



TIDINGS

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Vol. 64 No. 6

June 1–30, 2021

DEAR PARTNERS,

¹¹*Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.*

¹²*No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:11-12)*

What a joy it is to begin the process of including opportunities to gather again for worship in-person in the sanctuary for those who feel comfortable in doing so. It is clear, all are not of the same mind or comfort level. *How do we love one another as God loves us in this situation?*

This question is important every time we make a decision that impacts others and every time we deal with realities. Now that the horrid pandemic seems finally to be letting go of its grasp of us here in the United States, primarily because of the wide availability of COVID-19 vaccines, our current dilemma is how quickly do we begin returning to “normal.”

The truth is that it will be a new normal, and we, individually, as a country, world, church, and congregation, are still discerning what that will look like going forward. Restrictions have been eased in a number of ways recently by the CDC and the governor of Virginia. We have also been in dialogue with the Office of the Virginia Synod Bishop, other Lutheran congregations, and congregations with whom we are in ecumenical relationships in downtown Winchester. A survey was sent out via email in late April to gather information about worship preferences from the congregation (see those results in this issue of *TIDINGS*).

The Congregation Council made the decision in early May to add an indoor worship option to the ways we have been worshipping together, digitally and outdoor. The indoor services started on Pentecost Sunday, May 23. At this time, masks and physical distancing will continue to be required. The following is rationale for continuing these precautions:

- Children are not yet able to be fully vaccinated, and youth older than 12 years of age were just recently allowed to be vaccinated. In love, we stand in solidarity with our children and parents so that they can be confident in returning to in-person worship.
- Though the CDC has lifted the mask requirement for fully vaccinated individuals, requiring only the unvaccinated to wear facemasks will single them out and likely make them feel unwelcome. Asking people to indicate whether or not they've been vaccinated will also be unwelcoming. We understand that there may be very personal health or other reasons why someone is not vaccinated.
- There are people among us, who are vaccinated, who will feel confident worshipping indoor as long as masks are worn.
- Maintaining the use of facemasks and distancing allows us freedom to begin to reinstate some worship practices that are meaningful that we have had to give up in the last year.

Wearing masks and staying 6 ft apart is uncomfortable, and we look forward to the day when they are no longer needed, but it is a way to give of ourselves in love to our brothers and sisters, and to stand with them. Whether we worship digitally through live-streaming on the website or through YouTube, worship together outdoor in Mount Hebron Cemetery, or indoor in the sanctuary, we are one, united in Christ.

As we go forward, let us remember in prayer the people of India and Brazil and others for whom COVID-19 is still causing great suffering.

Your partners in ministry,

Pastor Martha Miller Sims

Pastor Jonathan M. Boynton

OUR WORSHIP THIS MONTH

Worship is now offered at three services each Sunday: 1) Outdoor at Mount Hebron Cemetery at 8:00 AM (weather permitting); 2) Indoor in our sanctuary at 9:30 and 11:00 AM. The 9:30 service will be live-streamed from the website www.gracewin.org and later posted to YouTube.

To participate, in-person, please sign up through the email announcement or the website. At this time, because there are those of us who cannot or have not been vaccinated (particularly children), masks are still required. Going forward, though, other precautions and restrictions may be eased over time. *Please watch for Constant Contact emails and the website for the most up-to-date information or call the church office 540-662-6678.*

Sunday, June 6, 2021 -- The Second Sunday after Pentecost – In the Gospel reading, Mark 3:20-35, in response to charges that he is possessed, Jesus wonders aloud how anyone who is demon-possessed can cast out demons. Those who do the will of God are possessed by the Holy Spirit, siblings of Christ. The other readings are: Genesis 3:8-15, Psalm 130, and 2 Corinthians 4:13-15:1.

Sunday, June 13, 2021 – The Third Sunday after Pentecost—Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God’s kingdom. The readings are: Ezekiel 17:22-24, Psalm 92:1-4,12-15, 2 Corinthians 5:6-17 and Mark 4:26-34.

Sunday, June 20, 2021 -- The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – In the Gospel reading, Mark 4:35-41, Jesus’ calming of the storm on the sea reveals his power over evil, since the sea represents evil and chaos. The boat on the sea is a symbol of the church and invites us to trust God amid life’s turbulence. The other readings are: Job 38:1-11, Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32 and 2 Corinthians 6:1-13.

