

GraceFull Visions

MAY 2019

From the Deacons' Desk

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” Matthew 6:33

Frank and I often wonder how to set the right priorities for our lives against what the world, our family and friends say are important. Not an easy job, but necessary if we don't want to miss the things that matter most.

Seek first His Kingdom? How can we do that? With all the challenges, obstacles and super important matters of each day, is this even possible?

I try every day. I take a few moments to be quiet and spend time with God. For me, it's usually in the early morning when I'm walking the dog. I pray for God to carry me through this new day, to allow me to know him better. I thank God for my many blessings. I pray for forgiveness because I am always do-

ing stupid things that affect others. I pray for those who are sick, hurting, scared, in need, confused, hungry and I pray for those who lead, that they lead with honor.

I always ask for the Spirit to speak to me and mostly importantly, that I hear what the Spirit is saying to me. I breathe deeply and look at my surroundings. I am always pleasantly surprised at how God lessens my worries and takes me away from the fast pace of life, at least for a while. I realize this is something I must do every day for myself and for those who matter most to me, in order to change my priorities, my worries, my frustrations and high expectations and make room for God's priorities.

I asked Frank about this, and he replied “ditto” then added.....I awake pretty early most days, and that's when I like to spend my quiet time with God, having

a cup of coffee, sitting in my favorite chair, and at times my cat on my lap. I guess we all pray for the same things. I start off by asking for forgiveness for my failure to do God's will, humbleness when I do succeed, praying for the living, the ones that have gone, and all the in between things we pray for. I ask God to send me His Spirit, to give me strength and wisdom to do all that He wants me to do. And you know, that's now easy to figure out.

I finish by thanking God for all He has done for me. For some reason, I thank the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit separately. The Father for watching over me and protecting me from “true evil.” Lord knows I had opportunities to go there, but for some reason, never did. The Son for being patient with me (that's a story for another time, the Son knows what I'm referring to).

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And lastly the Holy Spirit, for all the nudging, and inspiring me what to do. I know what I'm capable of, and I know a lot of things I do is not because of my doing, but of the Holy Spirit's “constant nudging”, which is a good thing. (Susi so very much agrees with this too!)

Throughout the day, no matter how busy or hectic it may be, try to find “a quiet time with God.”

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” Matthew 7:7

- Deacons Susi and Frank

Mission and Ministry

From the Stewardship Team

STEWARDSHIP FOR OUR National Church, (ELCA)

As we consider our responsibility in caring for God's world, we think, often, about what we can do for our congregation and local community. There is also a wider outreach which we support, namely, our benevolence: that is, the portion of our budget that goes to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which provides ministries and programs at the national, state and world-wide level. Sometimes we do not see where this benevolence is put to use.

Recently on the NBC National news a rare and wonderful thing happened. The word LUTHERAN was used.

The article was about the "Head Start" program, developed under the "Health and Human Services" agency of our federal government. The program is about providing socializing and cognitive skills for children, (particularly for lower social and economic areas). The design is to work with children in a pre-school environment; children who would otherwise be "plunged" into kindergarten without required levels of interaction other than at their family level.

The article continued to show that the once vibrant program had fallen into dis-function because of run down, inadequate facilities and poor funding.

The segment revealed that, "Lutheran Services of Florida" stepped in with the needed upgrades to get the program back on its feet. The news item concluded with videos and information showing how "Head Start" is now running with renewed success, particularly in the Florida area,

When disasters occur, Many ELCA ministries such as "World Hunger" and "Lutheran Disaster Relief", remain to help—long after other groups have departed.

Our local stewardship is a part of what makes this possible.

