



Gracegram

August 2015



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Holy Communion
Every Sunday

Winter

(1st Sunday after Labor Day - May)
Sundays @ 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Summer

(June – Labor Day)
Sundays @ 8:00 & 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School in recess

5th Sundays

Sundays @ 10:00am

Advent and Lent

Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m.



Winter

(1st Sunday after Labor Day – May)
9:30 AM

5th Sundays

@ 8:45 AM



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



**OUR
MISSION**

Saved by Grace.
Called to Worship.
Sent to Serve.

Mission Partners

**Redeemer Lutheran Church – Lansing
Trinity Lutheran Church - Battle Creek**



Grace Lutheran Church

239 E North St
Hastings MI 49058

Website: www.discover-grace.org

Facebook: Grace Lutheran Church-ELCA Hastings, MI

Phone: (269) 945-9414

(269) 945-2645

Fax: (269) 945-2698

Ministers: People of Grace

- Pastor Paul E. Kuhlman
E-mail: gracehastingspastor@gmail.com
- Parish Administrator: Victoria Alt
E-mail: ParishAdmin@grace-hastings.org
Mon – Thur 8 AM - 3PM Lunch 12 - 1 PM
- Financial Coordinator: Linda Trongo
E-mail: LTrongo@grace-hastings.org
E-mail: FinancialCoord@grace-hastings.org
or trongocamper@mei.net
- Custodian: Sharon Palmer
- Minister of Music: Cindy Olson
- Choir Accompanists: Marcia Bowman,
Chris Bush
- Bell Choir Leader: Kim Domke
- Organist Emeritus: Donna Buehl

2015 - 2017

Executive Committee

- President, Doug Neeb
- Vice President, Chris Bush
- Secretary, Kate Watson



Committee Chairs:

- Lorie Gladyness, Worship
- Tom Peck & Phil Poholski, Property
- Bill Freedlund, Evangelism
- Margaret Wood, Congregational Care
- Jana Bishop, Youth & Family
- Lorraine Freedlund, Education
- Tim Schoessel, Stewardship
- Diane Neeb, Social Activities
- Kay Howell, Sarah Circle

If you have any concerns or questions regarding church affairs contact one of these council members.

September Gracegram Deadline

August 17, 2014

Please submit articles to Stephen Kaiser (SLK) at: ihohrevlis@yahoo.com or the Gracegram mailbox.

Blessings of peace and love !

SLK _____

From the Pastor's Desk:

A few Early Observations from a New Pastor

While writing this article, I glanced at the calendar and realized that I have been at Grace for all of two months. I know that does not grant me a great deal of liberty in evaluating a congregation of several decades, but permit me to just throw out to you a few early, yet humble, observations/questions:

a) I have never been in a congregation where so many people have an "opinion" about everything. Why is that?

b) I spent one afternoon going through all the rooms and closets of this church. Unbelievable! Where did all of this stuff come from and who is responsible for all of it?

c) Grace has deep roots in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, where pastors define the direction and function of the congregation. Why are so many members of Grace distrusting of their pastors?

d) I have heard members describe Grace as a "family." Why are there so many cliques or factions in this congregation, most notably during coffee hour where everyone sits with the same "family" group?

We must begin thinking "outside ourselves" if we hope to be successful disciples of Christ. We are baptized, we are fed, we are taught, we are forgiven, and we are redeemed because God loves us. But more importantly, God has done all of this so that we are also "sent" by God to a world in need of the truth of the cross. In other words, everything God gives us and does for us is found in the nature of God so clearly revealed in Jesus. All of what God does is motivated by God's love for the world. One could say, we are redeemed for the world, for the mission God has in the world. That mission is defined by Jesus, "Love one another as I have loved you, for then the world will know that you are my disciples."

Living Liturgy—A Culture of Change:

Certain elements of our liturgy are important because they have defined Christian liturgy since the beginning. Luther understood this, though his list of important liturgical elements was limited because of the century he lived in. Liturgical/historical research and discovery since the early 1800's has identified the essential shape of the liturgy for Christian worship. Nonetheless, Luther was right that beyond those "given" elements for worship, everything else (music, the order of worship, and other elements added to the liturgy throughout history) are "adiaphora"—scripture does not forbid them, but they are not essential.

Today in Liturgical Studies, we say that there are all kinds of elements in worship, such as Holy Communion, sermon, scripture readings from the Old and New Testament, Gospel reading, prayers, hymn of praise, offering, and more that are essential elements for worship to be truly Christian. But there are all kinds of elements that do not "have to be" present—helpful but not essential elements. Some of those elements we have included for a long time, centuries perhaps. In turn, we "think" they should always be there, because we like them, or because we are "accustomed" to them. One such element is the Closing or Sending Hymn.

