

# Equippier

Equipping God's people as we celebrate, teach, and share God's Grace.



## October 2023

### Pastor's Message

#### ***"Gathering Together as the Church"***

***" [Jesus says], 20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)***

Who would have ever thought that gathering in the name of Jesus would become a political statement with cultural and even legal ramifications? During the COVID shutdowns of 2020, the Mayor of Chicago sent police to harass worshippers who were gathering for worship, punishing them for worshipping behind locked doors. Those locked doors were their routine, not to evade the Covid police, but due to the weekly struggle of preventing gang violence, even on Sunday morning. (The Mayor also put \$500 tickets on the cars of these faithful worshippers, many of whom also happened to be poor.) Then there was the government harassment of churches in Minnesota. Merely to worship publicly, Lutheran and Catholic leaders had to write the Governor of Minnesota and demand that they be treated equally as another "essential business" to the community, essential like liquor stores, malls, and casinos! (These politicians had forgotten that the church is the only constitutionally protected entity of them all.) Even worse, church leaders in California were threatened with arrest and jail, just for gathering God's people together in worship. So, why did the church risk the coercive punishment of the overreach of the state in order to gather in worship? Because there is power and purpose in gathering together in the name of Jesus, both for ourselves and our culture!

There were nefarious reasons for many of the shutdowns around the country. Why would these government leaders target the church so determinedly when gatherings to protest and even riot were treated with amazing indifference? Let's not go there right now because gathering together in worship is way more important than politics. So, in this devotion, let's focus anew on the blessing of gathering together in God's presence to worship the Lord who comes to forgive and to give abundant life in His Name. As believers in Jesus, we earnestly desire to meet together "in person," for different reasons than other groups. There is power in gathering together around God's Word and Sacraments which provide the very gifts of God to create and sustain our faith. Today, let's recommit ourselves to gathering as God's people in Jesus' name, hearing the "power" of God's Word for life and salvation.

God created us to be a gathering people. He wants us to gather with family, with friends, and with those we love. He especially wants those relationships to be centered upon and resourced by Him, by His love and His Word. Contact matters, hugs matter, handshakes matter, pats on the back matter, kneeling with each other matters. So also receiving the Word of God in our ears through the reading of Scripture, as well as in our mouths in Holy Communion and splashed on our bodies in Baptism, matters.

If the years of the pandemic taught us anything, it demonstrated that “*isolation*” is not healthy for people. We were made to be together, to gather together, and to live life “*face to face*.” The social scientists and the psychologists agree! Isolation, like that which we were compelled to experience, had and still has real risks. Social isolation is already causing a rise in mental health issues, in substance abuse issues, and even in domestic violence issues. It’s just as the Bible says. Even in the perfect creation of God, “*It is not good for the man to be alone*” (Genesis 2:17a).

The power of our gathering is much more than merely being together again. The power of our gathering results from the fact that the Lord chooses to dwell with us. Where two or three gather in His name, He is there in our midst! He promises to be “*really present*” in the Law/Gospel Words of the Bible, in the waters of Baptism, in the bread and the wine, so that you can hear, touch, and even “*taste and see*” how good the Lord is for you and me by grace through faith (see Psalm 34:8). The Jesus we worship never let anything get in the way of His coming “*all the way*” to where we are to love us. For example, He willingly and intentionally made His way to the lepers of His day, touching them with His love when no one else would even draw near (e.g., Luke 5:12-13; 17:11-19). He made up His own mind as to how He would exercise His freedom to love others into His Kingdom.

I’m not casting “*shadow*” on those who struggled with the risks of COVID-19, especially when we were uninformed about the breadth of its risks. My point is to remind us that when we gather now, it is not really to make a political, medical, or even a cultural point. We gather because our Lord Jesus invites us. He is truly present, gathering us to Himself to bless us with His Word and His love in community as His body. And there is nothing like receiving that “*bear hug*” of grace from our Lord Jesus who lived, died, and rose again so that you might live forever with Him! With all that we face today, culturally and politically, let us gather in the presence of the one who is “*the way, the truth, and the life*” (John 14:6).

Prayer— *Dear Lord Jesus, protect us from the enduring dangers of the pandemic and of isolation. Bless us as we gather around your Word and Sacraments, receiving and sharing the love that only You can give. Amen.*

See you in worship,

Pastor Taggatz

*Please note, Pastor will be out of the office from October 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 25<sup>th</sup> for the SWD Pastor Conference.*

**All Saints Day**—Any members who would like to recognize those of the Christian faith who have fallen asleep in Jesus this last year from November 2022 to the present, please let our church office know by Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup>. We will be remembering the saints who have gone to heaven in a special All Saints Day worship service on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

### **Choir at Grace**

Choir practice will be starting on Thursday evenings beginning on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Kathy Kolb for further details.