- Richard Duncan, Stewardship Team

Sunday Falco's Recent Activities

- Getting the different renters in a good system per week for helping with tables and chairs as we have events and church service.
- Handling problems for our seven paying tenants.
- Getting bids for painting the Fellowship Hall and assisting the painter while they are working.
- Helping to get another bid for the remodel of the Narthex and bathrooms.
- Providing hospitality and setting up on Sunday morning for the second service, setting up cookies for both services and organizing volunteers.
- Helping Cindy, our new office manager.
- Making appointments with people outside our congregation, walking them through the property, discussing prices, rules and times available.
- Organizing Pot Luck picnic for May 5th.
- Assisting with weddings in Sanctuary (Feb 14th, April 27th, May 11th).
- Managing cleaning people
- Setting up for congregation events when needed.
- Helping at front office before new Office Manager started.
- Tasks specific to the Adaptive Service:
- Talking with multiple assistant living facilities to set up regular outings to the Adaptive Service.
- Talking with the media, including local newspapers and Channel 10 News.

Suncoast Symphony Orchestra Concert

On Wednesday, May 1st at 7 pm, the Suncoast Symphony Orchestra will hold their annual end of the season concert at Grace to help thank us for the space to rehearse and store their equipment all year. This year the concert will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you!

For the wonderful expressions of LOVE you have sent and hugs you have given since Tollie's passing into the Church Triumphant. You are the "rainbows after the rain" and this church family has meant the world to both Tollie and me. God bless you always. - Gloria Holtzclaw

(Tollie's funeral will be held at Grace on Saturday, **August 3rd.**)

Thank you!

For all the prayers and beautiful cards during the illness and death of my mother, Gladys Calhoun. - Yvonne Hauschild

Cinco De Mayo Picnic

On Sunday, May 5th we will have a potluck Cinco de Mayo Picnic under our Grand Oak, with the main course starting at noon. The You can bring your potluck dish to the church kitchen in the morning, starting at 8:30am. Sunday Falco and/or a volunteer will be in the kitchen there to receive your culinary contributions. The Sones de Mexico dance group will be giving a short performance and there will be other entertainment as well..

Art Gallery

Artist Richard Duncan's art has been recently added to our gallery. George and Nancy Small are preparing to share some of their art as well. Many of the gallery's works are also for sale; please inquire with the particular artist. Anyone with a gift for art, whether it is painting or photography, etc. is encouraged to display their work. Please contact Phyllis Dumdie or Connie Puls if you are interested.

May Book Club Postponed Until June

The Next Person You Meet In Heaven by Mitch Albom will be the topic of June's book club. We are not meeting in May due to the recent death of Deacon Vicki's father.. We will meet on June 5th at 10:00 am. Please come and join us. The discussions are lively and the treats are sweet! Contact Vicki with questions at veis49@yahoo.com.

Pledge Cards

Due to a miscommunication, pledge cards were not included in the Holy Week mailing to the congregation. There are three basic ways to receive a pledge card. The first is to request one from the ushers the next time you attend worship. The second is to come to the office during regular hours (9am-12pm M-F) to pick one up. The third is to call the office at 727-446-5026 and request to have one mailed to you. We apologize for the inconvenience. As a reminder, the pledges you make will carry over into 2020 up until the next financial commitment appeal.

Men's Appreciation Baseball Game

On Sunday, June 2nd, we will be attending the Sunday Brunch event at the Clearwater Thresher's game against the Dunedin Blue Jays. This is an annual event to honor

the fathers and other men of our congregation who make such a difference in our lives. It's great fun, food, and fellowship! Please pay by May 24th so we know how many

group tickets to order. These advance tickets are \$17 each and includes the buffet, excellent shaded seats, and access to a clubhouse. For more information, contact Pastor Jeff.

Regular Event Updates

Men of Grace

This month's meeting will be at 9am at the Sunset Grille in Clearwater on Thursday, **May 2nd**.

Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet

The Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet will be held on Saturday, **May 11th** at 9 am. The date of the breakfast has changed to the 2nd Saturday for each month.

Young at Heart

The May Young at Heart event is the Holy Land Experience trip on Thursday, May 9th.

Council Meeting

The next Congregation Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, **May 14** at 6:30 pm in the Garden Room.

