

“Abiding in Christ through grace, we are gathered to grow and sent to serve.”

Notes of Grace

Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA), Brownton, Minnesota

September 2020

September Servants

Acolyte

- 6 Sydney Harpel
- 13 Kaden Wendlandt
- 20 Olivia Loncorich
- 27 Baylee Hahn

Communion

Michelle Gens

Altar Guild

Deb Messner & Lori Lindeman

Ushers

- 6 Bob & Lori Lindeman,
Bryce Lindeman
- 13 Ron, Mary, and Jackie Bullert,
Dean Katzenmeyer
- 20 Joyce Peterson, Yerks Family,
Amanda Kottke
- 27 Eric & Bev Werner, Lori Copley,
Shalon Werner

Readers

- 6 Joyce Peterson
- 13 Tison Werner
- 20 Oather Martin Jr
- 27 Cheryl Schwarze

Pastor's Note

Dear People of Grace,

As we prepare for the beginning of another school year and program year at Grace, in the midst of the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am struck by the relevancy and promise of these words from the Prophet Jeremiah.

“Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts.”
- Jeremiah 15:16

I know most of us don't make it a normal practice to go around eating words, but maybe if you get stir crazy and desperate enough, you might start eating your stock-piled toilet paper this winter! Just kidding.

I wanted to share these words with you because I know that in times of anxiety, fear, worry, frustration, and desperation, I often find comfort and balm in God's word. Here the Prophet Jeremiah reminds us that to receive God's word, we're invited not just merely read it or listen to it - but truly to “eat,” it. I see the word eat here as deeply connected to the Hebrew understand of a person's soul. The Hebrew word for soul is the same as the Hebrew word for your “guts” or digestive organs, or stomach.

The people of Jeremiah's time believed that their soul was akin not to their head, the seat of intelligence, thought, and logic; and not akin to the heart, the seat of emotions and love; but instead their soul was akin to their guts. Therefore if we “eat,” God's word, we are invited to taste and digest it in the depths of our soul. We invite God's word to take root in us, to experience the power of God's word for our grief, our fear, our anger, our sadness, and our joy.

Jeremiah's words too remind me that eating God's word is not like eating kale, or vegetables you don't like to eat! Instead, eating God's word because an internal source of joy and delight. Digesting God's word can remind you that you are not ultimately responsible for your fate or for anyone else's. Digesting God's word can set you free from internal or external pressure to always do the right thing or say the right thing. Digesting God's word can remind you that it's OK to step away from the worry and fear and enjoy the joy in front of you, in the face of a loved one, or in the beauty of a setting sun and the green fields, nearing harvest time.

Names were also exceedingly important to the Hebrew people. So when the Prophet says that in digesting God's word, he is then called by God's name, this is a powerful connection. It reminds us that reading and digesting God's word brings us closer to God in a powerful way, reminding us of God's power, sovereignty, and grace. We are called beloved and forgiven by God.

As we move into a new program year, working to be church to one another when our building still isn't available to us in the way we're accustomed to worshipping, I invite you to dwell ever more deeply in this word of God. Spend time with it. Read the Book of Jeremiah and wonder how these prophetic words might apply to your life. Even as churches continue to innovate and face unwanted change due to Covid, I believe God can still use this time to enrich and grow our faith.

In Jesus' love,
Pastor Angela

Upcoming Events:

Sept 13 : 8:45am Outdoor Worship
w/ Communion & Baptism
10am Sunday School Starts

Sept 15 : 1pm Bible Study Starts
4pm Confirmation Starts

Sept 27 : 8:45am Outdoor Worship
w/ Communion & Confirmation

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Abiding in Christ through grace, we are gathered to grow and sent to serve.

August 12, 2020 7pm

Attending: Keith Tongen, Vicki Schlenner, Nancy Deppe(zoom), Scott Katzenmeyer, Mary Bullert, Sharon Carrigan, Ben Schuft and Pastor Angela
Absent: Michelle Gens, Tim Olson

President Keith Tongen called the meeting to order

Pastor Angela led us in prayer

Secretary's Report:

A motion was made to accept Secretary's Report M by Scott /S by Ben/C

Treasurer's Report:

A motion was made to accept June and July Treasure Report's M by Sharon/ S by Mary

<u>Money Received:</u>	<u>Month (June)</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Money Dispersed:</u>	<u>Month (July)</u>	<u>YTD</u>
	\$8,126.07	\$45,226.12		\$10,590.88	\$55,101.51
<u>Money Received:</u>	<u>Month (July)</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Money Dispersed:</u>	<u>Month (July)</u>	<u>YTD</u>
	\$8,338.26	\$53,564.38		\$7,944.61	\$63,046.12

Pastor's Report:

- 1) Some nursing home facilities are opening up for outdoor visits, Pastor has made a few visits already, and is hoping to make more.
- 2) Our outdoor Services have brought good response, and more people. We will plan more services outdoors, including a Baptism and Confirmation.

Church Calendar of Events

- 1) 3 Services scheduled for outdoors; August 23 (Communion), September 13 (Communion), September 27(Communion), and also proposed Confirmation date
- 2) Fire Extinguishers will be checked on August 27th , Nancy will arrange for someone to meet at church for this work to be completed.