Sunday, June 27, 2021 – The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost—A woman finds healing by touching Jesus’ cloak, and a girl is restored to life when he takes her by the hand. In both cases a boundary is crossed: in Jesus’ time the hemorrhaging woman was considered ritually unclean, polluting others by her touch, and anyone who touched a corpse also became unclean. In Mark’s gospel Jesus breaks down barriers, from his first meal at a tax collector’s house to his last breath on the cross as the temple curtain is torn in two. We dare to touch Jesus in our “uncleanness” and to live as a community that defines no one as an outsider. The readings are: Lamentations 3:22-33, Psalm 30, 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 and Mark 5:21-43.

New Website! www.gracewin.org

Our new website is live! It is a work in progress, as we continue to update and populate all the pages. The new format is visitor friendly and interactive, including the ability to participate in digital worship directly from the website (beginning May 23rd). We invite you to explore and watch it grow. We hope it enables us to connect with each other in new ways and to welcome newcomers. Check it out! The address is the same as the old site. (www.gracewin.org)



Photo by Danielle MacInnes on Unsplash.

TAX TIP

Do you have a traditional IRA (not Roth)? Are you at least 70½ years old? Do you pledge or do you give a set amount to Grace each week, month or year? If you answered yes to those questions, please read this:

Money from an individual retirement account (IRA) donated to the church will allow you to avoid paying taxes on the amount withdrawn. Contact the institution where you have your IRA and tell them that you are interested in making a “qualified charitable donation.” Tell them the amount to contribute and for what time period (week, month, year). They will write a check to Grace in the amount you have decided.

If you itemize deductions on your tax return (Schedule A), you would not be able to deduct this contribution. However, if you take a standard deduction, the amount you contributed through your IRA will not be included in your income—this will lower your adjusted gross income and lower your taxes.

If you any questions, contact **Roger Milburn**, Treasurer (lrnilburn@yahoo.com or 540-336-0700)

Worship Attendance (ELCA standard = unique visit x2, in 7 days)				
Date	Type	Online	In Person	Facebook
4/11/2021	Sunday	450	71	204
4/18/2021	Sunday	444	68	202
4/25/2021	Sunday (YouTube error)	268	77	218
5/2/2021	Sunday	440	64	198
5/9/2021	Sunday	430	75	182

Stewardship Thoughts *Reflections on the generous giving of time, talents, and treasure*

In May and June we reflect on the generous giving of mothers and fathers and note:

“Your greatest contribution to the Kingdom of God may not be something you do, but someone you raise.” Andy Stanley



FOR THE RECORD “Growing in the Grace of Giving” Report of Offerings for 2021

	Anticipated Each Month	Given in April			Given Year-to-Date
		April Offering	April Vanco	Anticipated Year-to-Date	
Promised Offerings Pledged Envelope Giving \$446,041 budgeted for 2021.	\$37,170	\$27,162	\$9,079.69	\$148,680	\$155,844
Grace Offerings Non-pledged Envelope Giving \$94,389 budgeted for 2021.	\$7,866	\$13,396	\$550.83	\$31,464	\$35,543.28
Faith Offerings Loose Cash/Check Giving \$25,000 budgeted for 2021.	\$2,083	\$380	\$0	\$8,332	\$790
Covenant Income Income from fees, interest, grants,	\$650	\$100	\$0	\$2600	\$100
Revell Trust Income \$290,502 budgeted for 2021.	\$24,208	\$24,208	---	\$96,832	\$96,832
Bartko Fund \$25,900 budgeted for 2021.	\$2,158	\$2,158	---	\$8,632	\$8,632

In Our Prayers

Prayers for Healing

Members who have been in the hospital or are in need of our prayers of healing: **Jerry Kerr, David Herdman, Retta Short and David Kerr.**

Prayers of Comfort

Christian Sympathy is extended to the family and friends of **Charlie Krause**, husband of **Dinah**; and the family and friends of John Stiefvater, father of **Michelle Perrone.**

Thanks

Jim and I would like to thank the church for the beautiful flowers delivered by **Anne Ashby** and **Audrey Braden.** Also, I would like to thank

everyone that called and sent cards after the death of my brother. Words cannot express how much I appreciated your thoughtfulness.

Love In Christ,
Linda Brown

I would like to thank my church family for their kind thoughts, prayers, cards, and flowers during my recent loss.

With the help of **Jonathan, Martha, "T"** and the rest of my family in Christ, a brokenness is being healed with love and prayers. I am seeing the world with renewed spirit.

