

GraceFull Visions

NOVEMBER 2018

Steering Committee, Purchase Offer, and Property Improvement Capital Campaign Updates

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Special Events	2
Mission & Ministry	3
Regular Event Updates	6
Birthdays & Anniversaries	7
Prayer Corner	7
Calendar	insert
Worship Leaders	insert

As we come towards the end of another year, there are several updates regarding ongoing projects to share.

The first update is in regards to the new service concept. The Steering Committee is finalizing its proposal, and in fact a rough draft was presented to the Congregation Council at its October 23rd meeting for review. The Steering Committee will then incorporate any council suggestions for the proposal. A final proposal will then be presented at the November 13th Congregation Council meeting. If the Council accepts the proposal, then the Council will set a date for a Special Congregation Meeting to present it to the congregation for consideration.

The second update is

in regards to the offer by Mt. Zion UMC to purchase our property. After our informational meeting, I contacted the real estate agent representing Mt. Zion and simply informed him that Grace wasn't prepared to consider the offer at that moment, but if that changed we would let him know. Since the congregation directed the Steering Committee to continue its work, logically as a congregation we need to at least let that process play out before we actively consider whether or not to sell our property. In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to consider the future of Grace through prayer, reflection, and mutual conversations.

The third update is in regards to a Capital Campaign to raise money for the im-

provements to our property that would be needed for our property to continue to be an effective tool for mission and ministry into the 21st Century. Obviously, these needs are directly tied to the other two updates – if we end up deciding to start a new worship service that tries to be as adaptive and accommodating as possible to people with special needs such as mobility issues, then making changes to the Sanctuary would be important so that the service could be held in the Sanctuary in the future. On the other hand, if the congregation discerns that selling the property is the most faithful direction to carry out the Lutheran witness to the Gospel in our area, then it probably doesn't make sense to make any significant changes (other than

immediate safety concerns). So this by necessity should be put on the back burner at least temporarily. (The proposal for the new service concept would include proposals for some property improvements, especially to the sound system in the Fellowship Hall.)

If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to share them with me or anyone on the Council.

Peace,
Pastor Jeff

Special Events

\$15/Table Indoor Rummage Sale

\$15-a-table Sale (indoor rummage sale). Set up is on Friday, November 2nd from 10am until 2pm in the fellowship hall. The Sale is on Saturday, November 3rd and we open doors to the public at 8am. Doors for sellers will be opened at 7:30am. Checks should be made out to Grace

Lutheran Church and place in offering plate or drop off at Church Office. Please invite friends and family to get a table. More tables bring in more customers and better opportunity for sales. If you don't plan on having a table, you can donate items for the church table. The money we

make will go to the Gophers, Altar Guild and Lydia's Closet. We are looking for dishes, pots, pans, tablecloths and interesting items. For the church table we are not looking for furniture unless it's a lamp or small table. Men's tools are always a big hit.—
Florence Bencivenga

All Saints Sunday and First Communion

On All Saints Sunday, November 4th, we will welcome four children to the Lord's Table to receive Holy Communion for the first time.

They are Joseph Valentin, Jackson McClenning, and Kelly & Alex Ralph-Solebello. Kelly and Alex will be baptized at the begin-

ning of the service and we will welcome their parents Mike and Melinda as new members as well.

Work Day

The Gopher's are having a work day on Saturday November 17 8:00 am to Noon. There are indoor and outside jobs that need to be done. Here is the list of targeted projects: spread mulch, prune bushes by back fence, weed

Memorial Garden, spray Memorial Garden brick path with weed killer, wash windows (inside & out), power wash pavement on porch, clean air conditioner filters in window units (inside) and wash units outside. Weed Gopher shed

area, clean pews in the fellowship hall, spot clean walls, doors, etc. inside. Please come help clean our church home before the Holidays. You do not have to be here the whole time. Lunch will be provided.

Community Thanksgiving Worship Service

On Sunday, November 18th at 7:00 pm, Grace Lutheran Church will be host to our annual Community Thanksgiving Service. This service is shared by Sylvan Abbey Unit-

ed Methodist Church on Sunset Pt. Blvd., Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Keene Rd., and Grace. Pastor Jeff will be presiding at Holy Communion,

and Pastor Chuck Smith of Sylvan Abbey UMC will be preaching. A reception will follow for refreshments and fellowship.

Annual Church Christmas Luncheon

Our Church Christmas Luncheon is scheduled on Saturday, December 1 at Bassetti's Restaurant. The restaurant is located at 1568 Main Street, Dunedin (580 Plaza). We would like everyone

to come and welcome you to invite your friends and family. You will find an insert in your bulletin mid-November with your choice of menu selections and the deadline for signing up for the

event. The price is \$20.00 inclusive. All checks to be made out to Grace Lutheran Church with your selection insert.

