

Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn

493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
www.graceglenellyn.org
Return Service Requested

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod - ELCA

MONTH OF AUGUST 2021
1085421-8

Grace To You is the monthly newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn.

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FROM THE PASTOR

It is *so good* to be back together in worship! And at the same time, it's also kinda hard.

For almost a year we have been chomping at the bit to get back to in-person worship. You know that Grace took a cautious approach. Some of our neighbors took an equally cautious approach by postponing gathering in the sanctuary, while others started worshipping together months earlier. Neither approach is wrong. The only thing we know is that we have been able to slow the spread of COVID. Some of us may have saved someone's life by not gathering earlier—but we'll never know that for certain. Some congregations may have saved someone's life by offering community at a time when it was most needed. We'll never know for certain. What we know is that we each did what we thought was best, respecting one another's choices. And we seem to be succeeding in beating back this pandemic.

It feels *so good* at least feel like we're getting "back to normal." But if you've attended a service recently, you probably have noticed that "normal" isn't quite what it used to be. There are a lot fewer people in church. We still have about a dozen people who join us via Zoom each week. Even taking that into consideration, we aren't nearly at the levels of worship attendance we were at before the pandemic. Which may seem really odd, considering how much people talked about wanting to come back.

But evidently we're not alone. Bishop Curry sent out a letter to church leaders a few weeks ago to reassure us of that. Across the synod, most congregations are seeing worship attendance that is between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of their previ-

ous numbers. Not all, but most. It doesn't seem to be based on when congregations decided to re-open or what strategies they implemented. It's just that things seem to be different now.

I appreciated the fact that Bishop Curry reassured us that this is ok. It's no one's fault, it's not a sign of having made the wrong choices, it's not a sign of dissatisfaction or conflict. It's probably because we've been through a hellish year. While people are eager for "the way it was," they are also tender, exhausted, perhaps still reeling financially and/or emotionally from all kinds of losses.

(And let me emphasize again how grateful I am to all of you, the people of Grace, for how gracious you have been. As Grace's leadership struggled to discern what was the right path for us, you didn't attack or threaten or bully if the decisions made weren't the ones you were hoping for. I have colleagues who felt bitterly battered this year by angry attacks as people vented their frustrations and fears through their congregations. *You* instead chose to try patience and compassion for the difficult decisions. And we felt it, believe me. Thank you.)

Please continue to be gentle with one another. Remember that people may have experienced struggle that you didn't see, and it hasn't magically disappeared. If you *are* ready to return to worship, please know that your presence is a blessing in ways you may not recognize. Remember to ask yourself what you need, but also to ask yourself what your neighbors need. Keep on being patient. And know that God has been with us all the way, and isn't about to leave us now.

Pastor Melody

GRACE TO YOU
Proclaim, Build, and Serve



RETURNING TO IN-PERSON WORSHIP

With the increase in the number of people vaccinated and the decrease in the case rate for COVID, we are lifting a few more restrictions for our worship services and building users at Grace Lutheran:

- Masks are required for everyone inside the church regardless of vaccination status.
- We will allow singing and corporate speaking.

For the time being, we are keeping the following protocols in place for worship:

- We ask that you still sit in every other pew and practice social distancing between household groups, since we have the space.
- We will continue to use the individual communion kits, which you can pick up in the narthex with your bulletin before you enter. We will continue to receive communion in the pews.
- We will not take up the offering, but ask that you leave your offering in the offering box in the narthex.
- We will continue to offer a Zoom link for those who are continuing to participate from home.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87240509475>
Meeting ID: 872 4050 9475
One tap mobile +13126266799,,87240509475#

FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY AUGUST 15

We will offer coffee and donuts with outdoor seating following the worship service. We look forward to visiting with you!

PRAYGROUND AND QUIET TOYS

Grace will not be providing the PrayGround and quiet activity toys for children at this time. Parents, please create a special "church bag" for your child/children that you bring to worship and is only available to your child/children on Sunday morning. No electronics please.

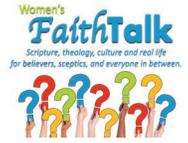
WOMEN OF GRACE

We will meet for drinks and dining outdoors together on **August 12, 7:00pm**, at **Reserve 22**. Please RSVP to Becky Ficarella by phone 847-347-0928 or email bficarella@graceglenellyn.org.

FAITHTALK

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 12:30PM

FaithTalk is a study and conversation group that meets to ask the deep and challenging questions of living our faith in today's world. We gather the first Thursday of each month from 12:30-2:00 in the lower level of the church. (If you are attending Sue Davison's exercise class that ends at noon, feel free to bring a sack lunch and meet before class. We'll start our discussion at 12:30.)