Your Sister in Christ,
Dinah Krause



FAITH FORMATION AND YOUTH NEWS

FAITH FORMATION VIRTUAL Opportunities:

Wednesday Morning Bible Study - YOU CAN PARTICIPATE through ZOOM! Email jboynton@gracewin.org for more information. Dwelling In The Word - 7:30 am Come together and prepare for worship on the coming Sunday by studying the Scripture readings ahead of time. Studying together helps Scripture come alive – Leaders: Pastor Jonathan Boynton, Pastor Martha Sims and lay leaders from the group.

Wednesday Evening Digital Book Study on zoom - 7:00 - 8:00 pm

All are welcome to join this book study beginning in June. The participants are in the process of choosing a new resource to be used through the summer. To join this group, please contact Pastor Martha Sims at msims@gracewin.org or use the zoom link below. This book study is led by group participants and Pastor Sims.



Or contact Pastor Martha Sims, msims@gracewin.org. Zoom Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85467932432?pwd=UldBWDITdHVuSnFRZTMzUHlaWUI4UT09>
 Meeting ID: 854 6793 2432
 Passcode: 300828

One tap mobile: +13126266799,,85467932432# US (Chicago),+19292056099,,85467932432# US (New York)

Youth Zoom Meetings - We will meet on **Wednesday, June 2nd at 4:00 pm.**, for our last zoom meeting for the summer. We are planning in person events, so watch your email for info. If you are a part of our Pen Pal Project, please remember to write you member of the congregation. If you would like to participate please contact T. Shafferman 540-327-5190. Watch your email for your zoom invite.

W.I.L.D. Women Meeting In Person Outside- Will meet again on **Wednesday, June 9th at 6:45 pm** at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. Please RSVP as soon as possible for this event. The cost is \$10. If you are interested in joining WILD Woman, please send an email to tshafferman@gracewin.org or call me at 540-327-5190.

Women of Grace Zoom Meeting - The third Tuesday of the month at 10:30 am. We will meet again on **Tuesday, June 15th**. We are currently using the resource *Walking Home* by Margaret Guenther. Please let us know, if you would like to join this group.

G.L.O.W. Kids Zoom Meeting— On the first Sunday of the month at 2:00 pm. Next meeting is **Sunday, June 6th** we will meet to check in and have a little fun together. This month Pastor Boynton has a game to play. If you have a child in K-5th grade, please join us for GLOW Kids (God Lights Our Way). Watch your email for the zoom invite. In Person Socially Distant GLOW Kids Event planned for Sunday, July 11th 2pm - 3:30 pm at The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley Patio. You must RSVP to tshafferman@gracewin.org to attend this event by 7/4. Thanks

Bible & Brew on Zoom - Meets on the first Monday of the month. Come bring your favorite beverage and enjoy a program and fellowship. We will gather virtually on Monday, **June 7th at 6:00 pm**. If you are interested in great conversation and fellowship from the comfort of your on home, contact one of the Pastors or T. Shafferman to get signed up. Look forward to seeing you there.

Young Adult Group - Young Adult Group to meet Sunday, June 6th for fellowship & book study. You can join for just the fellowship portion or stay on the zoom call for **The Ragamuffin Gospel** by: Brennan Manning. *Most of us believe in God's grace in theory. But somehow we can't seem to apply it in our daily lives. We continue to see Him as a small-minded bookkeeper, tallying our failures and successes on a score sheet. Yet God gives us His grace, willingly, no matter what we've done.* Join Pastor Jonathan Boynton through zoom for this study. Please contact him for more information or to signup at jboynton@gracewin.org. Thanks!



Grace Walks

June 8th - 10:00 am
June 22nd - 6:30 pm

Join us at the Museum of Shenandoah Valley Trails Parking lot on Amherst St. by James Wood Middle School



www.gracewin.org

Graduates of Grace

We are honored and proud to recognize those who have received their degrees. Congratulations to you all. We will recognize your accomplishments on June 6th at the 9:30 am Worship Service.

Our High School Graduates are:

Thomas Marsden, Ben Rayburn, Reeve Thomas

Receiving College Degrees:

Ashleigh Barnes, Grant Case, Nicole Perrone

Receiving Masters Degrees:

Meg Bachman & Bridget Rizzo



FAITH FORMATION PROGRAMS FOR SUMMER 2021

We will offer our Faith Formation Totes this summer monthly. They will be available for pick-up on:

Saturday, June 5th 10:00 am - Noon, Wednesday, June 30th 4:30 - 6:30 pm, & Saturday, August 7th 10:00 am - Noon. Please come to church alley for pick-up.

GLOW Kids Outdoor In Person Events planned for **Sunday, July 11th 2:00pm - 3:30 pm.**

Parents & children (K-5th grade) are invited to join us at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley Patio on **Sunday, July 11th** Please RSVP to tshafferman@gracewin.org on or before July 4th.