# Announcements

## Please Note

Call the church office at 414.762.8990

- When a member of your family is admitted to the hospital, so a visit can be made by Pastor Taggatz.
- When your address, email, or your home or business phone number have changed, so church records can be corrected.
- When you are planning to move either out of town or locally.
- When you know you are pregnant so that we will be able to assist you in any way we can with prayers, encouragement and support.
- When a new baby arrives in your family and/or in the family of another church member.
- When you are planning a wedding, baptism or funeral.

**Monday 8:00 am-1:00 pm**

**Tuesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm**

**Wednesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm**

**Thursday 8:00 am-1:00 pm**

**Friday Pastor OFF**

**Visitations: Monday-Thursday afternoons**

***For appointments or emergencies, call church office or Pastor's cell phone.***

***Pastor John Taggatz, cell: 715.467.1231***

***Heidi Brunzelle, Church Secretary***

***Church office: 414.762.8990***

***Church office hours: T-W-Th 9:00am – 12:30pm***

**REMINDER:** If you have any announcements and/or additions you would like printed in the monthly *Equipper* please forward to the church office at [church@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org) by the 17<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**The Mites collection dates  
for October are:  
October 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>**



When you or your group plans to hold a meeting at the Grace Lutheran School campus, it must be cleared by Steve Gettelman. His email address is: [principal@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:principal@graceoakcreek.org)

**THANK YOU!!!** A special thank you to everyone who came to our Church Picnic Sunday Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> on Christian Education Sunday!!! Thank you to those who prepared the meal, served it, and who helped with the set-up and take down of the tables, chairs, and decorations. It truly was a great day of food, fun, and fellowship. Thank you again for your support of our Church, Christian Day School, and Early Childhood Center. We couldn't do this ministry without you!

## CELEBRATE CHURCH WORKER APPRECIATION MONTH

**\*\*\*POTLUCK\*\*\***

**OCTOBER 15, after the 10:30 Service**

Please join us in acknowledging all the Grace Church Workers for Church Worker Appreciation month in October, with a potluck lunch. Please see the sign-up sheet in the narthex of church to indicate who will be attending as well what items are needed to make the lunch more delicious. Sloppy Joe's, dessert and drinks will be provided.

**October '23 Stewardship Series for Grace Lutheran Church Oak Creek: "Bringing Out the Best"**

**-Sunday October 1st, 2023—Money: The Problem with Money (1Timothy 6:17–19)**

**-Sunday October 8th, 2018—Talents: The Joy of Investing Yourself (Matthew 25:14–30)**

**-Sunday October 15th, 2018—Time: Maximizing Minutes for the Master (Colossians 4:3, 5–6)**

**During this year's stewardship emphasis, you will receive a commitment form & a time & talents survey. Please fill those out and bring them to church on Harvest Sunday (Commitment Sunday) Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> or return it to the church office when convenient. (Extra commitment forms are available on the back table of the church and in this October Equipper). I as your Pastor ask that, as you approach your commitment decisions and how God can use your time, talents, and treasures for service in God's Kingdom and in His Church, you seek God's guidance in prayer. Let the love of God guide you in your decision.**

### **Lutheran Hour Ministries Convention**

On Saturday, October 14 the North & South Wisconsin Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL) District Joint Convention will feature the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (LCRL) at Peace Lutheran Church, 1228 South Park Ave., Neenah, Wisconsin. You are invited to participate in "What is a Two Kingdom Church?" led by Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, executive director of LCRL. The 3 sessions are:

# 1 Two Kingdoms: One Mission & Foundation

# 2 God at Work: A Two Kingdom Exercise in the American Context

# 3 Set Free to Live Freely for Others: A Two Kingdom Engagement of the culture for the sake of the mission of the church

Doors open at 8:00 a.m. with the convention opening in worship at 8:30 a.m. and concluding at 3:30 p.m. Registration is \$30.00 per person, which includes lunch. There is no registration fee for pastors to attend. Register today! For more information or questions contact Neal Schalow, No Wisconsin LLL DP by email at [nschalow@juno.com](mailto:nschalow@juno.com); or Thomas Beineke, So Wisconsin LLL DP by email at [tombeineke802@gmail.com](mailto:tombeineke802@gmail.com). Mail your registration form and fees to Peggy Kraase, So Wisconsin LLL Secretary at N115 W16887 El Camino Dr., Germantown, WI 53022. Registration deadline is October 9, 2023.