The Sending hymn has been in Lutheran worship for a long time, to the point that we have come to think it is supposed to be there. When the Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW, Green Hymnal) was created, the authors suggested strongly that it be omitted, not even listing it as an element after the Blessing. The ELW calls the closing hymn after the Blessing a Sending Hymn, and only suggests its use ("...may be sung here.").

During the month of August, our Sunday worship will omit the Sending hymn, changing the format slightly. The authors of the LBW omitted the Sending Hymn because they wanted the congregation to be aware that we are sent from the table of Holy Communion to the world. We receive the Body and Blood of Christ, we participate and proclaim the Lord's death at the table and then are sent from the table to be the signs and actions of Christ in the world. We receive the body to become the body in the world. We receive the gift of grace in bread and wine at the table SO THAT we can become the bread and wine for the world.

Instead of a Sending Hymn, we will be led in silence by the cross, the processional cross, into the world. We must not tarry! The world needs the grace we bring, and Jesus has entrusted that mission to the church. One could say, everything we do in worship is to prepare us for this moment when we turn from the table and head to the mission field, the world.

During August we will also be led into worship by the processional cross. The acolyte will lead the worship leaders into the sanctuary in silence. The cross leads us to the world, but it also calls us from the world to worship and thanksgiving. The cross is the reason we gather, it is part of our “remembering the Lord’s death until he comes.” We gather in the cross; it becomes the model of how we serve, how we speak to, and how we are fed by one another. Lutherans are people of Christ Jesus; people of the cross.

Pastor Paul/Synod Global Mission Committee:

Did you know that our synod, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA, maintains a Global Mission Committee? And did you know that Pastor Paul is a member of that Committee? Well, now you know!

The synod Global Mission Committee has existed since the formation of the ELCA. Its task is to inform the synod and synod churches of the work of the ELCA throughout the world, encourage congregations to support global mission, and to establish relationships with “companion synods” throughout the world. Our synod has companion relationships with the Lutheran Church in Honduras, Papua New Guinea and Latvia. Grace Lutheran has supported the relationship with the ICLH (Iglesia Cristiana Luterana de Honduras—the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras) through various ministries, the latest being the purchase of water filters for the water project in Honduras.

Pastor Paul has served on this committee for about 5 years, and has served as its secretary for the last three years. The Global Mission Committee is of special interest to Pastor Paul since he and Mary served as LCA missionaries to Argentina in the 1970-80’s. Every summer, in the month of July, Pastor Paul and Mary invite the committee to meet at their home to share a meal together and to meet in a more relaxed setting. Usually special guests

accompany that meeting, including counselors from synod camps in Michigan who have come from our companion synods. This year, the GM committee met at Pastor Paul’s home on July 21st.

Church Council Study:



by Kelly A. Fryer

At their last Council meeting in June, after the presentation of a proposal from Pastor Paul, the council agreed to study Kelly A. Fryer’s book, Reclaiming the “E” Word: Waking Up to Our Evangelical Identity (Augsburg Fortress: Minneapolis, MN, 2008) . Though it was written in 2008, the questions and conclusions Kelly Fryer presents in her book are still timely today, especially for Grace Lutheran Church. The book is divided into six chapters, and the council will be discussing a chapter each month.

In the introduction to her book, Kelly writes,

Over the years, God has put our hands to good use. But our mouths, by and large, have been silent. And in recent decades in particular, we seem to have been caught off guard by the ways in which our context has changed. Many of us seem to have convinced ourselves that, in an increasingly diverse world, our best option is to keep our faith to ourselves. Some of us have even begun to doubt that we have anything worth giving away. Is it any wonder that our congregations keep getting smaller? Let’s take a deep breath and remind ourselves that the whole point of our lives as Christians, both individually and as a community of believers, is the other. It is our holy call, as followers of Jesus Christ, to share the good news of God with our neighbors in everything we do and say.

Kelly Fryer will take us on an exciting ride through the issues and questions of congregations that have come to be growing, thriving and “evangelical.” We will learn what makes them this way, and we will learn how we need to change to become the body of Christ. I believe she will open our eyes to new visions and options.

This book is so good, I plan to offer a class on it in the fall for ALL members of Grace who are interested in becoming a church that grows.

