

august 2020 | volumen 44 | number 1 | milwaukee, wisconsin (USA)

Grace Notes

A publication of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church—LCMS

WELCOME BACK
FATHER'S HOUSE

TO
OUR



WE'RE HERE
AGAIN

The Church was never closed

Page 2 | Pastor's Corner

Grace elected new officers

Our last Voters Meeting approved the election of Terry Donaldson, President; Dave Biermann, Vice President; Brenda Nitz, Financial Secretary; and Jim Barndt, Director of Trustees (period 2020—2024). In the same way, Randy Schuppe, Jim Beyer, Art Socha, Chester Zbrozek, Dave Gaus, Randy Huolihan, Nate Hamilton, Kenny Lovas and Eduardo Pizarro were elected as church elders until 2024. (Page 4)

www.GRACE-OK.org

Together
IN CHRIST
WORSHIP SERVICES
EVERY SUNDAY | 9AM & 11AM

GRACE: 3030 W. OKLAHOMA AVENUE, MILWAUKEE, WI. 53215

WWW.GRACE-OK.ORG

3030 W. Oklahoma Av. Milwaukee, WI. 53215



a letter from pastor novelli

The church was never closed, because Jesus' heart is open for us

*"I thank my God every time
I remember you, constantly
praying with joy in every one
of my prayers for all of you,
because of your sharing in the
gospel from the first day until
now. I am confident of this,
that the one who began a
good work among you will
bring it to completion by the
day of Jesus Christ. It is right
for me to think this way about
all of you, because you hold
me in your heart..."
Philippians 1:3-7)*

My beloved brothers and sisters in the true faith... my community, my church, my family. The past four months have not been easy for anyone. Our city, our nation, and the entire world have been shaken by a strange and invisible enemy that, once inside our body, is capable of damaging us, hurting us, paralyzing us, and unfortunately more than half a million people across the planet were not able to survive the power of this plague.

As I write these lines, what comes to my mind is my great friend and primary physician, Dr. Leonardo Aponte, one of my first friends when I moved to Wisconsin, and

who died a few weeks ago from COVID-19. I also think of our brother Kenny Lovas, who the Lord protected when he was in intensive care for several days, after being infected by this deadly virus. I thank God for protecting him and all of us.

What's happening right now is not a lie nor a political problem... this is real, this exists, and the worst mistake we can make now is to try to diminish its importance and relevance in today's world.

Today, as we follow all the prevention protocols, which we must already know, we continue to trust God, the Creator of life and all things, who promises to take care of us and be with us always. And I know that He has been

there, with us, especially in these last four months.

About 20 weeks ago, when all this started and we had to cancel all our activities, our Grace Community was not paralyzed. Maybe we had to close the doors of our building, but the church was not closed for a single minute. On the contrary, we had to open the doors to creativity, innovation, and the new technological alternatives that today's world offers us.

As social media was filled with bad news, we began to share the hope, comfort, and life that springs from the gospel, the good news, God's Word ... when everyone spoke of death and suffering, we continued to proclaim Jesus, the God of life, the One who died on the cross, but who was resurrected to bring us back to eternal life.

The church was not closed because during these 20 weeks, GRACE opened the Bible, and we placed our trust in the promises that we find there. The church was not closed because Jesus' heart remains open for us.

Immediately after canceling our activities in person, we began broadcasting our weekly devotions on our Facebook page and on our website. First once a week, and then up to three times a week. We did this in English and also in Spanish.

Simultaneously, we began to get in touch with our congregation families. Almost all of you received my phone calls, text messages, emails, etc. ... a couple of weeks later, our church leaders started calling all of our members. This is something we have continued as we continue to pray for people, visit them, and be there for them.

Although the building was closed ... the church was not.

