

grace notes

November 2016

NOVEMBER = SERVING

There's lots of activity planned during November . . . lots of opportunity to share God's grace with others - both locally and globally. Please join our all-church effort & energy in SERVING as we continue our mission of being 'A Ministry of Grace in the Heart of Andover . . . and Beyond.'

LOVE OF GRACE BAZAAR ~ November 12th , 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Volunteer to help or simply come to shop at this annual holiday craft bazaar at Grace. Proceeds will support Stepping Stone Emergency Housing in Anoka, a 66 bed shelter for youth and adults over 18 who are experiencing homelessness.

GRACE 4 RAKAI ~ November 12/13

During worship, we will share photos and stories from the mission team that traveled to Rakai, Uganda in October. There are opportunities to support children in Rakai - through monthly sponsorship for education or through one-time purchase of beds or linens for the School-Dormitory we are helping to construct for 26 orphans.

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN (FMSC) ~ November 18/19

Join the marathon packing event as 500 Grace volunteers pack meals at FMSC. Please bring your Catechism group, card club, choir members, hockey team, co-workers, neighbors, friends and distant cousins J (*see page 6*)

Friday, Nov. 18th 6-7:30 pm or 8 - 9:30 pm

Saturday, Nov. 19th 9 - 11 am , 11:30 - 1:30pm, 2 -4 pm or 7 - 9 pm

Free candy at worship on Nov. 5/6 . . . we'll give away M&M containers full of candy to enjoy, then please refill the tube with quarters (or bills or checks) for FMSC. Please return your filled M&M tube to church on Nov. 18/19!

FAMILY PROMISE ~

November 27-

December 4

Our church will host Family Promise guests, local families experiencing homelessness. Join the ever-growing team of volunteers who serve in various ways: sleep overnight for security, drive the van to transport guests, cook dinner one evening, donate supplies, or assist children with homework or evening activities.



STEPPING STONES

We will gather gifts for residents at Stepping Stones Emergency Housing in Anoka. We will create SOS (help) bags for the residents, including basic, needed supplies such as body wash, shampoo and deodorant. More details coming soon.

Note:

If you'd like to participate in Operation Christmas Child, you may take your filled shoeboxes to our neighbor church, Meadow Creek, between Nov. 14-21

Pastor Mark's Remarks

I always have mixed emotions as I approach November for I find it often feels like an emotional roller coaster. Why? Well, I think it comes from the fact it begins on the coattails of our Reformation and Oktoberfest celebration amid all the celebration of our Lutheran heritage. And even before the last strains of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" die down, we're suddenly thrust into the challenge of All Saints Day and immersed in the pangs of sorrow, recalling those saints who have died in the past year. It is not an easy moment especially as we remember lost family and friends who were dear to us. Yet we don't stay there very long as we're also caught up in the anticipation of the joys of heaven when all the "saints" will be gathered around the Lord's throne. We're happy and sad at the same time. It's a strange way to begin the month and I'm not always sure just how I should feel. Fortunately, it isn't but a week after All Saints that we've brought back down to earth to celebrate the earthly ministry of Christ and pledge our allegiance to him on Christ the King Sunday. And once again we've come full-circle and we're at the end of the church year. Whew! There sure is a lot going on in those first three weeks of November. But that's not all. There are, of course, the non-worship events in November like our "Love of Grace Church Bazaar" and the marathon serving event at Feed My Starving Children. I have to say that these are some of our best times as we connect with our community and share God's grace beyond our church. And what's more, they are always filled with fun,

laughter, and lots of love! Of course, November isn't complete without the focus of gratitude and thanks of Thanksgiving for it's like the postscript or final step of our whole year of ministry. I find that, although Scripture tells me to be thankful in all circumstance, the call for our nation to gather in our churches and homes to give thanks for all God's blessings somehow makes it even more significant. I guess that's why I love our Thanksgiving Eve service. It is filled with real and personal sharing of gratitude and it's like the icing on the cake. (Or should I say: "Ice cream on top of pie since we end the service with a pie social in Fellowship Hall!). It truly is a time of profound gratitude and thanks! But that isn't the end of November! On the last Sunday we begin Advent and start our church year all over again, counting down the four weeks before Christmas. And as the month of November begins with mixed emotions, it ends in the same way, mixing joy and somber reflection as we anticipate Christmas, but also realize the challenge for God's people to wait and wait for God's promise to be born. So whether or not I feel totally prepared for the ups and downs of emotions during November, I just want to experience them all the best I can as we welcome God's Spirit into the mix. And I hope that you can do the same as we take time to savor these important celebrations and moments together! May the Lord bless you during these important days!

