



PARISH NEWS

Grace Lutheran Church, Hatfield PA

July 2024

To Glorify God ♦ To Grow in Faith ♦ To Give in Service ♦ Together in Christ
www.gracelutheranhatfield.org Rev. Nancy M. Raabe, Pastor

FROM THE PASTOR: Why do bad things....



Children have a way of getting to the heart of the matter. As part of an icebreaker exercise that opened our Summer Youth Service Camp here on June 24, one young person asked: “Why do bad things happen? Where was God?”

Many times in your life each of you has likely asked the same thing.

For me: My favorite college classmate, an ebullient personality and brilliant political scientist who was struck down with brain cancer at age 40 -- what mediating influence might he have been on our fraught political landscape? Or: The favorite teacher at our children’s grade school who had just retired and was on her way home from having lovingly placed her retirement letter on the principal’s desk when she was killed at an intersection not far from her home by a driver who ran a red light -- two seconds one way or the other would have saved her.

Or: The much-adored seminary professor who, on his own time, directed riveting theatrical productions at school featuring seminarians’ entire families (“Our Town” – ring a bell, longtime Grace members?), making maximum use of minimal talent; he had been looking forward eagerly to retirement when, three days into it, his wife was felled by a devastating stroke and he suddenly became her full-time caretaker (“THY will be done,” he always urged us to pray). Or as I just learned, our next-door neighbor in Wisconsin, a vivacious, faith-filled person who launched a feeding ministry at her church, wrote devotions that could have passed as sermons, and yet was taken at the prime of life by pancreatic cancer.

My list goes on, as does yours. Why, God, why?

You may have your own answer, and you are welcome to it. But as your pastor, I offer you mine.

The most important thing to know is that God did not engineer any of these things for some mysterious purpose. God is love. Out of the overflowing love of God’s heart, God brought the worlds into being and created each of us so that we might return that love to God through the lens of our own lives. Each of us is the apple of God’s eye, the desire of God’s heart. If you ever wonder how great is God’s love, just go back to John 3:16-17. God does not desire a tragic end or an early demise for any of us. What parent would?

So why do bad things happen to good people? As our Summer Youth Service Camp children agreed, they *just happen*. God does not control everything, because in that case the world would consist of robots or zombies. Bad things that happen are the result of choices people make that affects themselves or others – human error or human intent; or being in the midst of forces beyond one’s control -- in a flood zone, a seismic zone, or a war zone; or vagaries of the human body and its processes that go awry. We can lead the healthiest life imaginable and still illnesses bring us down. Why, God, why?

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“THY will be done.” This prayer of my seminary professor was not an admission that bad things are God’s will, but an ultimate expression of trust. As the Book of Job approaches its climax, Job cries out in Chapter 31 that if he HAD done evil things, then yes, bring this calamity on him. But he hadn’t! So why, God, why?

In Chapter 38 God thunders his response: Who do you think you are by even asking such a thing? Where were YOU when I laid the foundation of the earth and laid its cornerstone as the morning stars came together and the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

In other words, *especially* in times of distress we are to acknowledge God as Lord of heaven and earth, and move through our lament to expressions of praise. If you don’t know how to make this journey, any number of psalms will lead you through, in words with which we can all identify. My Bible just now fell open to Psalm 5, where the singer lifts evildoers who plague him into God’s court of justice as he declares, “But all who take refuge in you will be glad; they will sing out their joy forever.”

But, you might be asking, how do we come to know this God who, as Job concludes in Chapter 42, is beyond human comprehension? We are blessed in ways Job was not, because we have the Son who was given to us for this purpose, to lead us *in person* from death into life, from despair into hope, from brokenness into trust. “I have said this to you, so that in me you have peace,” Jesus tells his disciples as he prepares in John 16 to leave them. “In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!”

Yours in Christ’s love,

Pastor Nancy Raabe

From the Minister of Music:

Singing and praying the music at Grace....

For me, to enjoy singing hymns in church, it is important to fully engage with the words and melodies being sung. I close my eyes, let go of distractions, and allow myself to become immersed in the music. Feeling the joy and peace that comes from worshipping through song.

Another key to maximizing this experience is to sing with passion and sincerity. Putting my heart and soul into each lyric, expressing gratitude, faith, and praise through my voice. Letting the music lift my spirits and bring me closer to God.

Additionally, I try to connect with those around me by singing harmoniously and in unity with other Grace worshippers. By joining voices together, it can create a powerful sense of community and shared devotion.

Singing hymns is not just about the melody or the words, but about the spiritual experience it provides. Allow yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit and let the music guide you in worship. By approaching hymn singing with these intentions, we can find deep fulfillment in praising God through song. O Lord, I lift your name on high!

