



**August
2020**

GRACE MESSENGER

Grace Lutheran Church, an ELCA Congregation
19221 Pineville Road, Long Beach, MS 39560
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www.gracelongbeach.com
PASTOR DAVE PARR cell - 423-620-1284
Personal email gracepastordave1@gmail.com

Keith Voigts - Church Council President
Zoom Sunday School - 9 am Adults
Zoom Worship & Communion 10:00 a.m.
Zoom Sunday School Youth - 11:30am
Office Hours: Pastor Dave 9-12 Tues. - Friday
Staff, Tues. All day, Wed.-Fri. 8-12



Our Zoomtastic Pastor



"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
— Hebrews 12:1, 2

Perseverance! In other words, "hang in there!" "Don't quit!" Don't give up!" The author of Hebrews, presumably the Apostle Paul, writes these words of encouragement to an audience of "Hebrew" Christians who are most likely living outside of Israel and in other parts of the Roman Empire. They suffered persecution at the hands of the Roman officials, and possibly by Jewish religious leaders as well. A close reading of Hebrews reveals the discouragement and perhaps disillusionment that some of these Christian converts were beginning to feel. The writer of Hebrews offers much-needed words of encouragement. "Run the race marked out for us" with our eyes fixed on Jesus.

The writer further exhorts us all to "not neglect to meet together," as some had done, but to encourage one another regularly. The hearers of Hebrews needed that encouragement. They needed to be reminded that Jesus was the "author and finisher" of their faith, and was their hope and our strength. We need that same encouragement today. We need to know that Jesus is still with us, that God still loves us, and even in the midst of adversity there is hope.

The early Church was held together by faith and love. Faith that could not be overcome by emperors or by death. Love of God and love for God that could not be suppressed or extinguished by anyone or anything was the "glue" that held them together.

Today we are not threatened by the Empire, nor by any human adversary. The Church has always done battle with the forces of evil, so there is nothing new on that front. But none of us, or least not many of us, have faced this type of invisible and deadly enemy known as Covid-19. Because of this virus, we have had to make many changes in our lives. Our lives have been turned upside down. We are constantly trying to adapt to a "new normal" that keeps changing day by day. We could, and perhaps do, grow weary, and discouraged.

But then we hear the words of hope and encouragement from God's Word! Words such as those quoted here from Hebrews. And the Psalms: *"... weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning."* — Psalm 30:5

For the past several Sundays our benediction has been *"Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, + Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love."* (adapted from Romans 8:38,39)

We might add "nor Covid-19" to the list.

My prayer is that all of us will "hold on" and "hang in there!" My fervent hope is that we will not let this virus, or any other adversary separate us from God or from each other as a congregation.

In the words of the Captain and Tennille: "Love, love will keep us together." (song from 1975)

This is most certainly true!

In Christ,
Pastor Dave

Thank you for serving!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Christians welcoming and serving

The marks of discipleship are to:

- *Pray daily
- *Worship weekly
- *Serve your church & community
- *Relate to others in a small group
- *Read the Bible
- *Give a tithe and beyond

READERS

- 2 Lynn Deegen
- 9 Art Speck
- 16 Judy Hierstein
- 23 Mary West
- 30 Youth Sunday

ASSISTING MINISTER

- 2 Mary West
- 9 Ron Schmidtling
- 16 Judy Hierstein
- 23 Kevin Schultz
- 30 Youth Sunday

TELLERS

- 2 Jarrell/Saglibene
- 9 Schultz/Luzadder
- 16 Puckett/Raif
- 23 Voigts/D. West
- 30 Wilson/Deegen



Birthdays in August

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 4 Wanda Branstetter | 20 Janie Dropco |
| 5 Rachel Lacey | 24 Christy Authement |
| 10 Ann Peneguy | Roxanne Cross |
| 12 Sandie Guthans | 25 Kathy Wilson |
| 16 Cheryl Lacey | 28 Mike Collins |
| Jonathan Ruoss | 29 Kathy Lee Peterson |
| 19 Rebekah Rush | |



Anniversaries in August

- 7 Fred/Lynn Deegen



Outreach Ministry - Pete Raif

On July 23rd, Pastor Dave, Candis and I delivered Granola bars, Fruit bars and Domino's cards to the Long Beach Police Department. We were welcomed by several officers, pictures were taken and posted on their Facebook page. This is just one small way we could show our appreciation for all they do! Thank you for your contributions!