In Him, Pastor Mark

Connect Class

Sunday, December 4th at 8:30 am

If you are interested in becoming a member of Grace or learning more about our congregation, we ask that you first attend one of our Connect Classes. This is a time to ask questions about the church, hear about the history of Grace and connect with other new people like yourselves. Childcare is provided. If you choose to become a new member, we will be receiving new members on December 10/11. Please sign up on GraceLink or call the church office.



"Love of Grace" Bazaar

Saturday, Nov. 12 from 9 am – 3 pm.

Bring your friends and enjoy the creative crafts, holiday shopping and festive food. This is more than a craft fair – it's an opportunity to share God's grace with our local community as we welcome vendors, visitors and our Grace family to the "Love of Grace" Bazaar.

Faith Connections

How can we think about growing spiritually in the month of November? Here are some ideas:

- Engage in ***What's the Big Idea?*** Conversations. Each week you will find an insert in the bulletin that offers you a place to take sermon notes, an overview of the text, and questions to spark conversation. This month we jump back into the *Narrative Lectionary* and explore the prophets. These colorful preachers will warn us, encourage us, and prepare us to receive the coming Promise of God found in the Good News of Jesus. Form a group, set aside time in your service team, join the conversation online at Grace Learning Center, have coffee with a friend, or sit down at dinner with your family, and dwell in these texts together.
- Check out the *Narrative Lectionary Devotions* page on our website. You'll find it under the "Resources" menu tab or go directly to <http://www.grace-andover.org/resources/devotions/>. This page has daily readings and links to other online resources to help you dig deeper into the text and incorporate it into your regular rhythm of meditation, prayer, worship, and service.
- Connect to the spiritual habit of serving by engaging in the multiple opportunities available in this month of serving (see the lead article).
- Set aside some time to list the things for which you are thankful. It is very easy to become overwhelmed and discouraged by the violence and continual stream of tragic news from around the world and in our own families. Yet, there is so much for which to be thankful. Sometimes, the best spiritual practice we can do is to list the good things and blessings that we have received from God, not the least of which is the forgiveness and relationship that we have with God through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Seek ways to heal broken relationships. One of the most stressful parts of the holidays is the fact that families feel obligated to get together, even when there is strife. Pray for family members that may be strained in their relationship with you or others. May this be a season of healing for you and yours.
- Finally, I ask that you will pray for our newly



formed Spiritual Formation Team. This is a small group of people that I have invited to come alongside me as I seek wisdom and clarity on how to lead our congregation in the area of spiritual formation.

Pastor Steve

Vision Board Message

When I was younger, I lost a significant amount of weight. I was overweight and did not feel comfortable in my own body. After preparing a plan and working hard at it, I ended up losing 20% of my body weight. Just to be clear, I am not at all bragging, I have since gained some back. However, the reason I am telling you this is because I was reminded of my accomplishment during the October Vision Board meeting when the topic of discussion came to setting goals. Goal setting is a valuable method of turning a vision into reality; it helps guide where you want to go in life and can be easily adopted to develop your faith journey.

A popular method of goal setting is the SMART system. This method tells us that a goal should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time bound. It is important to write down the goal and state it positively so that you stay on track and maintain motivation.

As the Vision Board continues to review the book Giving to God by Mark Allan Powell, it defines our basic vision by stating:

"Our goal is to find the life that God wants us to have, in confidence that this will be the best life we could possibly have."

This is a profound statement that is worth reading again; even write it down next to your goals for motivation. So I invite us all to take some time and write down some personal goals that will bring growth, inspiration, and help us to have the best life we could possibly have.

As part of the Grace community, we are blessed to have so many opportunities for development that are good stepping stones, or even goals themselves. The 7 habits of effective disciples are a good place to set goals. My challenge to you is to pick just one of these and enjoy the spiritual journey.

Neil Hawkinson



Kids in Grades 3-5 Lock-In

on November 4th at 8 pm. Our night will include games, Bible time, snack, a movie, sleep, and so much more! Yes, we will sleep! Kids must be able to stay all night. Breakfast will be provided in the morning. Kids must be picked up by 8 am.

Kids should bring: modest pajama's with sleeves, sleeping bags, pillows, their Bible and friends.

Kids should leave home: electronic games, Ipods, mp3 players, phones.

Kids may bring friends. If kids bring 2 or more friends, parents must plan on being an overnight chaperone.



The Lock-In is \$5 per person. Register through Gracelink or at graceandover.org

Birthday Offerings

During each large group session we recognize the **month's birthdays**. Children are encouraged to bring a coin for each year to put in the Birthday Bank. Kids will receive a sticker, a birthday pencils, and get their **name put on the "Birthday Door"** (Kim and Monica's office door). This offering will go towards buying flocks of chicks donated to Heifer Intl. Watch our chicks add up! Summer Birthdays will be recognized in April and May.