**2023 Church Pictorial Directories are in!!!** If you took part in getting you and your family's picture taken for our 2023 Pictorial Directory, you are eligible to receive a free directory. We will be handing the directories out before and after our worship services. Also, an app for your smartphone and/or tablet will also be made available to everyone in our congregation with information from our new church directory, this app will be completely free and look for an email with instructions coming soon to let you know how you can download the app and use it to stay connected with your fellow church members and things happening in our congregation.

**GIVING TO GRACE THROUGH THE THRIVENT CHOICE PROGRAM**—When you're ready to make an impact on the causes and nonprofits you care most about, we're here to help. Through our Thrivent Choice® program, you can make a personal donation or direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® to more than 40,000 churches and nonprofits. Eligible members can recommend where Thrivent distributes a portion of its charitable funding by directing Choice Dollars®. Members become eligible for Thrivent Choice based on insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent volunteer leadership.

**Special notice regarding the Thrivent Choice Program:** Thrivent members wishing to continue their automatic withdrawal to the charity of their choice will have to let Thrivent know either by e-mail or phone. All you have to do is call this 1-800 number in order to see if you have Thrivent Choice dollars to give. To continue to direct your Choice Dollars to the charity of your choice call: 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836) and state "Thrivent Choice."

**For More information on the Thrivent Choice Program please go to:**

<https://www.thrivent.com/what-we-offer/generosity/thrivent-choice.html>



**4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TRUNK OR TREAT TO BE HELD AT GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL PARKING**

**LOT:** Children from Grace Lutheran and the surrounding community are invited to come to a "Trunk or Treat" event at Grace Lutheran School's parking lot on Friday October 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:00pm. The children can come to our school parking lot to receive some Halloween Candy, some Christian tracts, and they will be able to have fellowship with other children and with members of our congregation. We are in need of volunteers for this event, please contact Pastor Taggatz or the Grace Lutheran Church Office if you are interested in helping out with this event and providing candy for the children through the trunk of your car, truck or van: 414-762-8990 or [church@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org). During a Trunk or Treat event the trunk of one's car is opened displaying candy, and often games are made available, and certain Halloween decorations. Because this is a Christian event, please do not decorate or come in costume with goblins, witches, and other occult attire. Ideas for how to decorate the trunks of your cars for this event can be found on Pinterest. The Oak Creek Fire & Police Department will be at this year's Trunk or Treat to talk about fire and public safety with the children and *Better Together Café* will also be there to offer sweet treats and drinks for all who come to this event. Grace Lutheran School is located at: 8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave Oak Creek WI 53154

## *“Neither Poverty nor Riches”*

Throughout Scripture, there are hundreds of verses that refer to money and possessions. God speaks through His Word, so we know that the amount of attention given to money and possessions is important and for our benefit. How we relate to money and possessions affects both our material and spiritual lives.

One of the most challenging and difficult questions facing us today is that of the proper attitude toward money and possessions. An excellent book written about 25 years ago by Craig L. Bloomberg helps address that question. The book is titled *Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Possessions*. The title is from Proverbs 30:8-9 which reads, *“Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny You and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.”* This request of a wise man tells us that both riches and poverty leave us in want. A rich person looks to his riches and possessions, blindly believing that he does not need God. His greedy and foolish interest is to seek more wealth. The wise person would not want poverty because he would deceive himself into thinking that he needs to steal in order to have enough. This wise man prays, *“Give us this day our daily bread”* (Fourth Petition: Luther’s Small Catechism)..

Mr. Bloomberg’s book offers some insightful conclusions:

**-Material possessions are a gift from God and meant for us to enjoy.** In the beginning, God looked at His creation, and He said it was *“Good.”*

**Material possessions are one of Satan’s best tools to turn our hearts away from God.** Adam and Eve coveted the attractive but forbidden fruit of the garden. Because they ate the forbidden fruit, everything was cursed thereafter. In their sin, they rejected God. In 1 Timothy 6:10 we read, *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils.”* Jesus tells us that we *“cannot serve God and money”* (Matthew 6:24).

**-Faithful stewardship will be evident in people’s lives when their hearts are transformed.** One’s entire life should be dedicated to God, but a particularly telling area for determining one’s commitment involves one’s finances.

**-There are extremes of riches and poverty which are in themselves intolerable.** God views hoarding and accumulating without giving as a sin. We are to seek moderation, and we have an obligation to take care of our own and those in need that they might see the hand of God and not despair.

May God grant us His grace to view, manage, and use our money in ways that give Him honor.

Blessings on your stewardship journey!