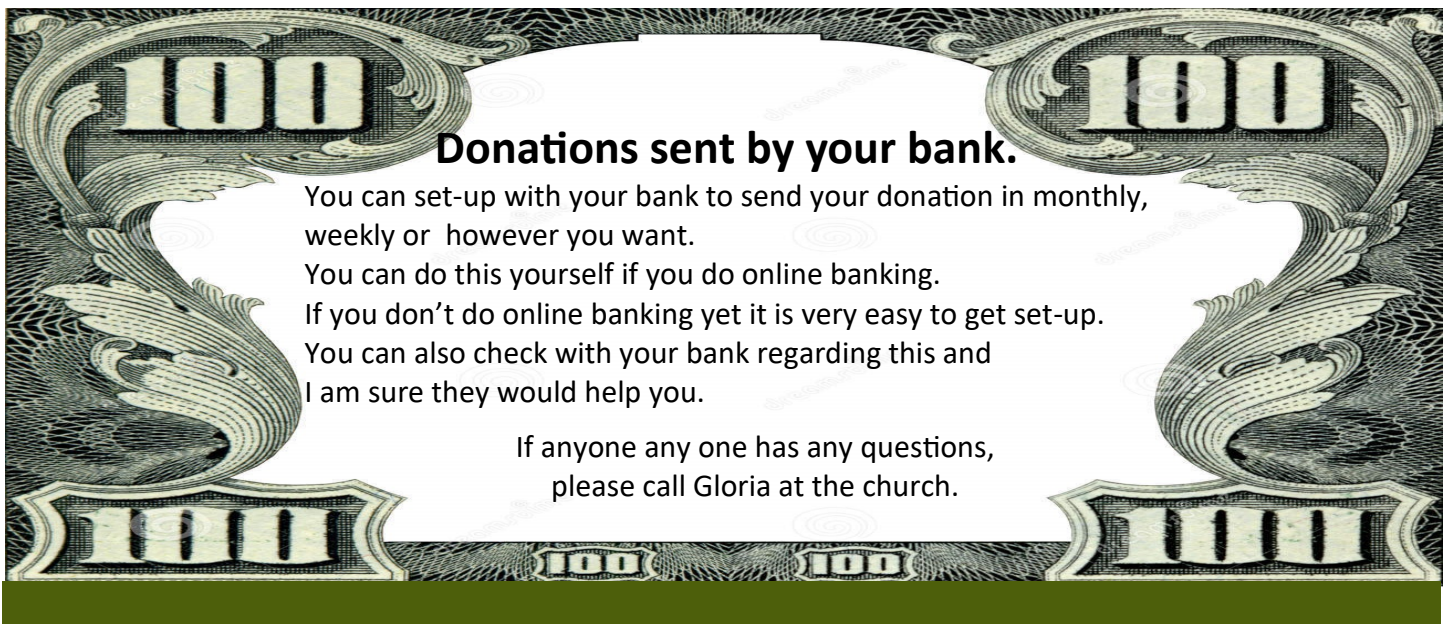
School starts August 6th (maybe) and school supplies will be needed at some point! Please check the supply lists in July's newsletter. Supplies may be dropped off at the church on Sundays and Wednesdays when you come for Communion. The basket in the Narthex has a few items already, more would be appreciated!



Donations sent by your bank.

You can set-up with your bank to send your donation in monthly, weekly or however you want.
You can do this yourself if you do online banking.
If you don't do online banking yet it is very easy to get set-up.
You can also check with your bank regarding this and I am sure they would help you.

If anyone any one has any questions,
please call Gloria at the church.





