



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 May 24, 2009

Dear People of Grace: This is our second newsletter in our new email format. As we have shared with you before, we are now sending the newsletter primarily via email because of postal regulations, and to assist office efficiency and economy. To those who specifically request it, we are sending a copy via regular first class mail. However, due to the challenges and costs associated with producing a physically-mailed newsletter, our preferred mode of getting it to you will be via an email link.

If you have not yet filled out a *Newsletter Request Form*, one is attached for your convenience.

Pentecost Sunday – May 31 – Recognition Sunday and Church Picnic

On Sunday, May 31, we will celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, and the feast day for Grace Church – the day which commemorates the gift of the Grace of the Holy Spirit. We will have a single, combined, service at 10:00am for all of members of the Grace Church family, including our Sudanese congregation. The picnic will follow the combined 10am Eucharist, and will be on site.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Our next week of hosting homeless families at Grace Church is Sunday, May 31- June 7. Please take a moment to consider how you can be a part of this ministry and sign-up for one or more of the following opportunities:

- * set-up/take down
- * meal preparation
- * evening host
- * overnight host
- * van/truck drivers

Sign-ups are posted by the front desk. Or please contact Anne Grobel, Sue Steketee or Liz Batdorf for more information. Thank you!

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.

STARS



We had a great time last month playing Outburst and Pictionary with our hosts, Bernie & Steve Sweetland and Tim & Tess Lundgren. We are, however, planning on taking up a collection as it is evident that some of our members truly need to enroll in some drawing classes at the local college. Their identities shall remain anonymous but we do know that their first class ought to be "Drawing Recognizable Wildlife."

The STARS Guild generally meets the third Saturday of each month but we are mixing things up a bit this month as we are meeting on the last Saturday of the month. Brian & Claire Bunker are our May hosts. We'll be meeting at their home at 7:00pm on Saturday, May 30. Their home is located at 1045 Santa Cruz, Grand Rapids, MI 49506. The Bunkers are planning a fun filled night of Summer Games. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share and your beverage of choice. We'll be chatting, nibbling and generally having a great time with friends as we show off our skills at bocce ball, bean bag toss and other favorite summer games. There is even a rumor of a campfire so bring your marshmallows and favorite toasting stick. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Watch your e-mailbox for the Bunker's evite to the May event. If you don't receive the electronic Evite please contact Tess Lundgren or the Bunkers (247-4788) as computers can be so picky about every email address having to be typed in perfectly. :)

If you have any questions about STARS please don't hesitate to contact Tess Lundgren at 682-2419 or tesslundgren@gmail.com.



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

Crocodile Dock - Vacation Bible School 2009!

Sunday, June 21 – Thursday, June 25

Sun. –Wed., 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, 6:00-9:00 p.m.



Plan ahead! Sunday check-in is from 5:30-5:50 p.m.
Register early . . . space is limited!

Registration open to children age 5 by June 1, 2009 through rising 6th graders.
A toddler/preschool program will be available for volunteers whose children are not yet 5 by June 1.

Register online, view details, learn more about the program, and sign up to volunteer at:

<http://www.groupvbs.com/webtoybox/myvbs/gracechurchgr>
Call the church for more information: 241-4631

Volunteers Welcomed!

Please check out the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for various volunteer positions. You can help 1 or more nights, shop for supplies, help in the nursery, and more.

Looking for VBS Crew Leaders!

If you are a rising 8th grader or older, you can help at VBS by leading a group of 5 students from station to station. You get to experience everything that goes on during the VBS time and working with these children is a privilege.



Donations Accepted!

We also need donations. There is a list of items that we need for VBS on the bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall. Please check it out and sign up to bring in 1, 2, 3, or more items.

Some items we need donated, others we just need to borrow.

Cash donations are always accepted.

Stop by the VBS table on Sunday mornings to see how you can help.

Crew Leader Training Sessions

If you will serve as a crew leader for VBS, please attend one of the following crew leader sessions:

Sunday, May 31

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 7

11:30-2:00 (Light lunch served)

Sign up on the VBS bulletin board for one of these sessions or contact Tina Cumings at tinacumings@gracechurchgr.org or 241-4631



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. 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 indicate September 09 Stewardship Event on the memo portion of your check!

From the Community of Deacons, Diocese of Western Michigan:

Thanks to so many in the diocese, a total of 68 volunteers were supported in mission work at the Gulf Coast (Mississippi and New Orleans) last year. We funded the trip through a newly formed mission fund which began to receive gifts last year. In cooperation with Terry Dorcy, Episcopal Relief and Development diocesan Coordinator, we are hoping once again that each congregation in the diocese will participate in the mission trip opportunities. Again, we are asking each parish to raise at least \$500. This would meet the goal of covering the cost for sending at least 60 people to make two mission trips to the Gulf Coast in November and December this year. Any remaining monies will be used as a "mission trip fund" for ongoing opportunities through other trips to the Gulf Coast, the Dominican Republic, and beyond.

Deacons are willing to come to your parish along with someone who has been to Mississippi or Louisiana, to recruit participants and raise awareness. Individual deacons will be contacting you. We are all called to mission, and we look forward to you joining us in this endeavor to "seek and serve Christ in all people, loving our neighbor as ourselves."

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 tjdorcy@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: _____