



GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1815 Hall Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506 / 616-241-4631

Learn the Faith Love the Lord Live the Faith

Newsletter for June 24, 2009

WELCOME New Youth Minister: John Roberts! Along with Ben Videtich, who joined the High School Wilderness Trip last week, John is joining our staff as the second of our two new part-time youth ministers. John will also be a seminary student at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary this autumn. John was present at worship a week ago, and will be with us regularly starting in September.

High School Youth Sea Kayaking and Wilderness Camping Trip

If you missed the report the kids gave to the congregation on June 21 after returning from their adventure in northern Wisconsin, here is a summary. We can begin with some images from the rector's sermon of the same day (copies available at the church office):

Our journey of learning gave us a trove of memorable images – like Sam and John carefully arranging sticks in a pyramid to start our fire; or Kate and Margaret learning to paddle in smooth synchronization; of Ian and Zack passionately defending their innocence in the game of Mafia; of Maddie Vaughn and Grace pacing our paddling by their singing; of Wes helping others by cleaning the cooking pots and of Philip cleaning out another paddlers' kayak, and Tim lifting kayak after kayak out of the water and on to the shore; of Anna and Briella joining in the line of those giving back-massages to others; of Carter nurturing lively conversation at the fireside; and of Maddie Kirkwood smiling at the Happy Birthday sign awaiting her and her brothers at our last night's camping spot.

Our group set out in a 15 passenger van driven by Fr. Holmgren and copiloted by our new high school youth minister, Ben Videtich. He may be only 22 years old, look hip and be a ton of fun, but he is also spiritually mature and doesn't skimp on the discussions. We are so thankful to God for sending Ben to us! Martha Holmgren drove the Dodge minivan and, having left cell phones and other electronic devices at home, the vehicles were soon filled with the sounds of great tunes from CDs the kids had made for the trip. We lifted our voices in song! We knew *where* to go and *when* because of the comprehensive planning work of Tina Cumings – thank you so much, Tina!

Our mission: to be a church community where every member lives as a disciple of Christ.

Our vision: to be a Christian community where every member is engaged in personal spiritual growth, in the life of the church, and in service to the world around us.

The arrival and departure times set by the camp meant we needed to break our journey coming and going with an overnight stay in Escanaba; another great opportunity to deepen our relationships around good food, swimming, and sharing rooms.

Tim Curran was one of the youth who spoke in church about our sea kayaking adventure. It began almost immediately upon arrival; we were instructed to put on our suits and head to the water for our first activity: learning how to get out of a capsized kayak. Tim then spoke from experience about the weight of a fully loaded kayak. Although we all struggled to help carry our kayaks on to the shore and across portages, it was with the help of strong kayakers like Tim that eased that burden considerably. Tim also described how once we were on shore, we split into teams to set up camp. The logically inclined set up the tents; others collected firewood and built the fire, some filled water buckets and filtered water, others cooked or cleaned up. **Zack Kirkwood** described our simple one pot meals cooked in 'billy cans.' We ate heartily of this food that tasted of the great outdoors!

Maddie Vaughn talked about the distances we paddled – acknowledging that the first outing of about 400 meters had her arms aching! But after the first day of seven miles followed by 14 miles the second day, she didn't feel a thing!

Grace Schuurmans spoke of the morning watches we did each day – time where we went off on our own with our Bible, a pen, and the journal the Honeyrock leaders had created. Our meditations were centered on 2 Corinthians 1: 3 -7 where we remembered that God comforts and strengthens us in all of our troubles so that we can comfort and strengthen others with the grace we have received from God. One of the days we had a solo time, where we went off for close to two hours to quiet ourselves before God and to focus on what God wanted to show us.

Carter Redburn continued with this theme when he spoke of how, once our meal was eaten and cleaned up and before turning to campfire games, we spoke of our experiences of the day, of the ways in which we may have struggled, and the ways in which we recognized God's presence with us. Carter pointed out how our relationships with each other and God were growing and deepening through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Not just around the campfire, but every step of the way, including in restaurants and parking lots, we took time to pray – to thank God for the spirit moving in and between us and for taking us safely to our next destination. We prayed that these deeper discoveries of the image of God within us would continue with us forever.