Mission and Ministry

Gopher Yard Tractor Fund Drive

Gophers's Craftsman Yard Tractor has now reached a point where it is not cost-effective to keep it running. Gopher's are conducting a fund drive to raise money to

purchase a replacement. On November 3rd they will be having a bake sale at the rummage sale in the fellowship hall. If you would like to donate bake goods for the event

contact Steve Davis 727-400-4308. Monetary donation can be sent to the church office marked as Gopher Tractor Fund.

Lydia's Closet Underwear Drive

Lydia's Closet is sponsoring an underwear drive during the months of October and November. Our homeless guests are needing: NEW socks, boxer underwear, women's underpants, and vee neck tee

shirts. We can not keep enough of these items on hand and need your help to continue to provide them. A box will be in the narthex to place your donations. If you would prefer to leave the

shopping to us you can make your check out to Grace, put underwear drive in the note section, and place in the offering plate or send to the church office.

Sunday Morning Adult Study Update

Starting Sunday, November 4th, the Adult Study will begin a series on the books of the Bible known as the Epistles of John, or 1 John, 2 John, and 3rd John. These letters are traditionally believed to have been written by the Apostle John, the author of the Gospel of John. They are sent to a community of believers that has experienced

division. The first letter addresses a heresy known as Docetism (which held that Jesus was only a spirit and did not have true substance. Others taught instead that the resurrected Jesus was in spirit only, which is part of the Gnostic teachings. John rejects both heresies. The second and third letters are two of the shortest books of the

Bible. The third letter critiques a certain Diotrophes while praising men named Gaius and Demetrius. Join us to learn more about this New Testament community of believers and how John supported them in their struggles to understand the reality of Jesus and how they were to live as his followers.

Faith Community Nursing Update

At the Faith community Nursing recent meeting, there was a presentation by Melissa Dohme Hill. She delivered a testimony that was powerful and uplifting. She was a victim of an abusive relationship. She now advocates to inform

victims of early signs to look for of possible abuse. There will be posted on the FCN bulletin board in the social hall and the bulletin board in the church entrance a Warning Signs and a Safety Plan poster. Please

read these and be informed. There are resources to help anyone in an abusive relationship. You can call Ellen Duncan at 727-940-3024 at anytime for resource information or any concerns

From the Stewardship Team

Stewardship, in its many focuses, includes how we utilize our resources to further God's creation. This past October, Grace Lutheran Church directed its Global Mission efforts to the ELCA's "Good Gifts" program.

The catalogs for this cause are available in the narthex, and within its pages, the ELCA explains that over 90% of any gifts goes directly to the pro-

gram. It is worldwide and it directs the gift purchases to where its research shows the most need.

Though this Global Mission at Grace was concluded in October, as good stewards we can continue to keep ourselves aware of what our financial resources can do to alleviate poverty and hopelessness in the U.S. and elsewhere.

From \$10 to buy 10 chicks, \$30 for a piglet, \$750 for a family farm, \$2500 to provide a water well or spring box, the costs are such that almost all of us could participate in some way.

What a blessing of hope where there had been despair.

From the Stewardship Team

Community Breakfast Help Needed

A "new" Breakfast season is about to begin in October. More people in need are expected as the weather up north becomes colder; consequently, more people will be needed to help them. There are many types of jobs to do in the areas of cooking, serving, and cleanup. Did you know that people are needed to go shopping?! Obviously,

that needs to be done ahead of time. Some meal prep can be done on Friday either at your own home or at church with others. Volunteers do not need to be at church doing their "chores" all morning long on the day of the Breakfast either. Depending on the task, a particular job might be only an hour or an hour and a half. Other jobs last for two

hours or more. Whatever you can give. If you do not have much physical stamina, you can sit and visit with our guests – all you have to do is eat! Sharing God's love by means of a meal is the purpose of the breakfast. Please contact Pastor Cox or the church office if you would be willing to help in this special ministry.

From the Deacon's Desk

Holy Moly!!! The holiday season is upon us already. Where does the time go? It's time for family gatherings. Time to go the mall and buy gifts. Time to go to parties. Time to work yourself into a frenzy. I have to buy food for Thanksgiving, buy presents for Christmas. Got to go shopping NOW!! Where are my car keys?? Where the h*** are they???? Oh, there they are. Thank God for that. Thank God for that??? Is that what we are thanking God for, for things like finding our keys?

One of our previous pastors at Grace, gave a Sunday sermon that was only eight words. "We waiver, Jesus doesn't, thank God for that." Those four words, half a sermon, "thank God for that," leads us to ask "thank God for what?"

Sometimes it's easy to take God for granted, to put God in the back seat of the car, and go on with our own lives, get

absorbed with ourselves, especially at this rather hectic time of the year.

With Thanksgiving so near, it is a good idea to ask ourselves "thank God for what?". It's easy to say thank God for everything, because without God, we would not be here. But let us put together a list of some specifics of what we are thankful for.

-We thank God for our health, being able to walk, hear, see; where many cannot.

-We thank God for our loved ones, family, friends, our Grace family; where many are alone or feel alone.

-We thank God for our possessions, things we hold dear, our insignificant treasures; where many are lacking and are in need.