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!*

Peace to you!

Kevin



THE BREAD DROP schedule for July is: 7/2/2024 Laura Kratz; 7/9/2024 Jean Delmuto; 7/16/2024 Emily Woltmann; 7/23/2024 Priscilla Landis

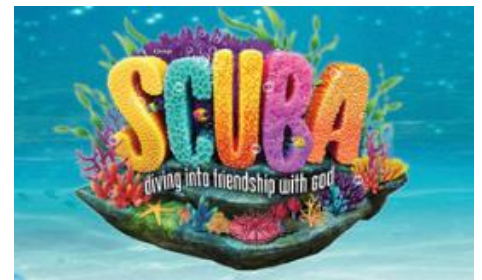


THURSDAY SOUP SUPPERS

If you haven't experienced our Soup Suppers yet, we warmly invite you to join in. We regularly welcome members from the neighborhood along with members of Grace; there is always someone new each week. Soups are freshly made by our resident chefs, and the bread is also fresh from Hearth Bakery. Stop in at 5:30 any Thursday to experience new community being formed.

YOUTH NEWS

You can still register for **Vacation Bible School** here at Grace on July 14-18 from 5:30 – 8pm. The theme is "Scuba: Diving into Friendship with God." Go to this link to register -- <https://vbspro.events/p/gracehatfield> -- or see our website for more information under "Learn and Grow." We are delighted to be offering this under the leadership of our new Director of Youth Ministries Annette Dittman.



The **Summer Youth Service Camp** offered by the churches of the Indian Valley Cluster June 24-27 was again a great success. On our day at Grace we helped walk and bathe dogs, clean rooms, and do odd jobs at Dogtown Rescue, then weeded the vegetable garden at the EEC church. And at the end of the day: Ice cream. Thanks to all parents who supported this!



STEPPING STONES



Congratulations to the Perky Penguins class of 2024 and thank you for celebrating with us! Special thanks to Beth Krout, Laura Kratz, and Colton Kratz for their help with setting up and decorating for decoration; we couldn't have done it without you! Waterplay is in full swing here at Stepping Stones and we're busy all Summer with the Trike-a-thon, Christmas in July, and even Water Ice Day! HappyFeet Soccer continues to roll on through the Summer, and we are just so happy to be out in the beautiful sunshine! Our work is never done as we are looking forward to the start of the upcoming school year; Stepping Stones is always looking for donations of

plastic bags and school supplies! Any donations can be placed in Miss Jessica's Stepping Stones mailbox (blue basket in the office.) Stay cool out there!

Jessica Moran, Director



YOGA takes a break for the summer ☺

Looking forward to seeing you again in September!

Yoga is for all levels. Poses and sequences will work on using all parts of the body and will vary from week to week. This will be suitable for those with some yoga experience but also for anyone with little to none, as options will be offered for the various poses.

The goal is to work on strength and flexibility gradually while gaining an ability to focus on breath and awareness.

Summer Wednesday Evening Picnics

Grace Summer Picnics continue in July and August!

Dinner will be served at **6:30 pm**.

Bring your favorite **picnic dish** to share and a lawn chair or blanket.

If you have a favorite **outdoor game** to share, bring it too.

Event is rain or shine!!

July 10th Host: Barb Watts at her home, 147 N. Main St., Hatfield

July 24th Hosts: Don and Ruth Campolongo/Frank and Kay Stone at Grace

August 7th Hosts: Council Members at Grace

If you would like to host, please contact Kay Stone at 267-218-2124 or kaystone@comcast.net



July 2024 Serving Schedule

Date	Altar Guild	Communion Assistant	Lector	Acolyte	Ushers	Coffee Hour
7/07/24 9:15 am	S. Wieland	B. Hess	F. Stone	Usher	K. Stone & K. Deussing	D. Ball
7/14/24 9:15 am	B. Hess	B. Hess	K. Stawasz	Olivia Plawa	K. Stawasz & M.J. Moyer	
7/21/24 9:15 am	S. Wieland	C. MacDonald	C. MacDonald	Carol M.	Ken & Karen Seiler	
7/28/24 9:15 am	R. Smyrl	TBD	Slugg Family	Usher	Slugg Family	D. Capanear

Council Offering/Lock-up for July is: Barbara Hess
Live Streaming: Harold Schaefer, Dan & Tami Sarm



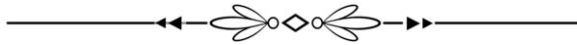
Council highlights for June

A motion was made and unanimously approved to hire Annette Dittman as Director of Youth Ministries at Grace.