High School Wilderness Trip Participants

A Warm “THANK YOU” From the IHN Committee

The IHN Committee would like to thank all of those who helped host five homeless families here at Grace Church during our week of IHN. We thank especially the many new volunteers who have helped for the first time, as well as our faithful and loyal volunteers who are here time and time again. Thanks also to John Crisman and staff. We couldn't do it without everyone's generous spirit. Thank you, IHN Committee

NOTE: Our next week of IHN is September 6- September 12.

Missing from the Pentecost Picnic:

A blue ceramic serving bowl lost its way home after the Pentecost picnic; if you have seen it, please let Linda know. Thanks!

Lower Kitchen Microwave on the Blink

Our lower kitchen microwave has recently gone on the blink. Since it was a commercial grade unit I have looked into the cost to have it repaired. The news that I have received is the repair would cost about 70% of what a new microwave would cost. Taking into consideration that it is seven years old I have declined to have the repair done. In the meantime if anyone in the parish has one marked for a summer yard sale and or would like to donate one please contact me here at Grace. / John Crisman, GEC Bldg Mngr.

From the Parish Prayer List:

Gerald Jr.	Katarina	Winifred	Megan
Gail	Collette	Greta Betz	David Gaikema
David	Brad	Rebeka	Reece
Pat	Bruce	Bob	Pearl
Sasha	Amanda	Martha	Chuck and Anne
Ruth	Tia Richman	Amy	Heidi Leonard
Ron	Samantha Lum	Shelly Craig	Felix Batista
Tom	Judy VanArk	Julie	Deborah Underwood
Kathie Hogarth	Roger	Thomas and Wilda Wood	
Nancy Newcomb	Peggy Kervens (pron: Care – Van)		

Those who have upcoming birthdays:

June 28	Barbara Richardson, Diane Clark, Jessica Borowsky
June 29	Margaret Gregg,
June 30	Craig Hecker
July 1	Marjorie Bjork, Candy Titus, Bob Brower, Jodi Astrauskas,
July 2	Roger Meyer, Brennan McVey
July 3	John Wert, Stephanie Croom, Margaret Chism, Susan Kirkwood, Alice Chapman, Greer Love
July 4	Connie Bennett
July 5	Jane Everhart, Megan Boekeloo
July 7	Nancy Frans, Gretchen Barr, Jennifer Klassen
July 8	Bill Malpass, Emily Monsma,
July 9	Jean McCormick, Ashley Baker
July 10	Nancy Massingham, Don Kelley, Ruth Norton
July 11	Ellen Ford



Vacation Bible School
Crocodile Dock:
Where Fearless Kids Shine God's Light

Today is Day 4 of Crocodile Dock. It has been an incredible time teaching over 60 kids about our God. So far we have learned these Bible Points and heard these Bible Stories: 1) God is with us! God spoke to Moses from a burning bush, and God was with Moses when he had a hard job to do. 2) God is powerful! God protected the Israelites when God sent the 10 plagues. 3) God does what he says he will do! When God sent the last of the 10 plagues on the Egyptians, he passed over the Israelites and spared their firstborn when they put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. Tonight we will learn that God gives us life! Through Jesus' death, we have new life. Stop by tonight or tomorrow night at 8:15 to hear some great music and hear about all that has happened that day at Crocodile Dock!

VBS Borrowed Items Available!!!!

We want to thank everyone who made donations to our VBS program. We appreciate all the items that were bought and borrowed.

Don't forget to pick up your "borrowed items" from the Godly Play I room as soon as possible. We would like to have these rooms emptied by the end of June so that summer cleaning can take place.

A Opportunity to Make a Difference:

Please join the Rector and members of the Vestry in making a special gift to support our plan to have Bruce Rockwell come to Grace Church on the weekend of September 18-20. Bruce will lead an event we are calling, Living Our Thanks to God: a Weekend Journey Into Stewardship Awareness. There will be a program on Friday evening and Saturday morning (following the Walk for Sudan). Bruce will also speak on Sunday morning at both Eucharists, and will lead an adult formation gathering at 11:30am. Everyone is invited to any or all of the events over the weekend.



Bruce Rockwell has just retired from serving as the Financial Officer and Assistant to the Bishop for Stewardship in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. He serves as President of the Board of Directors of TENS (The Episcopal Network for Stewardship) and is the author of TENS' newest resource, *Spirituality and Money: 7 Questions that Saved my Spiritual Life*. A banker for over twenty years, Bruce was Assistant to the Bishop for Stewardship in the Diocese of Rochester before accepting the call to his current position. A layperson and the son of a priest, he is married to a priest, the Rev. Cristine Rockwell. Since moving to New England six years ago, Bruce has become a dedicated fan of the Boston Red Sox and rejoiced over their 2007 World Series victory. He is also a runner who competes in several races in Western Massachusetts each year.