Old Business:

- 1) The new headset works well, the cost of repair and upgrades is \$638. Some are still struggling with visual while streaming our Church services. We will ask for input during service to try and pin point a fix.
- 2) A Motion was made to rescind motion of changing Insurance from Guide 1 to North Star, and to remain with Guide 1 of Missouri . M by Nancy/ S by Sharon/C

New Business:

- 1) A survey will go out to families with children in Sunday school. With the feedback from those, we will decide how to move forward. We anticipate the need for lots of flexibility.
- 2) Confirmation will most likely copy the same methods as school; if school is in person, confirmation classes will be in person, and we'll use masks. Pastor Angela will be in touch with these families.
- 3) Going forward, Readers, Video Recorders , Acolytes and Ushers can resume duties; ushers can clean, bathrooms, empty garbage, vacuum carpets (main areas used) and clean entry and glass windows in entry. If anyone is uncomfortable with all or part of this, they should notify a board member and we will find someone else for the job.
- 4) Bulletins will resume on August 23rd , M by Ben/ S by Mary/ C to have Nancy purchase our Microsoft 365 for that task.
- 5) Keith will look into what needs to be done to air our Services on local cable TV

M by Ben / S by Mary /C to adjourn meeting

Next Meeting September 9, 2020 7 p.m.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted by Vicki Schlenner

Council President's Message

Members of Grace,

As all of you are aware the past 6 months has been very different for all of us, this is also true for your church, Grace Lutheran. As Covid-19 hangs around with no positive relief in sight, we as a congregation need to move forward with plans of how we will continue our worship in the near future. We do plan to keep livestreaming via Facebook Live and are checking into getting back on local TV broadcast.

As Church Council, we are proceeding cautiously with a plan that could be "subject to change on a moment's notice", if area Covid-19 numbers should happen to increase. To my knowledge we have not had any Covid-19 infections within our membership and we certainly don't want to be responsible for any in the future. We plan to keep offering the opportunity for outdoor worship services as long as weather permits. For all indoor events masks are required. For outdoor events social distancing should be practiced. As a Council, we appreciate your cooperation and understanding. We all look forward to the day when we can resume fellowship with coffee following worship services! The Church Council also asks that all scheduled ushers, readers, acolytes and other servants resume their scheduled duties. For Ushers, the usual duties are to do a light building clean-up, emptying trash cans into dumpster, checking the bathrooms, turning off lights and to make sure all doors are locked before you leave. Please make sure that you count and record the daily attendance. If you feel unable to fulfill these tasks please notify Pastor Angela or Council President.

Sunday School will resume September 13 with masked in-person meeting at which "take home packets" will be distributed. Each month this will be repeated until further notice.

Confirmation classes will meet in-person weekly on Wednesdays at 4 PM with the option of ZOOM attendance if preferred. Confirmation classes will follow the lead of area schools in regard to Covid-19. 2020 Confirmation Service is scheduled for September 27 at a public outdoor service. In the event of inclement weather, Confirmation Service will be held indoors at 11 AM with only family members in attendance.

Bible Study will begin on September 15 at 1 PM. The group will meet either indoor or outdoor depending upon the weather of the day.

Due to your continued generosity, we have been able to remain financially stable throughout these times. Helping aid the financial stability was a PPP loan, that loan is currently awaiting approval to be changed to "Grant Status" that would not need to be repaid.

Personally, as Church Council President, I would encourage each of you to resume regular church attendance. You DO NOT need to pre-register to reserve a spot, but you will be required to wear a mask for the safety of all. I also encourage all to pray for those whom have been adversely affected by Covid-19. Within that time of prayer, consider the good things that have come out of this current situation (the slowed down life-style, more quality family time, more time to ourselves, time for many tasks that had been pushed aside, stimulus checks, unemployment assistance and for some businesses increase of revenue) and give thanks to God. Throughout history our God has proven to be a loving and gracious God, and I truly believe that He has a plan that will prove the same once again!

In the words of verse 2 of the familiar hymn "Day by Day": Day by day, I know you will provide me strength to serve and wisdom to obey; I will seek your loving will to guide me o'er the paths I struggle day by day. I will fear no evil of the morrow, I will trust in your enduring grace. Savior, help me bear life's pain and sorrow till in glory I behold your face.

God's Peace to You!

Keith O Tongen, Church Council President

Greetings from Noah's Ark Preschool!

We are hopeful at Noah's Ark that we will be able to start on time and continue with only a "little" interruption this fall! Noah's Ark continues to be a wonderful asset for Brownston and the surrounding communities and we continue to have many students from Grace participate. There are many opportunities throughout the year for you to support the preschool if you wish and here are the first two. First is our "Adopt A Student" scholarship program. This is the scholarship program for the preschool. All monies donated through this program go directly towards tuition and transportation fees for students in need. The second is our first fundraiser which is our "Dollars for Scholars Fundraising Drive". This is a simple donation program and all funds go directly towards operating expenses of the preschool. Through out the year you will have the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets, pizza, car wash cards, coffee and participate in small business sales. Thank you to all those who have supported us in the past!

Miss Vicki, Director/Teacher

*Forms are located on our bulletin board or send an email to Vicki or Sarah and we will get you the form via email