Children's Church

Children's Church has resumed with two groups led by Deacon Connie and Judy Ishida respectively.

Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on Thursday, **May 23** from 1pm-3pm. We meet in the Garden Room and the gate will be open for access and the door unlocked. Our study is from the current issue of "Gather" magazine. If you do not receive Gather magazine, call Connie Puls at 446-4091 and she will get the study information to you before the meeting. All women are invited, coffee and desert will be served. If you need a ride call Connie.

Cookie Donations Always Needed

More bakers or donations of your favorite brand of cookies are needed for Sundays. Donations welcome for either or

both of our worship services. Please drop off your contributions to the kitchen before worship hour. Kitchen opens

at 8:30 a.m. Thank you! Any questions, please see Sunday Falco at church or call 727-455-2528.

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Gopher Help Needed

Every Friday the Gophers meet to help maintain the inside and outside of the property. This time of the year with the snowbirds gone and

people on vacation, illness, etc. they are really struggling to get things done. There are jobs for both inside and outside to do. If you can help for

even a few minutes between 7:30 am and 11:00 am. Please call Cliff Bittner 727-771-0684 or just show up in the Fellowship Hall.

May Birthdays

5/03	Jan Alberg	5/19	Daryl Cooperrider
5/04	Duke Tieman	5/22	Nate Hauschild
5/12	Michele Nichols	5/28	Lindsay Haushild
5/16	Ellen DuPaul	5/31	Joseph Cox
5/17	Bob Wheeler		
5/18	Alan Wong		

May Anniversaries

5/6	Lloyd & Jeri Sorenson
5/16	George & Rosemarie Smith
5/19	Alexander & Julie Stevenson
5/29	Pastor Jefferson & Jennifer Cox

Prayer Corner

Tuesday Prayer Chapel

The Prayer Group meets at
11am on Tuesdays in the

Prayer Chapel. Submit prayer
requests through the Com-

munion Record Sheets.

Prayer List

Prayers are requested for: Linda Almond, Stephanie Adamitis, Pastor Lou & Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Kathleen Wacker, Karen Bates, Pam Long, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Kathy Falco, Pat Hudson, Bonnie Redler, William Mathis, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Ralph Burson, Jean Schlegel, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George & Phyllis Clark, Jill Grote, Zach Hauschild, Geneva Johnson, the family and friends of Gladys Calhoun (Yvonne Hauschild's mom) and Tollie Holtzclaw & those suffering from natural disasters, violence, and terror (including those unjustly or unnecessarily separated from their parents or children).

Please Pray for Military Personnel w/Grace connections...

-Marine Lance Corporal
Heather Burson, granddaughter
of Anne and Ralph Burson

-Seaman Third Class Kyle
Wassen, grandson of Connie
Puls,

-Marc Calhoun, nephew of
Wayne and Yvonne
Hauschild is in the Air Force

-Aldo Granados, son of Pastor
Lydia and member of Grace,
is in the US Army Reserves
locally.

-Maj. Christopher Conklin, a
chaplain with the USAF, is
Lorraine Rheinhart's grand-
son. He had been redeployed
to the Middle East.

-Gabrielle Falco, Pat and To-
ny's granddaughter, was com-
missioned as a lieutenant. in
the U.S. Army and accepted
at the exceptional Walter
Reed Hospital as a medical
student.

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Rev. Jefferson Cox, Pastor

Commissioning of Iris Saxby as Synod Parish Deacon

On Sunday, May 12th, Iris Saxby will be commissioned as Grace's latest Synod Parish Deacon. The representative from the Bishop's Office for this event will be ELCA Deacon Connie Schmucker, Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership. Iris is a long-time member of Grace, and also served on the staff of Grace's Pre-School. Iris's areas of service will include support for acolytes and crucifers, new member assimilation, and some worship leadership. The service will also include the Blessing of the Women in honor of Mother's Day.