



**TOWER
ECHOES
2024**

From the Pastor,

Pentecost was May 19. It celebrates the gifting of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Acts 2 speaks of a violent wind and tongues of fire.

I think this Acts story was necessary because the disciples were not moved enough when Jesus just breathed upon them the Holy Spirit and gave them the directive to forgive (John 20:19-23). In John 21 Peter is bored and goes back to his previous way of life and says “I’m going fishing”. Jesus cooks the disciples breakfast and reminds them to feed God’s sheep with God’s word.

Sometimes we just get bored, tired, or just ignore living out our faith for God. Life just becomes so smooth we just coast along without really thinking about God.

That is how I feel about the wind in Nebraska. Some people will complain about how windy it is and it is only about 10 miles an hour. I don’t think I even notice it unless it is 20 miles an hour. I just understand that the wind blows across SE Nebraska and that is how it is.

I believe that is why it took a violent wind to blow into the room for the apostles to notice it. It took tongues of fire floating in the room to get the apostles attention. Fire flies floating outside always get my attention. This was fire of the Holy Spirit landing on them and not burning them. Sometimes God has to get a little wild in our lives just to get our attention. Sometimes a person has to raise their voice at someone in order to get their attention. When we begin to ignore God in our lives, beware how God might have to move in your life just to get you to notice God in your life.

Pastor Jim

Church Seasons: We are now in the Church Season of Sundays (a time) after Pentecost. We will be in the church color of green until the end of the Church year, with the exception of color changes for festival days. The scriptures on Sunday are less concerned about following Jesus to a place like the cross and more concerned about how to follow Jesus in the ordinary times since the Ascension of our Lord into heaven.

Church Festival Days:	June 11 Barnabas, Apostle	June 24 John the Baptist (birth)
	June 25 Presentation of the Augsburg Confession	June 29 Peter and Paul, Apostles

U.S. Holidays:	June 14 Flag Day	June 16 Father’s Day
	June 19 Juneteenth	June 20 Summer Begins
		June 29 Armed Forces Day

GO AND...CELEBRATE!

Okay, so technically I just made that up. The 2023-2024 theme GO AND... has come to an end. The new Synod theme is Cultivate Love. As of this writing, May 13, I do not know how Nebraska Synod intends this theme to play out in 2024-2025. So lets just enjoy June by celebrating **75 years of Grace Lutheran Church** cultivating love in each member, in the church, and in the community.

75th Anniversary Celebration

It's almost June 23rd! Time is flying quickly and we are ready! As of May 26th, we have 219 adults and 17 youth for a total of 236 people joining together to celebrate God's ministry through Grace Lutheran Church! This includes 103 confirmants who have registered, with two from the first confirmation class of 1951 - Greta Evers Holscher and Ramona Fisher Boone. We're also excited to welcome back special guests Sandy Olson, Cheryl Thorberg, and Pastors Chris and Sheryl Kester-Beyer who plan to celebrate with us.

We are still accepting reservations. If someone you know hasn't registered, please encourage them to do so. We will not turn anyone away. However, we need to make sure we have enough chairs in church and our caterer would like as much of an accurate count as possible.

Highlights of the June 23rd celebration include:

- **8:30 a.m.** – Registration is open with coffee, pastries, fruit, and fellowship on the church parking lot. Special music will be provided by the "Grace Notes."
- **10:00 a.m.** – The worship service begins with Nebraska ELCA Bishop Scott Johnson delivering the sermon, John Weber as organist, and Kari Thorberg Borlaug as cantor. A special choir will sing and the youth handbell choir will perform.
- **12 noon** – A catered meal will be served following worship at the JCC-Cook Site new gym. Thank you to Penny Weber for making the cupcakes for dessert and to Alta Bohling, Kris Ebeler, and Eleta Eisenhauer for creating the table centerpieces.

Gators will be available to transport people, if necessary, from the church to the school. Parking at the school initially might help with traffic flow.

There is a signup sheet on the back table in the church asking for donations of pastries and fruit for the coffee bar. Please consider helping in this area.