Baptism Class

November 5th at 9 am.

Baptism is welcoming your child into the family of faith. During the Baptism Class, we will learn how God is at work in baptism and in our daily lives. We will share insights with you to help you as you help your child know and love God by creating habits and traditions that will make God apart of your families every day life.

Baptism Sunday is November 20th at either the 9 am or 10:30 Worship Service. Baptisms can be scheduled for almost any Saturday Night at 5 pm. We will not schedule any baptisms in Advent (December).



SONday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 18 at 2 p.m.

Contracts and information for Grades 2-5 went home October 16th. Kids wanting a speaking or non-speaking part for the program need to return their contracts by November 13. Scripts will be given to kids on November 20.

Dates to remember:

Rehearsal: Sat. December 10, 9-10:30 a.m. This rehearsal is for children with speaking and non-speaking parts only.

Rehearsal: Sat. December 17, 9-10:30 a.m. This rehearsal is for Grades 2-5.

Program: Sunday, December 18 2 p.m. (Please have children here by 1:40)

Preschool and Kindergarten children will rehearse during their Large Groups. Information about songs and finger plays will come home in November.

Rockin' Kids Bible Club



We are off to a great start at the RKBC, studying the story of Moses. In November, we are wandering in the wilderness, but through it all, we learn to trust the One True God!. What a great month of storytelling fun! Check out our True Tale Tom videos each week **on the Children's Ministry facebook page.**
@graceandoverkids

Wacky Wednesdays

- Nov. 2—Wear Red
- Nov. 9—Crazy Hair
- Nov. 16—Wear a smile—
- Nov. 30—Cowboy Duds!

The RKBC kids will sing in worship on Sunday, November 13th. Kids will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:35 to practice. We will sing at the end of the 9am and beginning of the 10:30 Worship Service.

No Catechism / RKBC
on November 23
*Come to Thanksgiving
Eve Worship.*
No SONday School
November 27

Family Worship Sundays ~ November 6
December 4

Children will begin in Worship Services with their families and then be dismissed to SONday School **after the Children's Sermon.**

Studio 252—This website also supports our 252 Basics Curriculum for our 2nd—5th Grade families. The weekly stories, videos, music, and more are to help your kids really apply our Bible Life Apps to their every day life! Check it out today!
www.studio252.tv.

In SONday School, we believe in engaging the whole child—heart, soul, mind, and strength. This fall, we are excited to use a new curriculum by Orange. Orange is a strategy for guiding our families. When we combine Red, which is the love of family, with Yellow which is the light of the church, we create Orange which combines the strength of each. Orange teaches children who God is. When home and church work together, we are much more effective in helping children know they are loved by God, called by God, and saved by God.

Parents, Orange provides so many great tools to help you have faith building moments with your kids in your everyday activities.

Parent Cue App – Download the Parent Cue App for an abundance of ideas of things you can do **with your children connected to the month's** unit, including songs, videos, and wonderful parent resources. This is HUGE! Download it today!

- Parent CUE app provides simple CUES throughout the week that remind you to pause and make the most of everyday moments.
- Offers CUES for families with preschoolers and elementary-age kids
 - Parent Time section has videos, podcasts, and articles just for parents
 - Videos, activities, and discussion questions link to First Look and 252 Basics material
 - Content updates weekly

Facebook – graceandoverkids

Like Grace Lutheran's Children's Ministry on facebook and we will have information during the week for you to help reinforce what your kids learned that week in SONday School

Women's Ministries



Women's Retreat 2017 "TREASURED"

Please join us for this two night women's retreat for a real 'get-away-from-it-all' time so that your spirit may be refreshed!

Date Friday, January 27 – Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017
 Time Arrive at camp between 6-8 pm Friday;
 Depart at Noon Sunday (we'll arrange car-pooling)
 Place Luther Point Bible Camp in Grantsburg, WI
 Cost \$85 per person

- Registration is limited to the first 30

Registration fee includes:
 Lodging for two nights
 (yes, you'll sleep on a bed)
 Bed linens and towels
 Three meals on Saturday and Sunday Brunch

You are a chosen and valuable treasure! You are the precious daughter of our heavenly Father, who claims you as His own. From a plain old lump of coal to a dazzling diamond, you are transformed in Christ. And you shine brilliantly as you reflect God's glory. And, just as a treasure hunter searches for hidden jewels and buried riches, we seek out and the truth and treasure of God's Word.

At this Women's Retreat, we will

- ☞ Know how "TREASURED" we are
- ☞ Seek the "TREASURED" truth of God
- ☞ Experience "TREASURED" time together

For more information about these women's events at Grace, please contact Jeannie Hellmann

Outreach News

Every November we participate in a marathon serving event at Feed My Starving Children. Please join us in our all-church effort on Nov. 18/19 to help feed God's children who are starving in body and spirit, in need of HOPE that you can provide!