On June 21, following the orders and the guidelines of the city, and following the strictest security protocols as recommended by experts, we decided to reopen our doors for in person weekly celebrations. We added one more service every Sunday, since we wanted to have small groups that did not exceed 25% of our full capacity. Meanwhile, we continued with online streaming for those who could not come and preferred to see it on their electronic devices. Some people have received pastoral visits, and others - who do not have a computer at home - have received a CD with weekly preaching to listen to on their audio equipment.

As you can see, the church was not closed at all, but we continue to walk into the world proclaiming the good news of Jesus in ways that we never imagined years ago.

Generosity did not stop in these months either. Our GRACE people continued to work for the church, our leadership continued to be involved, praying for one another, helping one another, and serving the church in an amazing way. Many of our members continued to send in their weekly contributions, some donated money to help those most in need, and the church leadership continued to donate their time and talents for the kingdom mission.

I must confess that although these past 20 weeks have been perhaps the most difficult of my life, and of my ministry as a pastor, God has

used all of you —my beloved church—to fill me with encouragement, faith, and very beautiful feelings. . I am very proud of you and of what we are capable of doing together.

I know that the future is uncertain. If we look back for a moment, we realize that we had to cancel our plant sale, our special celebrations, the Vacation Bible School, our annual picnic, and many activities that we had planned for this 2020. If we look forward, we have no idea what will happen. What we do know, and I want you to have no doubt on this, is that God will be with us, because the church never closes, but —just as the heart of God— it remains open to embrace all of us. Churches are not places, or buildings... the Church is the people of God.

Starting on August 2nd, GRACE will return to our regular service hours, every Sunday at 9:00am and 11:00am. We trust God that as we face this storm, we must always be certain that He is in the boat with us. In Him is our faith, our hope, and our joy.

Let's keep loving and respecting each other ... let's keep praying for each other, and let's keep trusting God. As Saint Paul says, in Romans 8:28 ... ***"Now we know that God arranges all things for the good of those who love him, that is, those whom he has called according to his purpose."***

God bless you today, tomorrow and forever...

Your servant,

Pastor Germán Novelli Jr.



Starting on August 2nd GRACE goes back to our regular schedule Every Sunday, 9:00am and 11:00am

On June 29, the voting members of our congregation held the annual church meeting. The reunion was held in our sanctuary, and attendees got to hear the reports from the pastor, the board of elders, and the council of the congregation.

As established by the new constitution, GRACE assembly also elected the members of the council, and the elders, who will be in charge of the church leadership for the next four years.

The Assembly approved the election of Terry Donaldson, President; Dave Biermann, Vice President; Brenda Nitz, Financial Secretary; and Jim Barndt, Director of Trustees. In the same way, Randy Schuppe, Jim Beyer, Art Socha, Chester Zbrozek, Dave Gaus, Randy Huolihan, Nate

Hamilton, Kenny Lovas and Eduardo Pizarro were elected as church elders until 2024.

The installation service is scheduled for August 9th, 2020 at our 9:00am Worship Service.

REGULAR SCHEDULE, SUNDAY | 9AM & 11AM

Another approved resolution gave elders freedom to decide on the schedule of our weekly services. In a subsequent meeting, the elders decided to return to our regular schedule, Sundays at 9:00 am and 11:00 am, starting on August 2nd, and continue to maintain prevention regulations that include the use of masks, social distancing, and the use of antibacterial soap before entering the building, etc.

Following protocols of health and safety, the church is being disinfected before each service, and a team of church leaders are working hard to care for the health of all who come to the congregation.

Remember that before attending to our services, you're asked to contact our offices every week to reserve your seat. You can call (414) 384-3520 or send an email to info@grace-ok.org

FINANCIAL REPORT

During our annual meeting, attendees were able to see a complete financial report through May 31 of this year. To date, the church had a general income of \$75,093 (\$1,698 less than last year), while expenses for the first five months of the year were \$72,813, (\$17,899 less than last year).


Council President, Mr. Terry Donaldson, further reported that the church received the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) emergency loan, with which we were able to continue to pay our payroll and some of our utilities.