Through your generous gifts we have now raised \$2550 for the meal. Thank you!

- 75th Anniversary Celebration Committee

PASTOR TRANSITIONS AND CELEBRATIONS OF INTEREST

David DeFreese - Retired

Gary Panko - 50 years

Nathan Metzger - 15 years (Adams)

David Larsen - 60 years

Letter of Transfer for Chris & Sheryl Kester-Beyer to
Rocky Mountain Synod

Pastor will be at Confirmation Camp June 16–21. Call his cell phone if you need to talk to him and he will return the call when he is not around campers—as per camp rules.



I have finished my initial training on how to train the congregation to use simple faith practices to pass on our faith to the children in our lives. May 12 we began by handing out magnets with our QR code on it that when open it will allow you to see this week's activities. Please take advantage each week and give magnets to any parents or grandparents you know that may appreciate doing the activities with their children/grandchildren.

Vacation Bible School 2024

Hosted by: Grace Lutheran, St. Paul's UCC Osage, and Hope Lutheran
All Kids Pre-K through 6th Grade are Invited to Attend.

Where: St. Paul's United Church of Christ (Osage)
3288 R Rd, Cook, NE 68329

When: July 15-19, 2024
5:30 – 7:45 pm each night
Supper provided during VBS.
VBS Kids will perform at the Community Church Service on July 21st!

RSVP: RSVP by June 30 to ensure we have the necessary t-shirts, food, and craft supplies.

Use the QR Code to go directly to registration link or
Email Erin Ebeler (eebeler@gmail.com) or
Carley Goracke (jeremyandcarley@yahoo.com) to request the registration link be sent to you.

No Cost to Attend.



SUNKEN GARDENS TOUR, JUNE 28TH

The Stewardship Committee invites you to join in a tour of Sunken Gardens on Friday, June 28, 2024. The Gardens are located at 2600 D Street, Lincoln, NE. You will witness God's creation reflecting His creativity and splendor. Please meet at the church parking lot. We will leave Cook at 9:15 am. We will share a meal together at Pizza Ranch, 8420 Lexington Ave at 11:30 am. Please RSVP to Cheryl Grundman, 402-873-2468 by text or calling. I must have a meal count by Tuesday morning June 25th.

JUNE

ANNIVERSARIES

- June 1st—Larry & Cheryl Grundman
- June 20th—Carl & Sarah Purcell
- June 21st—Taylor & Sara Kuhl
- June 25th—Travis & Mikaela Thomas

Congratulations to ***Madi & Logan Lang***
on their marriage, May 25th, here at Grace
Lutheran Church.

Blessing on their new life together!



JUNE

BIRTHDAYS

- 3rd - Steve Bridgmon
- 6th - Kaiden Dorn
- 7th - Kenna Thomas
- 10th - Kelly Bridgmon
- 13th - Kyle Wellensiek
- 17th - Karsten Bruns
- 18th - Trevor Brinkman
- 19th - Ann (Moles) Keigher
- 20th - Jack Moles
- 21st - Charlene Helgren
- 25th - Travis Thomas
- 26th - Angie Ekhoff
- 27th - Mitchell Faris
- 29th - Aaron Cropp
- Edgar Dorn
- Taylor Kuhl

June 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
						Synod Assembly @ Kearney June 1 & 2
2	11:00 am Synod Assembly Worship @ Grace Lutheran—11:00 in the Church Basement—Live Streaming	3	4	5	6	7
9	8:30 am Worship	10	Bible Study 2:00 p.m. Church Council 7:00 p.m.	11	12	13
16		17		18	19	20
23	75th Anniversary Celebration	24		25	26	27
30	8:30 am Worship					28
						29

Grace Lutheran Church Council

May 13, 2024

President Bret Wellensiek called the May meeting of the Church Council to order at 7:00 pm with all members, Pastor Helgren and church Secretary/Treasurer Diane Wilken present. Pastor led with an opening prayer.

Minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Cheryl Grundman motioned to accept the minutes, Sarah Purcell 2nd – minutes approved.