# Stewardship

# Corner



# SCRIP at Grace Lutheran Church, School & ECC

**Did you know that Grace Lutheran Church Sells SCRIP???** Scrip is a **No-Cost Fundraiser** that helps to support the ministries here at Grace for our Lutheran Church, School, and ECC. Scrip is gift cards that we buy from various restaurants, gas stations, and grocery stores to name a few and then sell at face value to you. Examples include: Woodmans, Kwik Trip, Meijer, Menards, Culvers, Kohls, to name a few. Each merchant sets their own discount percentage, so some scrip purchases “earn more” than others. The gift cards you buy and then use at these stores our Church, School, and ECC earns a certain percentage of the purchase from the retailer that you shop at. Gail Nowakowski is our new Scrip Coordinator. If you are interested in Scrip please contact our Church office. We sell Scrip after each of our worship services, if you would like to take a look at what Scrip cards you can buy to help support the ministries of Grace.



If you would like to take a look at what Scrip cards are available to buy to help support the ministries of Grace, please reach out to Gail or grab a Scrip form on the table in the narthex. Gail's contact information is as follows:

➤ 414.791.4075 and/or: [gnowakowski@att.net](mailto:gnowakowski@att.net)

## ONLINE GIVING AT GRACE

You can now give to our Church online. It's easy, fast, and secure. If you're able, we also encourage you to set up recurring giving. Thank you for supporting our ministries here at Grace!!! Text the word: graceoc to 206-859-9405, use this QR Code or head to our web-site: graceoakcreek.org. You may give a one time gift or set up your regular weekly/monthly offering. Thank you for your generosity and support of the ministries at Grace!!!



### **Sunday School has begun at Grace for people of all ages!**

Children preschool through 8th grade, a group specifically for our high school students, as well as an adult bible class! Sunday school is held at our school campus, with adult bible class taking place in the school library. This will be from 9:15-10:15 am on Sunday mornings. Please note that Adult Bible Class will be every Sunday of the month and Sunday School will be on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month.

**You can register your child for Sunday School by going to this link:**

<https://forms.gle/UorLacie97zSZDdf8>

# Grace Ladies Guild

## Rise and Sonshine Bible Study

*Promised Rest*  
*“Finding Peace in God’s Presence”*  
By Michelle Diercks

### **From the Introduction:**

*“I created this study as a meditation on the various names and characteristics of God to deepen your understanding of Him and your identity as His child. The names of God reveal important aspects of His character as well as how He relates to you—His beloved child—and how He offers the peace we all crave so much.”*

**The ladies of Rise and Sonshine are eager to begin this study this month on Saturday October 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 8am-9:30am, at school.**

Ladies of Grace, you are invited to study God’s Word with your fellow sisters in Christ!

The book is available thru Concordia Publishing House and Amazon.

Feel free to contact Jennifer Olen ([olenjennifer@aol.com](mailto:olenjennifer@aol.com)) with questions.

## Grace Ladies Guild

Grace Ladies Guild

The glove said to the sock, “Looks like you could use a hand!”

SOCKTOBER begins October 1

Yes, we can use a hand to fill the bin full of socks for the Milwaukee Rescue Mission. New or gently used socks in all sizes, men’s, women’s, and children’s are needed.

Look for the designated sock bin in the narthex!

LWML SWD Mission Grant update...we are currently funding grant #10 for \$8000 to support DOXOLOGY which provides a safe environment for clergy to reflect on their own spiritual and emotional health and assists them to review and enhance their professional competencies and skills as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s sacred mysteries. Specifically, this grant will assist to plan a 2 day/one night event for 50 clergy wives in the first ever pilot program.

The large mite box will be out October 5 & 7, remember to bring your change to add to the box!

A list of dates and activities is posted on the Guild board at the lower church entrance.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Olen [olenjennifer@aol.com](mailto:olenjennifer@aol.com)





We use these social media platforms to share the special things going on at church, school and the Early Childhood Center. However, most importantly, we share on social media the Gospel of God's redeeming love!

We enjoy using technology to continue the work of spreading the...

*...Good News of God's Riches at Christ's Expense!*

LIKE our page, and make sure you SHARE these messages with others too!



**Facebook:**

*Grace Lutheran Church, School & Early Childhood Center, Oak Creek, WI*



**Instagram:**

*gracelutheran\_oakcreek*

## **The Fellowship Committee will be having a Packer Party**

**Who: The Fellowship Committee**

**What: Packer Party**

**When: Nov 5th- game starts at noon**

**Where: School**

We will be supplying ham and rolls, hot dogs, and buns, and water, we ask that you bring sides, dips or desserts to share, please bring your own non alcoholic beverages. You may bring lawn chairs if they would be more comfortable than our chairs for the game. children over 12 are welcome to attend with their parents, but we don't have a place or the people to take care of younger children.