In the first days of July, our general income reached \$100,000, which places us in the middle of our race to reach the annual goal of \$200,000, which we have set to achieve before December 31.

On behalf of the entire congregation, we want to thank all church leaders for extraordinary work over the past few years, and especially these past few months.

GRACE also welcomes Bill Low and Lori Winters, who became members of the church at our last voters' meeting. **The next assembly will be held in January 2021.**



 grace - milwaukee

YOU'RE INVITED
IN-PERSON
WORSHIP SERVICES
THIS WEEK

EVERY SUNDAY
9:00am & 11:00am
STARTING ON AUGUST 2

GRACE - MILWAUKEE
3030 W. OKLAHOMA AVE.
MILWAUKEE — WI 53215



TE ESPERAMOS EN LA IGLESIA
CADA DOMINGO 11:00AM

COMUNIDAD DE GRACIA
3030 W. OKLAHOMA AVE.
MILWAUKEE — WI 53215

 COMUNIDAD DE GRACIA - MILWAUKEE

CONÉCTATE IGLESIA EN LÍNEA CADA SEMANA

MARTES | 6:30PM

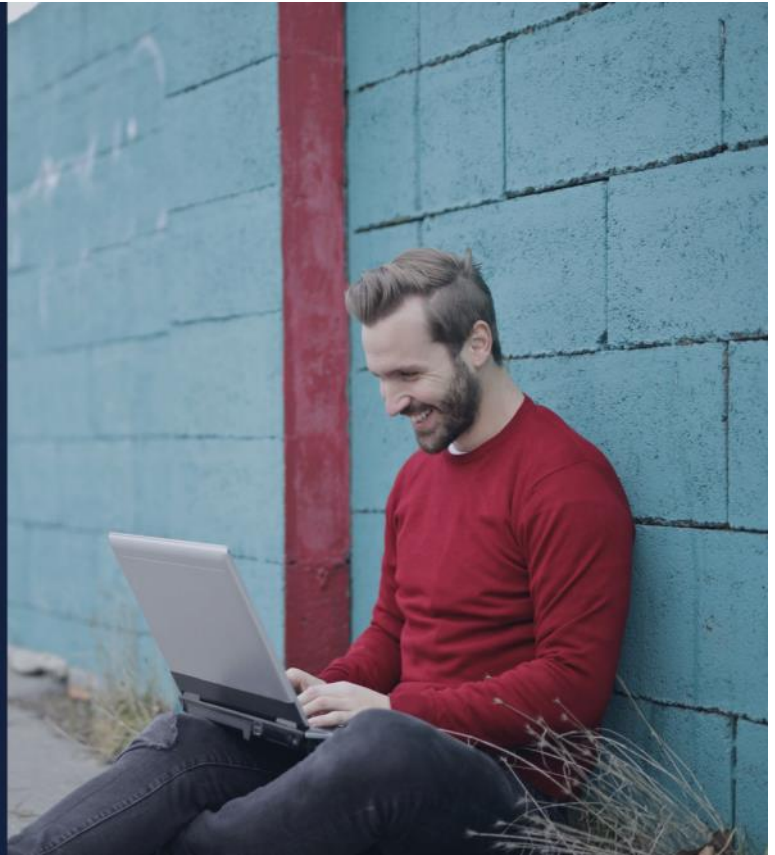
DEVOCIÓN DE LA NOCHE (en facebook)

DOMINGOS | 11:00AM

CELEBRACIÓN DOMINICAL

(puedes vernos en facebook o asistir a la iglesia)

 COMUNIDAD DE GRACIA - MILWAUKEE



JOIN US FOR
CHURCH ONLINE
THIS WEEK

TUESDAY | 6:00PM

EVENING PRAYER (Facebook Only)

SUNDAY | 9:00AM

WEEKLY DEVOTION (Facebook & Website)

 Grace - Milwaukee
www.grace-ok.org

Matthew 13:44-46

(Jesus said) "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it."