Treasurer Diane W. presented the treasurer's report . Sarah Purcell motioned to accept the report, Robin Eggleston 2nd. Motion approved.

Pastor's report:

- LSTC Learning Community complete on Wednesday evenings. Trainings will be moving towards "Synchronous" learning programs.
- Faith forward to begin 5/12/24 making information available to both parents and grandparents.
- Inurnment scheduled for Bill Bohling 5/22/24, Bruce Gerking 5/26/24. Funeral for Gene Gardner at Wherry's in June.
- Received call from Fidelity Charitable for information.
- Panko wedding 5/25/24 – set up Thursday
- Communion served at Good Sam – 5/2 schedule not yet set.
- April communion for shut-ins
- Provided assistance to Cook resident with OPPD bill.
- Synod assembly – Cultivate Love.
- GO AND ... CELEBRATE is the June theme for Grace.
- Two young people confirmed. Kael Fricke received into membership by Letter of Transfer from Hope.

Correspondence – none

Committee reports

Property – Window repairs complete. Committee working with Dave Smith on mulch around trees prior to anniversary.

Worship, Evangelism & Fellowship – Owen and Nick are going to paint the sign in the park. Anniversary preparations continue.

Parish Ed & Young People. Last Kids for Christ and Sunday School for the summer. Bible school planning underway, Melissa is doing music. Bells practice will begin. Kids for Christ will begin later in the fall due to 4 day school schedule.

Stewardship and Memorial – 19 people attended the City Missions tour and lunch. Cheryl will plan a tour of the sunken gardens in Lincoln in relation to the Litany in Nature studies. Date to be announced.

Old Business:

- Worship Duty – Jody – 19th, Carl – 26th. Volunteers needed for upcoming services.
- 75th anniversary committee – To date: 209 adults, 13 youth and 4 kids are registered to attend the celebration. Information submitted to both Syracuse and Tecumseh papers.

New Business

- Mission Festival – Hope Oct, 13th 10 am
- Church Cleaning – council will clean beams on 6/9/24 following worship to allow time for deep clean before celebration.
- VBS – Pastor West primary instructor.
- Noisy Coin offering for March, April and May will be designated to Carol Joy Holling . Robin motioned, Cheryl 2nd.
- Next meeting – Monday 6/10/24 at 7 pm. Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Jody Wellensiek, secretary

Information about Tanzanian Students we are sponsoring in 2024

All 4 children that we are sponsoring attend the Nronga Secondary School in Tanzania. The Nronga Secondary School is owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Northern Diocese, and is located on the northwest side of Mt. Kilimanjaro, in a rural area of Moshi. Student who study at Nronga board there from January to early December, with holiday breaks at Easter and during the month of June. Nronga educates students in Forms 1-4, as well as Advanced Levels 5-6.

The headmaster for our students is Elirehema Massawe

Winfreda Mongi

Winfreda is a Form 3 student, both parents are deceased and her Grandmother Monica Mongi, who is a farmer, is her guardian. She has 4 siblings, enjoys playing sports and her Career Goal is Education.

On a side note: Winfrida is from the Karansi Parish, where Sarah & Carl Purcell visited for worship and helped to hand out Bibles during their trip to Tanzania.

Anna Emanuel

Anna is a Form 3 Student, and she is now 16 years old. Anna is a student that we sponsored last year. Her mother Eunice Philipo is a peasant and her father is deceased. She has 3 siblings , enjoys dancing and her Career Goal is to be a Teacher.

Evance Sam

Evance is another Form 3 Student and is 18 years old. He also is a student that we sponsored last year. He has 5 siblings and both of his parents are deceased. He is interested in becoming a Church Leader and enjoys singing church music.

Vanessa Moshi

Vanessa is a previous student of our sponsorship last year. She is 19 years old and is a Form 4 student. Her mother is Jenipha Eliya is a peasant and her father is deceased. She has an Uncle Sadick Juma who is her guardian. She has one sibling and her interest is studying and her Career Goal is in Education/Teacher.



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