We have raised \$450.00 so far toward our goal of \$2,000.00 for this event. Please make your gift to Grace Church, and write "September 09 Stewardship Event" on the 'memo' portion!

Fourth Annual Walk for Sudan: Save the Date!

September 19, 2009 will mark the day of the fourth Walk for Sudan, which will start at 8:00am. The route will be the same as last year, 5K starting at Grace Church.

Plan to join the walk yourself, bring friends and also get sponsorships.

Questions: Contact Margaret Burrows-Getz or David Mayon, Sudan Mission Committee co-chairs

Community Outreach

We continue to deliver your weekly donations of clothing, food and personal items to the groups serving people who need help in their daily lives. These days, they need rice, beans, tuna fish, canned fruits and vegetables. They also can always use personal items such as shampoo, toilet paper, etc.

Spring cleaning is a great time to empty closets and pantries of items you either don't want and/or need. These items could really help those that do need them. Donations can be left at the church, in the area at top of the stairs off the parking lot.

Thank you for your continued support, Mike Redman

A need you can help with: Several families within our Sudanese congregation have identified some needs they have in this time of increased financial pressure. If you have, or would like to obtain, some packages of disposable diapers they would be very welcome. We can use sizes 2, 3, 4 and 5. Please bring them to the church and give them to Linda, or to Fr. Zachariah.

DIOCESAN MISSION TRIPS SCHEDULED

The Diocese is planning mission opportunities in 2009. The missions will provide hurricane disaster relief along the Gulf Coast. The first mission is to Mississippi, the last week of October. The second mission is to New Orleans, the first week of December.

Episcopal Relief and Development has made a long-term commitment to rebuild the Gulf Coast. Devastation from the hurricanes is so massive whole communities have been obliterated. The Diocese of West Michigan is partnering with the Diocese of Louisiana and Mississippi in this endeavor. Accommodations are provided once volunteers arrive at the mission site. Beds, lavatories with hot showers, stoves, refrigerators, phones, snacks, and necessary amenities are at each camp. Mission sites have a director and staff to address each volunteer organization's group and individual needs.

Most of the work is reconstructing homes. On site crew leaders provide basic instruction before each workday begins. Alternatives to construction are also offered, such as meal preparation and serving, dispensing basic needs in the community, landscaping, clerical work, and camp maintenance. The work at the mission site changes weekly, sometimes on a daily basis.

Volunteers range from young adult to seniors. All work is valuable, and each mission volunteer makes a significant contribution to Gulf Coast renewal. Qualifications needed are the desire, time, patience, and flexibility to do what is needed to serve Christ. Volunteers work, eat, and sleep in a group atmosphere, and must have the ability to cooperate with each other at the work site and the relief center.

Travel will be by car pools. There will be one motel overnight to and from the Gulf Coast. All parishes will be asked by the Diocese to help defray the cost of the missions. No volunteer will be denied the opportunity of a mission trip experience because of finances.

For more information, or to volunteer for either or both missions to New Orleans and Mississippi, contact either Terry Dorcy, a member of St. Luke's in Kalamazoo, or Lynn Carson at Christ Church in Charlevoix. Terry's email is tidorcy@aol.com. His phone number is 269-349-3625. Lynn Carson can be reached at lecarson2002@yahoo.com

Parish Church Newsletter Request Form

Because of several factors: new postal regulations concerning bulk mail; the increasingly high cost of postage; an outdated newsletter address list; and the sheer physical challenge of assembling, tabbing, addressing, and mailing several hundred paper newsletters... our new, preferred, way of getting the newsletter to you will be via our church website or via email.

The newsletter will always be available on our church website: www.gracechurchgr.org. Copies of the newsletter will also be available for pick up at the church.

We will *only* send the newsletter to those who request it:

We can send it to you in an email attachment (this is our preference, due to costs, etc).
It will be formatted in a pdf file.

Or we can send it to you as a printed copy through the US Mail.

In order to receive the newsletter, please provide the following information:

- I will pick up my newsletter at the church.
- I wish to receive the newsletter via email
- I am unable to access email or the church website – please, send me the newsletter through the U.S. Mail.

→ PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY ←

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Physical address: _____

Telephone number: _____