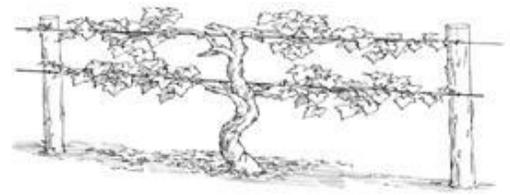


THE GRACE VINE

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



"I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit" John 15:5

JUNE 2018

Rev. Timothy Spence, Pastor

Home Telephone: 304-905-6188 - gracelutheranwheeling@comcast.net

Called by God's grace, we commit to a life of worship, service, and discipleship in the name of Jesus Christ

FROM THE PASTOR

As we move into June after Synod Assembly and the Strawberry Festival, life at Grace starts to slow down. A couple of groups still meet through the summer, but mostly we recognize the slower pace of life in the "lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer" and acknowledge that people are vacationing and not as available.

The focus of our communal life shifts to worship, with Sunday morning being our primary activity.

Or does it?

We recognize that church attendance drops in the summer as other things compete with our time. In fact, time seems to be the one thing that is in short supply for so many of us.

Which brings us back to the question of stewardship.

I know: You're probably thinking "Huh? How did we get from talking about time to talking about money?"

The old prayer from the Lutheran Book of Worship (and still in Evangelical Lutheran Worship) uses this language, "We offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us: Our selves, OUR TIME, and our possessions. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Stewardship is not just about money. It's about all that we have - our beings, our stuff, our money, our talents, and our TIME. We are called to use ALL of that for God's good and gracious purposes.

So this summer, as you travel, go to reunions, festivals, celebrations, and go on vacation, remember to give back to God some of the time that God has given to you. Even if you can't make it to worship, take some time for devotions, for family prayer, for Bible or devotional reading, and for your offering of "prayer, praise, and thanksgiving".

God rejoices as we act as good stewards of all of God's good gifts to us, including the gift of time!

See you in church!

WELCOME!

We extend a warm welcome to Mrs. Shirley Johnson, who assumed her duties as our new secretary on May 7. Shirley comes to us with a background as both a legal secretary and a church secretary.

A Glen Dale resident, Shirley is a veteran and a grandmother, and is married to Sergeant Major Johnson, a Blackhawk Helicopter Flight Engineer (and, coincidentally, who works with Council member Casey Young).

Shirley is in the office Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM until noon. Stop in some day to say hello and welcome!

GRACE GUYS

Because of the Strawberry Festival, Grace Guys will not meet in June. Thanks to the guys who helped with so many projects on May: Cleaning out the storage room, replacing light bulbs, finishing the Youth Room, building new storage for costumes, AV materials, and paper products, repairing the damaged ceiling from the AC leak, and readying the Community meeting room.

SUMMER MUSIC

With the arrival of summer our choirs are taking a break. Thanks to all the singers, ringers, shakers, drummers, fiddlers and fluters who provided music to enrich our worship over the past year.

Volunteers are being recruited to provide special offertory or prelude music on a Sunday of their choice during the summer months. If you would be willing to share your talents, please speak to Interim Director of Music Laurie Spence.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Thanks to all of those who gave faithfully and generously of their time to make this past year's Sunday School a success. Our last classes were held on May 20.

Classes will resume on September 16 with a special opening and a new (second) class for adults, along with classes for confirmands, preschool, and elementary-aged children. Don't neglect to take this opportunity to "grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God".

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Grace's annual Strawberry Festival will be held on June 9, 2018. All proceeds from the event after expenses will be donated to local charities.

Volunteers will be needed on June 7 and 8 to help bake cakes, cut up strawberries, and set up tables. Sign-up sheets are out for volunteers for all or part of the day to help with food, games, clean-up, and other parts of the day. Sign up now to help with this major charity event.

ASK THE PASTOR

Question: Somebody said something about heretics and I got to wondering: What exactly is a heretic? Are there any heretics around today?

Answer: WOW! A really great and complicated question!

A heretic is someone who believes or promotes teachings or practices contrary to what the official teaching of the church is. In deciding who is a heretic or what is heresy we have to make a distinction between dogma and doctrine. In an oversimplified way, dogma is what you have to believe. Doctrine is what we and maybe some other folks believe but which is open to critique or interpretation.

Let me give you a quick example: The crucifixion and resurrection are dogma. The Third Use of the Law is doctrine.

Having said that, most definitions of heresy exist in the world of dogma (although there are churches that make violating doctrine equal to heresy). There are several classic heresies that keep popping up over the centuries, albeit in different forms. At least in Europe and America we no longer burn people at the stake for being heretics. Today we probably call them "seekers".

So the short answer is yes, there are still heretics today. The problem is that, without a strong understanding of the Christian faith, most heretics don't know they are heretics and think they are perfectly normal Christians. This is one of the reasons why on-going, life-long Christian education is so important!

I don't think there is a Heretics for Dummies. But there is a book in the "Armchair Theologian" series entitled Heretics for Armchair Theologians. The books are easy to read and fairly short and concise. If we don't have that in our library, I'll make sure Christian Ed gets that one added to our library list.

Meanwhile, since you asked, I'll be starting a regular column for about six months on the classic heresies and how they manifest themselves today.

Look for an article later in this newsletter on "Adoptionism", and as always, thanks for asking!!!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Planning for this year's Hilltop Community Vacation Bible School has begun. VBS will tentatively be held from July 15 to 19 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. All children who are at least 3 years old, up to those who have completed Grade 6 are invited and encouraged to attend.