The flatscreen project in the sanctuary is still awaiting an accurate estimate of the electrical work that needs to be done.

After a discussion on the possibility of moving to one service during the entire year, it was recommended that Council members seek direct input from the congregation. People are encouraged to speak directly to Council members on the topic. If you aren't sure who they are, their photos are now featured on our narthex bulletin board, or find them on the Staff/Council page of our website.

There will be no July meeting; instead, the Council will hold an all-day retreat on August 10 facilitated by Pastor John Heidgerd, with the goal of developing short-term and long-term visions for Grace.



From **June 30- July 6**, Pastor Raabe will be spending a week of continuing education at the Chautauqua Institute in New York, where the week's focus is on artificial intelligence. She will be staying at the Lutheran House and participating in worship services there.

From **July 21-26** she is taking a second week of vacation for the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, of which she is President. She will be presiding at the opening Eucharist and leading the annual face-to-face board meeting.

From **September 20-26** she will be taking a third week of vacation to travel to France (the Toulouse area) to visit her sister.

Pastors covering in her absence:

June 30: Pastor Karen Sease

July 21, September 22: Pastor John Berntsen

Please be on hand to give Pastor Berntsen and Pastor Sease a warm welcome on those dates.

SANCTUARY VILLAGE UPDATE

Hello, Grace family!

I need to share that a few weeks ago, I received news from the Philadelphia City Solicitor that Philly's new Mayor, Cherelle Parker (elected in November), has decided not to continue the partnership between the City of Philadelphia and my organization, Sanctuary Village, to build a tiny house village on city-owned land for individuals experiencing homelessness. This news came just as we were preparing to finally break ground – after working with the City for over three years. We had initial rumblings that this change in direction might be coming around the time that Mayor Parker was elected, but no one in the Mayor's administration (including the Mayor) would speak to Sanctuary Village, or explain what her thoughts were. Finally, I was told that the village "is not part of her vision" although no one shared what that vision entails. And so, Sanctuary Village is working to decide what to do next. A little over a month ago we hired a full-time Executive Director, who is jumping in to help direct us to find a new site for the village. It could be in Philly but it could also be in a suburb – one thing we have learned is how the need for housing is ever increasing and, sadly, more and more people are becoming homeless. We hope to help address this need, and apply all that we have learned over the past few years so that we can move quickly to make our vision a reality at a new location. As always, I welcome your prayers for this project to move forward and finally be up and running soon!

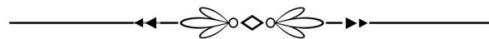
Thanks,

Cathy Farrell, Grace Council Secretary and Board President, Sanctuary Village

July Calendar

- The Jesus Love Church (formerly Central Philadelphia) will be worshipping on Sundays at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary and Friday night worship at 8:00 pm.
- Tues. are Bread Drop Sandwich Days. Donations are accepted from 8am-7pm.

Tues July 2, 2024	7:00pm	Stitchers
Thurs July 4, 2024		Independence Day - Office & Stepping Stones Closed – <u>No Soup Supper</u>
Sun July 7, 2024	9:15am	Worship/Communion
Thurs July 11, 2024	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper
Fri July 12, 2024	8:00am	Advocacy Outreach Network Meeting
Sun July 14, 2024	9:15am	Worship/Communion
	5:30pm	Vacation Bible School begins
Mon July 15, 2024	5:30pm	VBS
Tues July 16, 2024	5:30pm	VBS
Wed July 17, 2024	5:30pm	VBS
Thurs July 18, 2024	5:30pm	VBS
	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper
Sun July 21, 2024	9:15am	Worship/Communion
Tues July 23, 2024	7:00pm	Giving in Service Meeting
Thurs July 25, 2024	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper
Sun July 28, 2024	9:15am	Worship/Communion
	10:15am	4th Sunday Summer Forum
	4:00pm	Healing Service
Mon July 29, 2024	7:00pm	Stepping Stones Committee Meeting, via Zoom
Tues July 30, 2024	7:00pm	“Tentative” Worship & Music Meeting
Wed July 31, 2024	12:00pm	Choir Picnic



Heads up for August:

- **August 11 at 10:30 a.m.:** Joint service with the Jesus Love Church (note time of day)
- **August 18 at 9:30 a.m.:** Joint service with Faith Lutheran Church in Montgomeryville, this year it is at Grace, next year it will be at Faith. A light picnic will follow.



Food Collection

EEC Food Cupboard

A message from Janet Hague: "Summer continues to be very busy; we're serving as many families as ever in the food cupboard!"

This amazing outreach could not happen without your ongoing generous giving of food and household products. Volunteers during distributions and shelving are always needed so please reach out to Janet if you can offer some time.