-We thank God for letting us grumble, complain, wish our circumstances would be better, where many would be happy with far less.

As we strive to do God's work, there are acts that we do, but we may not thank God for....

-We thank God for giving us

the opportunity to do His work.

-We thank God for bestowing His blessings on this church, Grace, and our congregation. We are all different at Grace, but as a whole, we are one. One that is fortunate.

-We thank God for the less fortunate, so that we can share God's blessing with them and help them up.

-We thank God for those that are suffering, or have loved ones suffering, so that we can share God's blessing with them, giving them comfort and peace.

And of course, the easy one, we thank God for letting us be, giving us the gift of life, to do His will.

So let's give a shout out to God.

O God, we thank you for your endless blessings, and for letting us strive to do your work. Forgive us when we fail, and keep us humble when we succeed, and, dear God, always bless us all REAL GOOD.

Thank you and amen.

New Deacons Update

On Monday, October 22nd, Iris Saxby and Vicki Eis were approved to become the newest Synod Parish Deacons in the life of our congregation. Planning is underway for their commissioning service some-

time towards the beginning of next year, which will be held as part of our Sunday morning worship. Please keep Iris and Vicki, as well as all of our current Synod Parish Deacons (Connie Puls, Nova

Bickell, Frank Bencivenga, and Susi Roessler) in your prayers. They provide amazing mission and ministry as an extension of Pastor Jeff's ministry to our congregation.

Regular Event Updates

Men of Grace

The Men of Grace now meets on the 1st Thursday of the month, still at Sunset Grill in Clearwater. This month's meeting will be at 9am at the Sunset Grille in Clearwater on Thursday, November 1st.

Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet

The Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet will be held on Saturday, **November 10th** at 9 am. The date of the breakfast has changed to the 2nd Saturday for each month.

Young at Heart

Young @ Heart will be have a one day bus trip to the Two Tails Ranch in Williston, Fl on November 7. A flyer with trip information is in the Narthex. There is still space available so if you are interest contact Florene Bencivenga flovenga@verizon.net or 727 773-2766. Young @ Hearts is open to all.

Children's Church

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

Elizabeth Circle

The Elizabeth Circle will meet on **November 29th** from 1pm-3pm . We meet in the Garden Room and the gate will be open for access. 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 Deacon Connie.

Council Meeting

The next Congregation Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 13th at 6:30 pm in the Garden Room..

November Book Club

The Book Club will meet November 7 in the Garden Room at the usual time of 10:00 am. We will read *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* by Mark Sullivan. This book of historical fiction was written in 2017 and reviewed as one of the

best historical fiction books of 2017. The story is fiction but based on a true story of an Italian teenager named Pino, that gets caught up in the war with the Nazis. I believe you will all want to join us in reading this highly reviewed

book as the author spent an enormous amount of time with the actual main character to make this story available. All are welcome to join. See Vicki Eis with questions or email at veis49@yahoo.com.

Save the Dates: Community Thanksgiving Service @ Grace, Nov. 18th, 7 pm; Annual Christmas Party, Dec 1st, 12 pm.

November Birthdays

11/01 David McClenning
Robert Bergesen
11/02 Daniel Cote
11/05 Christopher Granados
11/11 Cliff Bittner
11/18 Anne Burson
Wendy Roth

11/23 Susi Roessler
Shirley Saitta
11/28 Carol Ann Nugard
Charles Saitta
11/29 Ralph Burson
11/30 Andres Ruiz

November Anniversaries

11/21 John & Kathleen Johnson

Prayer Corner

Tuesday Prayer Chapel

The Prayer Group meets at 11am on Tuesdays in the

Prayer Chapel. Requests for prayer can be made using the

Communion Records in the bulletin.

Prayer List

Prayers are requested for: Linda Almond, Stephanie Adamitis, Pastor Lou & Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Galen & Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria & Tollie Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Kathleen Wacker, Karen Bates, Pam Long, Rev. Lydia Villanueva, Don Eunis, Glen Dumdie, Gladys Calhoun, Lorraine Reinhard, Steve Davis, Kathy Falco, Jill Grote, Pat Hudson, Bonnie Redler, Dianna Frasier, William Mathis, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joey Valentin, Rita Burneik, Ralph Burson, Hilda Taylor, the family and friends of Bill Cutts, Helga Zedalis, and the son of Judy Ishida, all those still suffering from natural disasters especially Hurricane Michael, and those suffering from violence and terror (especially 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.

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

Grace Lutheran Church
1812 N Highland Ave.
Clearwater FL 33755



1812 N Highland Ave.
Clearwater FL 33755

Phone: 727-446-5026
Email: office@graceclw.com

Rev. Jefferson Cox, Pastor

Special Events at Grace in November:

Rummage Sale

Sat. November 3rd, 8 am - Noon

All Saints Sunday and First Communion

Sun. November 4th, 10 am

Community Thanksgiving Service

Sun. Nov. 18th, 7 pm