This year we will be on a "Journey to Babylon", where we will meet the prophet Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and learn about how they coped with being commanded to worship false Gods. We will find out what happens when Daniel is thrown into the Lion's Den by the King!

This year's program is similar to last year's, in that much of what happens occurs in the Market Place. Volunteers are needed to work with a variety of crafts and topics, including leather working, basket making, astronomy, food, gardening, and jewelry making, along with actors and actresses to help tell the story of what life was like in Babylon during the exile for Daniel and his friends.

If you would be willing to help on one or more nights, please speak to Evelyn Birch or Pastor Spence.

HERESY OF THE MONTH: ADOPTIONISM

Adoptionism is the belief or teaching that Jesus as the Son of God was not begotten of the Father and had no pre-existence as the Son of God, but was a mortal, human being who was adopted by God the Father because he was perfect. The adoption came (probably) at Jesus' baptism when the voice from the cloud says, "This is my son."

The problem with adoptionism is that it flies in the face of Christ being both God and Man, and upends the willing sacrifice of the Son of God for the sake of the world. It is a direct rejection of the idea of the Incarnation, of God taking on human form and becoming one of us in order to know our pain and pleasure and to die for the sins of the whole world.

It also opens the possibility that if you just live a really good life, you too could be adopted by God because you are perfect, which is contrary to the doctrine of original sin, thereby rejecting the idea that the world is in need of redemption because it has fallen away from what God intends it to be due to human disobedience and rebellion.

Adoptionism is still around today, but in very subtle forms. Folks who say that you just need to be a good person and that will be enough for God are closet adoptionists, denying both original sin and our need for the cross. Other adoptionists include those who say that Jesus was a really good person whom God rewarded and if we're just really good people God will reward us in the same way.

Listen for language that denies Jesus' divinity, pre-existence, advocates the possibility that we, too, can be perfect like Jesus, and denies the need for the cross, and you've probably found an adoptionist!

Next month: *Pelagianism*

THINGS TO REMEMBER/ONGOING ACTIVITIES

CANS FOR WATCH

Grace members are collecting aluminum cans for WATCH. They will crush, recycle, and use the proceeds for client events. Please bring them at any time, and place them in the large box behind the kitchen door.

RIESBECK GIFT CARDS

Riesbecks Gift Cards to benefit Thrivent are available from either Judith Myers or Tami Tysk.

GAME DAY

A free Game Day is held on the last Thursday of every month, between 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM. You can play our games or bring your own. For more information, call 304-233-2990 or 304-242-2632.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

Save "Box tops for Education" from food and other products for our "Partners in Education" partner, Bethlehem Elementary School. "Box tops" can be left in the bin under the Welcome Desk.

PRAYER LIST

**Ryan Deegan
Henri Fontaine
Faith Hartzell
Stephanie Moore-Vetanze
Zane Neuhardt
Becky Holinghead
Jodi Ennis (Hunt)
Michael & Brittany Shank
Carolyn Palverini**

**Hines Rotriga
Amelia DaGrava
George Myers
Addison Lucas
Howard Shackelford
Barbara Knollinger
Betty June Wymer
Stacy Tysk
Bob Condron**

**Betty Swartz
David Ausdenmoore
Thelma Moore
Cindy Roshak
Joan Shelek
Keith McMannis
Susan Falbo
Bill Scholley
Anita Schunn**

*****On Military Duty*****

**Justin Mull
Parker Euri**

Brian Coughlan

Casey Young

HOMEBOUND

Lois Huffner
Mound View Health Care
2200 Floral St.,
Moundsville, WV 26041

Mabel Winesburg
218 Elm Crest Drive
Wheeling, WV 26003

Rebecca Frazier
55801 Canna-Mara Dr
Bellaire, OH 43906

Donald Carl
Carriage Inn
308 West Warren Street
Room Shay 13
Cadiz, OH 43907

Debbie Hawkins
Peterson Rehabilitation Hosp.
20 Homestead Ave.
Wheeling, WV 26003

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Betty June Wymer	June 3
Sean Young	June 4
Mary Stees	June 5
Caitlin Skiba	June 7
Vicki Crawford	June 7
Gregory Sgroi	June 9
Brody Smith	June 9
Rebecca Frazier	June 13
Jessica Sedilko	June 15
Jo Ellen Albers	June 16
Christopher Schenkel	June 16
Bob McClure Jr.	June 18
Mary Lou Tush	June 20
Cadence Maguire	June 21
Debbie Talbert	June 21
Michael Carl	June 22
Cassandra Blaschak	June 23
Thomas McGaughy	June 27
Cheryl McClure	June 29
Willie Talbert	June 30
Andrew Nelson	June 30

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

Jay and Kathy Wallace	June 3
Steve and Elaine Sedilko	June 11
Dennis and Donna Niess	June 16
Pastor and Laurie Spence	June 19
Jim and Tami Gallaher	June 19
Butch and Debbie Talbert	June 24
Lutz and Doris Albrecht	June 24
Brad and Nancy Weeks	June 29
Robert and Bertha Loth	June 29

GRACE COUCIL- 2018

Nancy Weeks	Mike Carl
Lutz Albrecht	Kathy Sheller
Brian Crawford	Casey Young
Marjorie Wolf	Tami Gallaher
Dennis Niess	

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
16 RIDGECREST ROAD
BETHLEHEM
WHEELING, WV 26003

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SAVE THE DATE!

Fourth of July Picnic and Sing-along

July 1 after worship

Hilltop Community Vacation Bible School

"Journey to Babylon"

July 15-19, 2018, 6:30 to 8:00 PM

Congregational Picnic at Bethlehem Park

September 9, 10:30 AM