Comments from our president ~ Keith

The way I understand it, this Covid-19 virus thingee is represented by gazillions of little “cells” that go from person to person either directly or indirectly. They then live not only in the first person, but in the new person as well, to affect that person and start the cycle all over again.

Imagine that those little cells are the Holy Spirit floating around (you know, the part of the Triune God that fills us with love for Him and the ability to pray, praise and witness, among other things). This person to person distribution of the Holy Spirit is how God’s word is spread.

Now, (stick with me, I’m trying to make a point here), the difference in the two types of cells is that we try to suppress Covid by masks, separation and other activities. We do not want it to spread! But such activities used for the Holy Spirit cells keep them from spreading also.

I am a German descendant, and like most Northern European cultures, most especially Lutherans, we are not good at hugging, expressing ourselves and issuing gushing comments (Gwenn is an exception, so she doesn’t apply to this analysis!). When it comes to witnessing, we just put on those masks and distance ourselves as fiercely as we treat those nasty Covid cells. We just cannot help ourselves, even though those Holy Spirit cells are tremendously eager to get out and spread.

The next time you have a chance to express your relationship with God, go hide that mask, close the 6-foot gap and let those cells do their work. They are in you, so let them help you spread them far and wide!!



SUNDAY
SCHOOL
KICKOFF



Christian Education ~ Lisa Speck

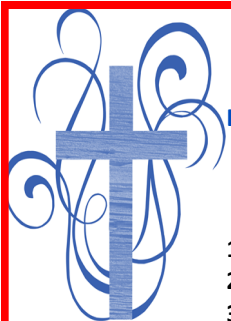
Sunday School for the new 2020-2021 school year will begin on Sunday August 23 at 11:00 a.m. or right after church Zoom meetings. Sunday school will again be on Zoom and letters were sent out to parents of children who want to participate and receive Sunday School material packets through regular mail.

Parents, please return letters so that we can an accurate count of children. We look forward to helping our children learn more about **GOD**.



Stephen Ministry

We all experience challenges in life. There are times when we could benefit from the support of a caring Christian friend that will keep our visits confidential. Stephen Ministers are ready to provide the emotional and spiritual care one needs when faced with a difficult time. If you, or someone you know in the congregation or community, could benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister, please call or ask the person to call the numbers below. Stephen Ministry is **CONFIDENTIAL**
Contact: Linda Johnson 504-433-4768 or Pastor Dave Parr 423-620-1284.



READINGS FOR AUGUST

Date	Sundays After Pentecost	1 st Reading	Psalm	2 nd Reading Romans	Gospel of Matthew
2	9th	Isaiah 55:1-5	145:8-9, 14-21	9:1-5	14:13-21
9	10th	1 King 19:9-18	85:8-13	10:5-15	14:22-33
16	11th	Isaiah 56:1, 6-8	67	11:1-2a, 29-32	15:10-28
23	12th	Isaiah 51:1-6	138	12:1-8	16:13-20
30	13th	Jeremiah 15:15-21	26:1-8	12:9-21	16:21-28

LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYERS FOR....

Kevin Baker, Rose Bearson, Gracie Blair, Jennifer Bonstaff, Charles Busby, Henry Branstetter, Erica Broussard, Peggy Broussard, Jan Bruner, Charissa, Cynthia Chadwyck, Vivian & Mike Collins, Alice Crandall, Cole Crane, Susan Cross, Robert Crowley, Anita Cruz, Richard Cuevas, Gina Dale, Timothy Davis, Toni Davis, Angie Dedrickson, Christie Deshotel, Joe Dunnion, Amberly Favre, Azalee Fullmer, Madelyn Gordon, Vickey Gordon, John Guthans, Jackie Haygood, Devon/Emily Head, Debbie/Billy Hennessy, Steve Hiles, Brenda Hiles, Sherry Holbrook, Pat Holliday, Stan Hoard, Miriam Hurdle, Peggy Jefcoat, Mike Johnson, Carmela Jones, Palmer Jones, Peggy King, Larry Kirtwright, Larry/Sarah Koehn, Debra Kotzen, Cheryl Lacey, Breanna Ladner, Patti Lastorka, Patricia Lindsey, Lois Long, Mary Ann Maggard, Janie Malley, Betty Marshall, Lindsey Mays, Cindy Mitchell, Mike/Kathy Pearson, Ann Peneguy, Patience Poupart, Lucy Puckett, Christopher Ryan, Karen Samuelson, Karen/Kim Schultz, Corky Sidell, Ruth Spera, Larry Strohsack, Rita/Boyd Swenson, Ted, John Thompson, Maggie Tirrell, Gorie Thomas, Jeff Turner, Juanita Vann, Gwenn Voigts, Doris Weaver, Brantley West, Kacey Jade West, Janyce Westerman, Dolly Willams, Larry Wilson,