On August 5 we will be listening to a podcast episode called "Tell Christy I Love Her," from the award-winning podcast *Ear Hustle*. (We originally planned this for July, but we got...sidetracked. It's a bit of a free-wheeling group! But we promise to stay on topic this time....)

"Tell Christy I Love Her" contains interviews with police officer Tom, his wife Christy, and Jason, the man who shot Tom in the neck after being caught with a gun in a traffic stop. It is a powerful story that illuminates both the tension and the hope of policing in communities of color.

In following classes, the group has requested that we discuss the book, *So You Want to Talk About Race*. Please join us if you're interested! If you have questions, feel free to reach out to Pastor Melody.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP AND PICNIC AT BLACKWELL FOREST PRESERVE

Join us for a special outdoor worship service at the East Picnic Shelter at Blackwell Forest Preserve on **Sunday, August 29 at 9:00am**. (The East Picnic Shelter is a long drive into the park—the last shelter at the end of the road, but easily accessible with a paved path from the parking lot to the shelter.) Feel free to bring camp chairs (the shelter may not hold *all* of us) and your own picnic brunch/lunch; we'll enjoy fellowship, food and some kids' games after our service. We look forward to seeing you there!



GRACE LUTHERAN'S CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY MINISTRY

HIGH SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION BIBLE STUDY

Via Zoom **Monday, August 2nd at 7:30pm** with Dominic LoGalbo and Becky Ficarella.

HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Saturday, August 14th at St. Andrew's Church in West Chicago from **8a-11am** we will assist with the delivery of food and baby essential items to a drive-up food pantry. This ministry serves as many as 300 cars on a given Saturday. We will team up with St. Paul Youth for this event.

Please RSVP with Becky Ficarella.

CALLING ALL STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

Backpack Blessing is **Sunday, August 15th at 9am!** Bring your backpack/briefcase and receive a tag and blessing for the exciting year of study ahead!



ATTENTION PRESCHOOL - HIGH SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS

Faith Formation begins again **Sunday, September 26th**! We look forward to seeing you in class again!

HOLY COMMUNION INSTRUCTION COMING IN OCTOBER

We will be offering Holy Communion Instruction on **Sunday, October 17th from 11:30am-1:00pm**. This is open to any student in first grade and older. We ask that at least one adult attend with their student. We will discuss our lesson around the lunch table, focusing on the importance of shared meals together and how that relates to this very special meal of Holy Communion. We will celebrate Holy Communion the following Sunday, October 24th. If you are interested in having your children participate, please let Becky Ficarella know.



OUTDOOR FAMILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2021

What an amazing week! Our three congregations, First Congregational, Grace Lutheran, and Faith Lutheran, hosted 23 families, which worked out to 86 participants!

Our theme was *Joining God at Work in the World* with our focus on Equity for all, serving and treating your neighbor with love and respect as God does with us, and how through communion, we remember Jesus, his love and compassion for all the world.

Our Mission projects included assembling 136 snack bags for Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center, 48 Boredom Buster Bags for PADS youth moving into new homes, and over 80 bags of food donated to the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry!

We wrapped up the week on Friday with a yard party, including singing and dancing, water and parachute games, bubbles galore, a photo booth, and snacked on donated Kettle Corn from Kernel Dan's Kettle Corn and traditional homemade VBS bread and honey sticks.

Great FUN was had by ALL who were there!

Friends are ALWAYS welcome to join in our programming!

Peace Be Upon You Grace Family and Friends.

Becky Ficarella, Ministry Associate

bficarella@graceglenellyn.org

847-347-0928



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 8/4 Amanda & Matt Streicher (3)
- 8/11 Jeff & Jessica Drager (3)
- 8/15 Rob & Sabrina Granner (6)
- 8/20 Tom & Kim Wiebe (38)
- 8/27 Joe & Donna Jacobo (25)
- 8/29 Sean Nelson & Robin Hulshizer (28)

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8/1 Dominic LoGalbo | 8/15 Joe Jacobo |
| 8/2 Cheryl Huizenga | 8/15 Lynn Murawski |
| 8/2 Tim Loftus | 8/16 Kim Wiebe |
| 8/4 Greg Barber | 8/16 Tom Wiebe |
| 8/4 Matt Fenske | 8/17 Shirley Sauerma (94) |
| 8/5 Jake Jacobson | 8/22 Carol Wandke (91) |
| 8/5 Bonnie Pasbrig | 8/23 Delaney Bethel |
| 8/5 Isabella Zimmer | 8/24 Jim Kregor |
| 8/7 Cathy Milleville | 8/24 Nancy Lantz |
| 8/9 Beth Bruning (94) | 8/24 Bonnie Paganis |
| 8/11 Heather Lewis | 8/25 Zachary Kregor |
| 8/11 Sandra Venturoni | 8/26 Norma Petersen (94) |
| 8/12 Katie Anderson | 8/28 Sean Nelson |
| 8/12 Kristine Anderson | 8/31 Daniel Dean |
| 8/15 Robert Dieter, Jr. | 8/31 Jake Koors |

UPDATE ON GYM USAGE AT GRACE

The Food Pantry will finally be moving into their new location in December which means the gym and all other areas of the building will be available for Grace and other outside activities in January. Yeah!!! You don't need to be a member of the Social Committee to plan an event so grab a friend and get your thinking caps on and lets put 2020/2021 behind us and get back to Grace life in 2022!