Christian Education—“Forming Faith” Committee—Brainstorming Event

In July and again in August, several adult and youth members of Grace will sit down, around a table and a white board, to brainstorm possible changes to the Christian Education program of Grace. We agreed to meet no more than two times and the meetings should not last more than 90 minutes. We also agreed that our task was NOT to solve the Christian educational problems at Grace, but to offer several creative ideas about how we might improve the program for the coming months.

In July, one point really was driven home by all of the members of the committee—Christian Education is really about forming our members, children, youth and adults, into people of faith. Parents want a program that can help their children in their spiritual journey. Members need to learn how to develop their relationships with God, each other, and the world as people who trust the promises of God.

Just wondering, but would we do well to change the name of what we do from Christian Education to “Forming Faith?” Are we not more about equipping each other in a journey through life that needs, and is grounded in, faith—trusting the promises and presence of God in Christ Jesus? We ALL have a role in the learning as well as the teaching, modeling and demonstration of faith.

Forming Faith Committee? Is that a better title for what we need to be about doing? Just thinking out loud!

Constitution Reform—Moving Toward the Model

After nearly a two year hiatus, the Constitution Committee is back in the sweat and task of reforming the Constitution of Grace. Congregations of the ELCA and our synod are required to maintain their constitution to the form and structure outlined in the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA. This model is updated at each biannual Churchwide Assembly and requires action from congregations. The last update of Grace’s constitution that was approved by the

synod was in 1995, more than 25 years ago. Since then, major revision have taken place to the Model and we have not kept up with them. The need to move our constitution more toward the ELCA Model is most important. Pastor Paul is committed to the completion of this task before a new pastor is called to Grace.

The task is usually quite simple, though somewhat time consuming. Here at Grace, because of the particularities of past constitutions, the task is not so simple, and probably more consuming. The committee will complete the basic constitution before reforming the Bylaws of the congregation. The council has expressed a desire to see a rough draft for their consideration as early as November, 2015, and a working draft for the congregation to consider by January, 2016.

The Constitution Committee is committed to stay as close to the Model as we can, and to include some of the successful elements of Grace’s constitutional peculiarities, in order to make it a document that fits our needs for mission and ministry and reflect our traditions. Pray for the important work of this committee!

President’s Pen

August brings in our new Church Council to start their service. There will be many tasks to accomplish, many ideas to discuss, learning of new duties and a lot of just plain getting used to working together. Please keep all the Council member in your prayers and with God’s help we will move forward.



We are the persons who have accepted the call to serve and lead grace forward each with a specific area of service. If you have any ideas of things you would like to see Grace be a part of, these are the people to bring them to for consideration and discernment. We are also the persons to bring concerns to, if you have any concerns please do not hesitate to bring them forward. If you are unsure who to contact, please contact me and I will help direct you. With your help and support we will start to move forward and discerns God’s mission for Grace Lutheran church.

God’s Peace, Doug Neeb



Financial Coordinator's Office Hrs.

August 21, 2015
8:00-12:00



BACKPACK NEWS

A Big Thank You to the Grace congregation for the generous support given during the recent backpack collections! The backpack prep will continue through August. Supplies and backpacks will be purchased and we will have a backpack prep event in late August to get ready for Backpack Sunday on August 30th. Those wishing to participate in the prep can sign up soon. We will put a supply list in an upcoming bulletin and also place one on the bulletin board. A box will be placed by the front door for those wishing to contribute supplies. Thanks again.

Faith and Art Walk News

The 2nd annual Faith and Art Walk will take place on Saturday, September 26th in the afternoon. Just like last year we will be depending on volunteers for a variety of things. We will need: Devotion writers who will share the devotion at the individual art work, Tour guides, and Music volunteers. We may also need cookie bakers and help with a social time here at Grace right after the Art Walk. Please keep this date in mind and look for the sign-up sheets in early August.



It is time that we begin thinking about the 2015 CROP Hunger Walk. The date for the walk this year will be Sunday, October 11, 2015. The site will be at the Dowling United Methodist Church in Dowling, located on M-37 south of Hastings.

The date for the recruiter's meeting is Thursday, August 6, 2015 at the Dowling United Methodist Church at 7:00 pm. At this meeting we will have training and material for use with your group for the 2015 CROP Hunger Walk.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please let me know or have someone represent you at this meeting. Please, place these two dates on your calendar.

Last year's walk provided \$694 to each of five different food programs in Barry County. Each food program used that money to provide food to struggling families. This is the reason that we continue to promote this valuable program in our county. We are looking forward to meeting with you on August 6th.