There will be a sign up sheet starting Oct. 1st at the Church, School and ECC. There will be a free will offering.

Watch for some of our upcoming events----Jan. 20th Bingo --- March 16th Tea Party --other events to follow

# Birthday Blessings

## *October Birthdays*

10/2 Abby Dachel  
10/2 Gordon Schaefer  
10/2 Anthony Puetz  
10/3 Celine Mould  
10/4 Amber Kendrick  
10/5 Jerry Urbaniak  
10/6 Laurie Wenzel  
10/9 Connie Roettgen  
10/10 JoEllyn Pfeilstifter  
10/12 Alive Behling  
10/12 Chase Kelley  
10/12 Anniston Svcek  
10/13 Sharon Iseli  
10/14 Nicole Kisley  
10/17 Carson Mallon  
10/19 Susan Herzog  
10/21 Richard Flower  
10/21 Reinhard Medek

10/23 Brandon Dachel  
10/24 Virginia Schmeiser  
10/25 Claire Sauer  
10/25 Caroline Thomas  
10/27 Christopher Edgerton  
10/27 Kathryn Szefflinski  
10/28 Steve Thomas  
10/30 Carsen Serdynski



Happy Anniversary!

## *October Anniversaries*

10/4 Tony and Suzie Miranda  
10/5 Ryan and Annie Olen  
10/6 Natalie and Andy Jaskie  
10/8 Ariel and Josh Hagar

# October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <b>8:00am Divine Worship</b> <b>9:15am Adult Bible Study</b> <b>9:15am Sunday School</b> <b>10:30am Divine Worship</b>	<b>2</b> 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Grief Share Group	<b>3</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner) 6:30pm Stephen Ministry Meeting	<b>4</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm All Board's Meeting	<b>5</b> 6:30pm Divine Worship	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>8:00am Divine Worship</b> <b>9:15am Adult Bible Study</b> <b>10:30am Divine Worship</b>	<b>9</b> 6:30pm Confirmation Class	<b>10</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	<b>11</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Council Meeting	<b>12</b> 6:30pm Divine Worship	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 8:00am Rise & Sunshine Bible Study
<b>15</b> <b>8:00am Divine Worship</b> <b>9:15am Adult Bible Study</b> <b>9:15am Sunday School</b> <b>10:30am Divine Worship</b> <b>11:45am Church Worker Potluck</b>	<b>16</b> 6:30pm Confirmation Class	<b>17</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner) 10:00am - 10:00pm Culver's Dining Out Event	<b>18</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	<b>19</b> 6:30pm Divine Worship	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <b>8:00am Divine Worship</b> <b>9:15am Adult Bible Study</b> <b>10:30am Divine Worship</b>	<b>23</b> Pastor away at Conference	<b>24</b> Pastor away at Conference 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	<b>25</b> Pastor away at Conference	<b>26</b> 6:30pm Divine Worship	<b>27</b> 6:00pm - 7:00pm Trunk or Treat	<b>28</b> 8:00am Rise & Sunshine Bible Study
<b>29</b> <b>8:00am Divine Worship</b> <b>9:15am Adult Bible Study</b> <b>10:30am Divine Worship</b>	<b>30</b> 6:30pm Confirmation Class	<b>31</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)				

## Radio Worship Service

"*The Lutheran Hour*" can be heard every Sunday Morning at 6:00 AM on WGN 720 AM, Chicago or at 6:30 AM on WTMJ 620 AM or at 11:00 am WRRD 540 AM, Milwaukee.

"*The Lutheran Hour*," which began in 1930, is the world's oldest continually broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program, now heard on more than 1,200 radio stations, pro-claims the message of Jesus Christ to a world-wide audience.



## Prayer Hot Line

In order to request prayers by members of Grace, please contact one of the following people. Your request will be made known to all members of our Prayer Line. Prayer requests for worship service should be directed to the church office or Pastor Taggatz.

10AM – 3PM

Carol Thurber, 762-9615

3PM – 9PM

Pauline Parker, 764-5574

### Internet Prayerline

Pauline Parker

[paulinemom@aol.com](mailto:paulinemom@aol.com)

## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, SCHOOL, ECC



### CHURCH & ECC

3381 E. Puetz Rd.  
Oak Creek, WI 53154

### SCHOOL & CHURCH OFFICE

8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave.  
Oak Creek, WI 53154

### WEBSITE

<https://graceoakcreek.org>

**Pastor John M. Taggatz**

**PH: 414.762.8990**

**Thursday Worship 6:30 pm**  
**Sunday Worship 9:00 am**