AUGUST 15 IS BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS!

And not just backpacks! If you have a medical bag, briefcase, teacher's bag or any other bag or pack that you use for work or learning, bring it! We will bless you into the year of learning and serving that is part of both education and vocation.



ALTAR FLOWERS FOR SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES

We invite you to sign up in the narthex to provide floral bouquets that you have created. It's okay if bouquets don't match or we have only one bouquet on a Sunday! Share from your garden, the farmer's market, or local store and bring them with you Sunday morning! Please sign up in the Narthex, or contact the church office to reserve a date. Please only include flowers and no special decorations or messages in the bouquet. These are the available dates: July 25; August 1; August 15; August 22; September 5.



USHERS NEEDED

Each of our four usher teams are in need of one additional team member. **Team 1** (January, May, September); **Team 2** (February, June, October); **Team 3** (March, July, November); **Team 4** (April, August, December). Please contact the church office if you can volunteer for one of these teams or sign up in the Narthex.

CHECK OUT MARVEL'S LATEST SUPERHERO, ELCA MEMBER REBEKAH BRUESEHOFF, AS THE MIGHTY REBEKAH

Rebekah is one of 20 kids Marvel selected for the **Marvel Hero Project**. Marvel created comics to tell the stories of heroic work everyday kids do to make the world a better place. Marvel created the character **Mighty Rebekah** to add her story to the Marvel universe of superheroes. You can view the story of this amazing 12 year old on Grace's website.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Cathy Milleville, Dorothy Tracy, Sigrid Elliott, Jim Sladek, Chris Danly, Tammy Rollo, Elizabeth Amber, Susan Nelson, and those infected with the Covid-19 virus for healing and strength.

Prayers for the family and friends of Bob Stein who passed away on July 10.

Birthday blessings to Beth Bruning 94 on 8/9; Shirley Sauerman 94 on 8/17; Carol Wandke 91 on 8/22; and Norma Peterson 94 on 8/26.

Our blessings go with Brad and Lisa Goertzen as they relocate to Florida and with Howard and Beth Bruning as they relocate to South Carolina. You have all been treasured members of our congregation and we will miss you!

Prayers for our Homebound Members:

Dolores Nosal, Carol Petersen, Norma Petersen, and Dorothy Stein

CIRCLE OF CARE COORDINATOR NEEDED

We are seeking a new individual to fill the role of **Circle of Care Coordinator**. Sooz Hufnagle was fulfilling this role previously, but is no longer available to serve due to the Hufnagle's relocation to South Carolina.



This role includes managing incoming requests of care from members and then finding the appropriate volunteers to assist from a list of willing helpers! Examples might include rides, grocery store runs, or meal drop offs.

Please contact the church office or Becky Ficarella if you are interested!

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

You do not need to be a member of Grace to participate on Wednesday mornings at 7:30am. All are welcome! Discussion centers on the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday plus other topics of interest. Tim Stephan, Jerry Miller, Sue Pagnoni, Kathy Gallian, and Tim Frakes are regulars with this group meeting in the Narthex at Grace. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania Avenue
 Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
 Office: 630.469.1555
 Emergency Pastoral Contact: 630.674.2887
 Email: info@graceglenellyn.org

www.graceglenellyn.org

Every Member: Minister & Missionary!

Melody Eastman, Pastor
 Becky Ficarella, Ministry Associate
 Carole LoGalbo, M.S., LCPC Parish Counselor
 Barbara Sudds, Office Manager
 Bradford Thompson, Minister of Music

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30am - 3:00pm
 Tuesday and Thursday 1:00pm - 3:00pm



NOSES AND NUMBERS

DATE	ATTENDANCE		MEMBER GIVING
	IN-PERSON	ZOOM	GENERAL FUND
6/6	36	6	\$16,025
6/13	25	14	\$ 5,271
6/20	18 (At Faith)	0	\$ 840
6/27	36	10	\$ 4,085



Grace's **total income** through June 2021 is **\$171,985** while **expenses** incurred during the same period are **\$241,935**.

Besides Member Giving, additional contributions to the General Fund come from interest on our bank accounts, Thrivent Choice dollars, and donations from our building users.

Please give as you can and any extra when possible. Grace cannot absorb a continuing deficit in the long term without draining our cash reserves.