Your servants in Christ's service,
Joan and Nolan Hudson
6355 Bivens Rd
Nashville, MI 49073
Phone: 517-852-1821
e-mail: shonohs@hotmail.com

EVANGELISM NEWS

Evangelism met on July 15th. Car show planners attended and discussed the schedule and advertising plans. Also discussed the furnishing of food by Thrivent. Flyers will be made for distribution and Grace info cards will be made to place on tables in the eating area. Planners are looking into more ideas such as music and yard signs. Delayed the discussion of Reviving the Congregation till August meeting. Went over the Backpack plans with dates for articles. Will place a box by the front door for those wishing to bring in supply donations. Lists of suggested supplies will be posted. Also a sign-up sheet for the backpack prep event will be available soon. Discussed the Faith and Art Walk. Will have all art on State St area this year. Sign-up sheets will be available on Aug 9th with suggested works of art. The CROP walk was discussed and decision made to request a volunteer recruiter for Grace. The Barry County CROP walk is October 6th with a planning meeting in Dowling on August 6th. A volunteer request for a Grace recruiter will be in the bulletin and August Gracegram. Christmas basket plans will be discussed at a later meeting. Thank you to all involved!

Grace Lutheran Church 1st Car Show

Pastor Amy had approached me and others earlier this year about doing a Car Show at Grace, as she knew I had several older vehicles. With that initial start, the idea will final come to fruition this August.



Through the involvement of Pastor Paul, the Brothers of Grace, Evangelism and Social Activities Committees, our 1st Annual Car Show will be August 22nd, from 9 AM to 3 PM. The invitation is to anyone with a classic or antique, car, truck or motorcycle to show their vehicle. Registration will begin at 9 AM. Dash plaques will be given to the first 30 entries as mementos. Phillip the Thrivent Financial representative will be providing a BBQ meal, assisted by side dishes and drinks by the Social Activities Committee. Serving will be from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Fliers will be printed, distributed at local car shows, and posted around town by store owners who will allow fliers. A week before the actual show the Evangelism Committee will have a written article for the Reminder. We are hoping for a good turn out and a good time for this 1st show. The congregation is invited to bring a vehicle if you have one or come to enjoy the good food, fellowship of car owners, visiting spectators and fellow congregation members. Bring a lawn chair and spent the day!

Thank you,
Gary Golnek

Education Committee News

Vacation Bible Experience Day will take place on Saturday, August 8th from 8:30 am to 1 pm. There will be singing and story-telling time, games, crafts, a blow-up slide, snacks, and lunch.

We are looking forward to seeing youth of all ages enjoy making a “Joyful Noise to the Lord.” We also are inviting our Grace community to join in this day of praise and singing to the Lord. Let’s make it an intergenerational sharing time. We will have fun singing together and eating together. Invite a family or some friends to our celebration of community.

Sunday School Opening will take place on Sunday, September 13th. A theme has not been chosen yet. More information will be given through the Sunday bulletins. An Education sub-committee has been formed and meetings are taking place. This committee is discussing and brain-storming ideas on how to share our faith with youth. The main goal is to increase youth participation and involvement here at Grace. The Education Committee is looking for members to help shape and guide the vision for educating youth and adults on their faith journey. Sunday School teachers are needed for the coming Sunday School year. We need you . . . please consider touching the lives of our Grace youth. We envision the TEAM approach. Share a kind word with a child because children imitate what they hear.

Lorraine Freedlund, Education Chair

Your Congregational Care Committee

What do you think of when you hear the words “Congregational Care Committee”? For many of us, we may think of “shepherds” because the Congregational Care Committee members’ primary responsibility is to be a shepherd to members of Grace Lutheran Church Congregation. Our church constitution defines this committee’s purpose as: “with the pastor, shall be responsible for providing pastoral care through a shepherding plan, including ministry to participating and inactive disciples.”



To carry out the shepherding plan, each committee member/shepherd is assigned a list of members of Grace including their contact information for which the shepherd will be responsible for throughout the upcoming year. The shepherd also has the responsibility for establishing and maintaining contact with the family units on their list on a regular basis. Shepherds are encouraged to contact a family if they do not see them in worship regularly, if they know of a family crisis, or to inform them of an important events or news of the church. Likewise, a member may contact their shepherd to inform them of any family concern they might want the church and/or pastor to know about. Additionally, shepherds participate in the prayer shawl ministry and prepare and deliver “welcome baskets” to new members of Grace.