When my husband was born in Vietnam, his father broke custom and gave him a lovely name. You have to understand that, in this country full of spiritism and worry about bad luck, people often gave their children bland or even terrible names. If you named your child something good, the thinking went, that would attract demons who would come to see what the good thing was and take it away. So to protect their beloved children, they would name them things like "trash."

But my father-in-law was a Christian, and he wasn't having any of that. "God will protect my children," he said, and he gave them all lovely names. The names reflected the treasures he believed his children to be. And to my husband, the youngest surviving child, he gave the name "Shining bright pearl"—or as we would say it, "pearl of great price."

My father-in-law was thinking of this parable of Jesus—the one where a merchant discovers an incredibly valuable pearl and sells everything he has just to buy it. You may have heard this story told before as an example of how we should treasure the Gospel and give up everything we have to get it. But that's not what Jesus means here. In this parable, Jesus is the merchant looking for pearls; and we are the shining bright pearl He discovers and just has to have—no matter what it costs Him.



And have us He does. He lays aside His heavenly glory and all His power, safety, and comfort in heaven. He becomes a human infant, born into a poor family. He grows up to work hard and wander across the country, teaching and healing the sick. When the authorities come after Him, He submits to an unjust trial and a cruel execution on a cross—knowing that this is the way—the only way—He can redeem us from the power of evil. He pays for us with His own blood.

But that isn't the end of the story. No, now that He has laid down everything He has, even His own life, to have us—now the story takes an upward turn. Jesus rises from the dead—and He brings us with Him. Now that we are His, He refuses to let us out of His hands. Not even death will keep us from Him. In His resurrection, we rise too—because Jesus has promised to give us eternal life with Him forever. He will raise our bodies at the last day, and we will live with Him in joy in the new

heavens and earth He is making. For we are His treasure, and He will never let us be lost.

THE PRAYER: Dear Lord, thank You for treasuring me. Help me to treasure You as well. Amen.

This Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Reflection Questions:

1. When you were a child, what was one of your treasures?
2. What do you treasure now as you are older, and why?
3. What effect does it have on you to realize that God regards you as a treasure, and will give up all He has to have you?

This devotion was taken from Lutheran Hour Ministries website. You can find more daily devotions by visiting: lhm.org

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

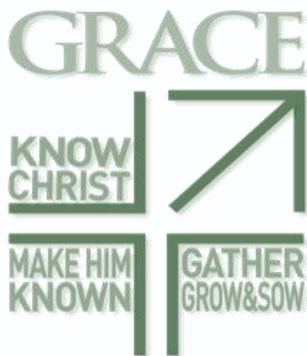
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MILWAUKEE, WI. 53219

Phone: (414) 384 3520

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Happy Birthday

David Ballard	8/2
Jacqueline Hoeft	8/5
Laurie Gemmell	8/6
Jamie Steinke	8/6
Lori Eshleman	8/8
Jacqueline Miller	8/8
Jeffrey Tuler	8/9
Clyde Dartey	8/14
Mark Jubeck	8/16
Michael Schenzel	8/16
Diane LaCourt	8/18
Bernadette Lovas	8/18
Lorene Zolinski	8/18
Elijah Huolihan	8/19
Marilyn Jubeck	8/21
William Draeger	8/22
Debra Dobs	8/22
Amanda Penndragon	8/23
Kathryn Barndt	8/28
Joshua Garcia	8/28
Benjamin Chadwick	8/30
Randy Huolihan	8/30

Happy Anniversary

Don and Karen Ewert	8/1
Jim and Deanna Van Acker	8/6
Jeff and Kathy Tuler	8/9
Ferd and Dori Bahr	8/10
Wayne and Patricia Robertson	8/12
Richard and Colleen Smith	8/16
Jeffrey Jacobson and Lynnette Chadwick	8/21
Jeff and Susan Brahm	8/26
Tom and Linda Ronkowski	8/20