The question for us is whether we can find 500+ volunteers to pack over 100,000 meals for the hungry children around the world. How are we going to do this? **We'll do it by asking YOU to invite many friends such as your Catechism group, Grace choir members, Family Table ministry team, etc.** Also, invite your relatives, co-workers and neighbors to join us at six different packing sessions November 18 and 19.

But 500 volunteers? Yes, 500! The good news is that **we've done it before and we can do it again!** Reserve the dates now and begin to extend the invitation to join us for The 500 Challenge!

MARATHON Packing Event this November at FMSC
 Join the Grace Team of 500 volunteers!

Friday ~ November 18	6-7:30 pm
	8-9:30pm
Saturday ~ November 19	9-11 am
	11:30am -1:30 pm
	2-4 pm
	7-9 pm

Come and join the teamwork (and FUN) with other Grace volunteers at Feed My Starving Children on Nov. 18/19, as together we share God's grace in this very tangible way ... through food!

- ⇒ Please register online at fmsc.org, sign up on blue opportunity page, or call the church office.
- ⇒ Please arrive 10 minutes before your shift begins and please wear close-toed shoes.

FMSC warehouse is located at
 401 S. 93rd Ave NW, Coon Rapids



A Snapshot at our Finances

Week 40	2011	2012	2013	2014		2015	2016
Operational	\$549,344.34	\$523,514.66	\$493,800.30	\$504,165.48		\$510,726.92	\$ 511,679.28
Capital	\$77,496.00	\$70,788.00	\$66,887.00	\$62,196.00		\$55,885.50	\$62,117.16
Other (Holiday)	\$16,230.49	\$11,233.75	\$18,168.12	\$14,559.29		\$13,058.72	\$16,098.48
Free 2B Grace	NA	NA	\$131,930.00	\$144,128.50		\$136,313.00	\$113,997.16
Total:	\$643,070.83	\$605,536.41	\$710,785.42	\$725,049.27		\$715,984.14	\$703,892.08
Week 41	2011	2012	2013	2014		2015	2016
Operational	\$560,124.31	\$501,552.96	\$504,213.30	\$512,180.48		\$520,778.92	\$ 530,157.28
Capital	\$79,226.00	\$75,284.00	\$68,121.00	\$63,185.50		\$56,902.00	\$64,042.16
Other (Holiday)	\$16,230.49	\$11,233.75	\$18,168.12	\$14,559.29		\$13,058.72	\$16,098.48
Free 2B Grace	NA	NA	\$133,450.00	\$147,389.50		\$138,111.00	\$121,847.16
Total:	\$655,580.80	\$588,070.71	\$723,952.42	\$737,314.77		\$728,850.64	\$732,145.08

In January, we, as a congregation passed an Operational Budget that was a financial stretch. The budget called on the congregation to continue to work the fields we had started to plant in 2015 and Take a Step in Giving.

The staff has worked diligently to keep costs down to support the many ministries at Grace. However, our biggest cost in our Operational budget is staffing that allows Grace to do this ministry. We are significantly behind financially from where we would like to be at this point of the year. We are praying for the Stewardship campaign and are thankful for the Take a Step Team who has helped make the campaign possible.

Financially, we are also working on the 2017 budget. If you are part of a Ministry Team at Grace, please be in contact with your Staff Liaison to plan for the 2017 budget year. The budget should accurately reflect what God is calling us to do.

Thank You

- Thank you for a great retirement celebration and for the delicious chocolates. Thanks also for all of the restaurant gift certificates. We will be able to eat out often! ~ Carroll Potter
- **While I know that ‘it takes a village’ is a phrase we hear often, I can’t think of a better way to describe HOPE 4 Youth and the amazing people, like you, that keep our doors open for the 30-40 homeless youth we see each day. Thank you for your generous donation of \$5,815 for our Wall of Hope support of HOPE Place, new transitional housing program located in Coon Rapids (due to open late November) . . .We simply could not continue our work without you!** ~Lisa Jacobson, HOPE 4 Youth Executive Director

Thanksgiving Eve Worship & Pie Social



Wednesday, November 23 at 7:00 pm

Pie Social is immediately following worship. Our Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service is a wonderful time to reflect on the many blessings we have received as a nation, a church and a family. We hope you will join us as we Worship and give thanks to God, then enjoy a time of fellowship with our Grace family and friends and have some great pies too.

Grace Lutheran Church

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A Ministry of Grace in the heart of Andover and beyond!

www.graceandover.org

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Neil Hawkinson

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