Current members of the Congregational Care Committee are Sharon Duits, Karen Halstead, Kay Howell, Judy Hughes, Dollie Larsen, Kay Marsh, Ingrid Morgan, Mary Rider, Jane Secor, Jan Schreiner, Sharon Varkula, Mark Bishop, Jeanette Kogge (alternate), Margaret Wood (chair), and Pastor Paul Kuhlman (advisor). Thank you to retired shepherds George and Phyllis Lietz and Chris Bush for their devoted service.

How did I decide to get involved in The Gathering??? **Kim Domke July 2015**

Growing up in the church gave me the basics of my faith and I began serving as a VBS teen helper and handbell ringer when I was in 7th grade. However, I did not have the opportunity to go on mission trips or faith retreats until I was in college. Our church just didn't have those events.

It was 1982 at Central Michigan University that I got involved with the New Song Folk Group which traveled 2 or 3 times a semester to serve congregations around Michigan and the mid-west. It was exciting and comfortable to use my servant's heart to get involved with adults, teens, and children around the state sharing the Love of God through music, drama, and the arts. It was such a natural high on those weekends it was difficult to come back to the normal routine of school on Monday. So when I first heard Amy Grant's song *Mountain Top*, I found it amazing how it really captured my exact emotions. It feels safe and comfortable to stay home with our own church family, but there are those, whom God loves, who just haven't heard the Word or found a church family. This song reinforces my call from God to reach out to others so they know the saving grace of Jesus. You may want to go online to listen to the whole song, but here are the words from the 2nd verse.

*Now praising the Father is a good thing to do
To worship the trinity in spirit and truth
But if we worshiped all of the time
There would be no one to lead the blind
But I'd love to live on a mountain top
Fellowshipping with the Lord
I'd love to stand on a mountain top
'Cause I love to feel my spirit soar
But I've got to come down from that mountain top
To the people in the valley below
Or they'll never know that they can go
To the mountain of the Lord*

Now, here I am, some 30 years later, blessed to be attending and serving Detroit through the *ELCA Gathering: Rise Up!* How great that this is right here in Michigan for the first time, making it a little easier for our Grace congregation to get involved.

It has been a fabulous journey getting ready with Chris, Hope, and Emma to serve in Detroit. I look forward to sharing more stories when we return. Thanks for your prayers this week.

August Birthdays

8-1	Doris Allerding	Dave DeDecker
8-2	Dan Steinke	
8-3	Tommy Peck	
8-7	Joyce Proksch	
8-8	Randy Teegardin	
8-9	Doug Baker	
8-10	Skyler Henion	
8-12	George Lietz	
8-15	Cindy Beckwith	
8-18	Cole Davis	
8-19	Joberta Converse	
8-24	Carol Vos	
8-25	Bob Tossava	
8-27	Diane Neeb	
8-28	Virginia Henion	

August Baptisms

8-1	Diana Brown	Scott Hubbard
8-5	Melinda Shepler	
8-7	Jerry Buehl	
8-9	Anne Johnson	Dana Gonzalez
8-11	Cheryl Cole	Ryann-Lynn Cole
8-11	Lydia Cole	
8-14	John Poholski	
8-15	Danielle Powers	Garrett Powers
8-17	Karen Schlachter	
8-18	Luke Poholski	
8-19	Gwen Hansen	
8-20	Amy Poholski	
8-21	Bernie Bowman	Molly Patton
8-25	Carleen Overholt	
8-29	Karen Halstead	
8-31	Shirley Beck	Robert Brown

Wedding Anniversaries

8-2 Frank & Colleen Moore
8-9 John & Rose Fear
8-10 Cheryl & Kevin Allarding
8-10 Clyde & Kate Watson
8-11 Paul & Mary Kuhlman
8-11 Dana & Jason Gonzalez
8-16 Randy & Brenda Teegardin
8-17 Dave & Laurie DeDecker
8-18 Steve & Peg Kaiser
8-18 Rick & Sharon Palmer
8-18 Chris & Dennis Bush
8-22 George & Jeannette Ulrich
8-27 Dan & Evelyn Granzow
8-31 Robert & Diane Bouchey

Memorials

8-5-2011 Loretta Schoessel
8-7-1988 Nell Manni
8-9-2010 Orville Burghdoff Jr.
8-10-2008 Nolan Heath
8-12-1994 Ann Sherington
8-21-1980 Hazel Gardner
8-21-1997 Alma Faul
8-22-1991 James O'Connor
8-22-2012 Phyllis Thompson
8-23-1990 Clayton Loughlin, Jr.
8-24-1995 Jim Simon
8-25-2012 Myron Von Seggern
8-28-1999 Robert Brown
8-29-1973 Ray Haywood