This can be life-changing.

Come and join us. If you have not participated in a Monday evening class before and would like to join us, contact Fred Warnke or Vince Hardt so that we can order a study guide for you.

Thank You

My dear friends of Grace,

I want to sincerely thank you for your outpouring of love and support after the loss of my father last month. Whether it was a card, an email, a text, a donation, a hug or a prayer, it meant so much to me that so many of you reached out to me. Your expressions of concern helped me in a difficult time. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Some of you have heard me talk about tending to our flock at Grace. I want to tell you, I so appreciate how lovingly you tended to this injured sheep in my time of need. To me, that is the definition of a congregation, and I am so thankful to be at Grace. You are thoughtful shepherds. God bless you.

Most sincerely,
Paula Ortmann

Noses and Numbers

Date	Attendance		Offering
	8am	10:30am	
3/05	26	80	$ 9,837
3/12	14	92	$ 7,012
3/19	41	??	$ 3,462
3/26	21	71	$ 7,211

Wednesday services averaged 40+ for attendance.

Grace's total income through March 2017 was $93,135 while expenses incurred during that same time period were $120,289.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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Every Member: Minister & Missionary!

Melody Eastman, Pastor
Bradford Thompson, Minister of Music
Barbara Sudds, Office Manager
Becky Ficarella, Children & Youth Coordinator
Carole LoGalbo, M.S., LCPC Parish Counselor

Church Office Hours
Monday-Friday 9:30am - 3:00pm

Prayer Requests

Lois Pertle, Eva Holzapfel, Dorothy Stein, Jan Hutzler, Debbie Jasin, Clay Bledsoe for healing and strength.

The family of David Heinrich for comfort and peace.

Birthday wishes to Dolores Nosal 5/18, (93); and Evelyn Elson 5/19 (93).

Congratulations to Laura Milleville & Matt Sugrue married on March 25th.

Prayers for our Homebound Members:
Ardena Klenk – at home in Glen Ellyn
Florence Kracke –at Laurels Peak in Mankato, MN
Julie Trout—at home in Wheaton

Prayers for our member in the Armed Forces:
Rodger Plant, Air Force

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