**Deployed & Active Military ~ Victims of Domestic Abuse ~ All who have been furloughed
All Medical Personnel and First Responders**



June Financial Report - Duane Wilson

Finances for Grace improved in June. Net General Fund income in June was \$20,386, while expenses were \$14,190. There were no unusual budget expenditures in June. We did receive a large contribution from a member that we are spreading out over the remainder of the year. To meet the 2020 budget, our income needed each month is \$16,610. **This does include the PPP loan receipt. Contributions YTD are \$1,758 above required budget.**

Restricted fund account activities were fairly active in June. Grace Food Pantry received \$290 in donations with expenses of \$248. Good Samaritan expended \$150 to assist members and others in need with no donations.. The Service Project Fund had no activity in June. These Restricted funds will continue to be used to help members and others in the community in need.

The June Financial Summary is posted in the hallway if you'd like to review the finances in more detail. We should all be thankful for our financial stability, challenge ourselves to turn the decline in Finances around, and continue to pray for the council and financial health of our church so that we can continue to support our church mission and outreach. Please remember to support our church financially during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Worship Committee - Candis Raif

As we continue with our services using Zoom, please consider using the video option so we can see each other as we worship. Also, remember that we all need to "mute our mikes" because there is too much out-of-sync feedback when we don't mute. We can't respond and sing together (yet)! Adult Bible Study has resumed at 9:00am on Sundays and following the Wednesday night service.

If you would be interested in singing the first and last verse of the hymns at the church during the Zoom service on Sunday, please let Ingrid know. We can't have a group of people doing this, so you would be singing solo at the Clavinova while Ingrid plays.

We still need readers for each service. You do not have to be at the church to read. This can be done from home via Zoom. You will receive a copy of the bulletin and readings. If you can participate as a reader, please let Carrie Carrubba know. For Assisting Ministers, we will use the AM schedule as it stands. If for some reason you are not able to serve, please find a substitute and advise Gloria of the change.

Thank you for continuing to participate via Zoom!



August Service / Liturgy Schedule

August 2, ~ 9th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21 ... like us in times of sadness, Jesus seeks solitude after John the Baptist is murdered—but unlike us He does not remain and let his grief dismiss those who need him

August 9, ~ 10th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33 ... although Matthew's gospel often portrays Jesus' disciples as people of "little faith", this passage reflects how Jesus comes to the disciples when they are in trouble and sustains them in their time of doubt and fear.

August 16, ~ 11th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Gospel: Matthew 15:10-28 ... Jesus teaches his disciples that true purity is a matter of heart—not outward religious observances...and it's immediately tested when a woman, and an 'outsider' approaches Jesus for help.

August 23, ~ 12th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20 ... In this climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" ... and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the gates of hell.

August 30, ~ 13th Sunday after Pentecost (Green) – 5th Sunday/Youth Sunday

Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28 ... Following Peter's confession of Jesus as "the Messiah, Son of the living God" (Matt 16:16 from last week), Jesus reveals the ultimate purpose of his ministry with words that prove hard to accept—even for the disciple Jesus called a "rock".

Mid-week Worship Schedule

Midweek Worship adapted from "Evening Prayer" on Zoom at 7 pm

August 5, 12, 19, 26

Our Old Testament Bible Study continues, following worship.

All are invited/encouraged to stay connected!