Current Needs:

Food items: 100% Fruit Juice, dry Pasta, canned Fruit (no pears or cranberry), canned Carrots & Lima Beans

Household & Personal Care*: Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Deodorant, Razors, Shampoo (Please TIGHTEN Lids)

Gift Cards: Grocery gift cards are always welcome too, especially ALDI & Giant!

Your non-perishable donations can be placed in our narthex bins by the conference room.

Upcoming distribution dates & times:

Tuesdays 5:30 - 6:30 pm: July 2, 16, & 30

Tuesdays 1 - 2 pm: July 9 & 23

The food cupboard is open to all Hatfield borough residents, so please reach out if you, or someone you know, would benefit from receiving supplemental food/household items. Messages for Janet Hague can be left at 215-855-2540; foodcupboard@yahoo.com. You can also call/email Carol MacDonald @215-872-0472; pcmacdonald125@gmail.com

PRAYER LIST

Please let Pastor Raabe or Lynn know if you would like someone added to this list, or if someone you have added is no longer in need of urgent prayers.



In Need of Ongoing Prayers: Liz Bauer, Suzanne Colville, Bob Kaler, Peggy Long, Hazel Mascaro, Gerry Mason (Richard Badman's son), Pam Matolicz, Bob Rufe (Mary Jane Moyer's brother), Joyce Salter, Nancy Sellers, Bailey Vinson (Liz Bauer's great-granddaughter), Nancy Dustman (Joyce Salter's sister).

In Current Need of Prayers: Cassi Lambert, Kristopher Yoder, Lisa Kane, Vickie West, Sandy Klinger, Dean Moore, Peg Malloy, Daniel Hopwood (Tom Hopwood's son), Lisa and Laurie Ronan (the MacDonalds' neighbors), Jan Madigan (Sue Wieland's niece), John Renick, Joan Wright & Alicia Hollingsworth (friends of Linda Renick), Diane Pierson, Robert Naragon (friend of Frank & Kay Stone), Joanne Moyer, Sheran Shenk (friend of Bruce & Peggy Schmidt), the family of Liz Eliff and the Laymen Playmen family, Helen Chappie (Liz Bauer's sister), Allie Moyer, Angelina (Mascaro) Trotter, Alice Ciarrocca (friend of Karen Heacock & Phyllis McKeefrey), Anita Spisak (Ken Seiler's mom), Chuck Slugg, Christopher Humlhanz (Jaime Snyder's cousin), Betty Poling (June Detweiler's sister), Sally Muntz, Lynn Pribbernow, Regi Gambino (friend of Lynn Plawa-Oxenford), P. Stringfellow (friend of Barb Hess), Annette Beyer (friend of the Reillys), Tricia O'Neill (member of the Stepping Stones family), Ed Irzyk (L. Pribbernow's brother-in-law), Joan Fonseca (B. Schmidt's cousin), Betty Ball (Diane Ball's mother-in-law).

For all who grieve, including the family & friends of: Dan Black (Laymen Playmen), Amanda Magenheim (Lindsay Stone's college roommate), Joan Roeder, Dawn Pier, Roger Smith (friend of the Shaffer family), Janet Williams (Carol MacDonald's mother), Jacob Strohleim (member of the extended Barry/Joanne Moyer family), John Josten (Frank & Kay Stone's neighbor), Buzz Benson (Karen Seiler's uncle), Barbara Klock (daughter of Bill & Evelyn Haertter), Al Riley (Bruce Schmidt's cousin), Goodloe Sutler (friend of Peggy Schmidt).

For those in active duty military service: Jessica Murphy, Air Force; Matthew Smyrl, Army; Nathaniel Smyrl, PA Army National Guard; Eric Gutsche (Janice Swartz's grandson); Cole Dempsey, Air Force (Laura Kratz's grandson).

For active military deployed overseas: Kyle Murphy, Air Force; Robert McNulty, Marines

Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy 4th of July Holiday !



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Stepping Stones 215.368.2052
Jessica Moran, Director



**Thursday Soup Suppers
continue at 5:30pm**



Please Note: *The church office will be open as usual on Monday, July 1 but closed on Tues & Wed for Lynn's vacation and Pastor's continuing education trip and then Thursday for the 4th of July Holiday. Thank you !*

**Thurs July 4th Independence Day
Office & Stepping Stones Closed**

**Sun July 14th - Vacation Bible School begins
and continues through Thurs, July 18th**

**Sun July 28th Worship/Communion
10:15am - 4th Sunday Summer Forum
4:00pm - Healing Service**



View our website by scanning this code

Grace Lutheran Church
40 N. Main St.
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