GLOW Kids event for **Sunday, August 1st 2:00 pm** Painting Day in church alley

Youth Group Outdoor In-Person Events Sunday, July 18th 3:00 - 5:00 pm

at the home of Ellen & Jim Pearce. Games on the Lawn!

Sunday, August 8th 12:00 - 2:00 pm Painting Day and Catered Lunch

You must RSVP to tshafferman@gracewin.org to participant. Thank you

For now we plan to kick-off Fall Sunday School Programs on

Sunday, August 15th

Would you like to be a Faith Formation Volunteer Minister?

Please contact T. Shafferman at tshafferman@gracewin.org or 540-327-5190. We need folks to prepare craft kits for our Faith Formation Totes - counting, sorting, bagging, bulletin board pieces cut, birthday cards & cheer cards sent.

Please contact T. to get involved in these opportunities you can do in your own home.

Thanks!



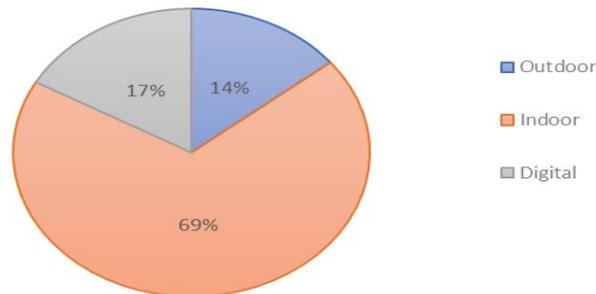
Worship Survey Results

On April 28th, 2021 the Executive Committee and Pastors sent out a survey seeking input from the congregation regarding their preference for worship at this time. We received surveys representing 122 households, or 267 individuals.

Respondents were asked to select their preference for their attendance in worship in light of the COVID Pandemic, and access to vaccines.

- Outdoor Worship at Mt. Hebron – 38 individuals / 16 households (including 9 children under 16 years of age)
- Indoor Worship – 184 individuals / 84 households (including 29 children under 16 years of age)
- Digital Worship – 45 individuals / 22 households (including 4 children under 16 years of age)

Individuals Preference for Worship



If respondents chose outdoor worship or digital worship they received a follow-up question asking “What will bring you back in-person indoors?” (Digital Preference Responses):

- Singing and ability to hug.
- When it is completely safe.
- Higher inoculation levels in our area.
- I don't know at this point, but am starting to think about attending outdoor worship.
- When we stop face masks and social distancing.
- Virtual option not available.
- Most people vaccinated, all masked, bad weather.
- More time from vaccinations --feeling safe singing without a mask.
- Greater percentages of people vaccinated and lower positivity level in Winchester and Frederick County.
- More fully vaccinated people.
- When more people have been immunized.
- Case rate below 10 per 100k in city and county.
- Relaxed restrictions.
- Time.
- A higher percentage of vaccinated individuals.
- Knowing that herd immunity has been reached in the counties around Grace church.
- Have several services, so that way we can social distance and spread out people more throughout several services. Maybe a service Saturday night, maybe possibly one Wednesday night. Or several on Sunday.
- We have to feel more comfortable about Covid. We just lost two friends last week to Covid.
- Not having to wear a mask. I have too much breathing difficulties with a mask.
- State guidelines without restrictions.
- Everyone including children being vaccinated.
- Herd immunity.

(Continued on page 8)

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What will bring you back to in-person indoor? (Outdoor Preference Respondents):

- When more people are vaccinated in our area. After over a year I just feel the need to ease in to it. With that said I will support in-person as I am on staff.
- Lower case counts both regionally and nationally.
- More vaccinated locally.
- All in attendance are vaccinated.
- By July 2021 more "herd immunity" will occur and based on my age I would feel more comfortable at that time.
- I'm good in-person or outside, whatever the majority goes with. It's all about time for me.
- Higher vaccination rates.
- More vaccinated and the CDC lifting their recommendations not to have medium to large indoor gatherings.
- Vaccine passports, availability of vaccines for children.
- I'm actually comfortable indoors if proper precautions are taken, but outdoor services have been good.
- We don't have objections to indoor worship but, if offered, we prefer outdoors until herd immunity is achieved.
- Mask free, no longer distancing. I can be patient.
- Just a little time.
- When the CDC says gathering indoors does not increase the risk of contracting COVID.
- The CDC/WHO declaring the pandemic over.

Congregation Council Highlights

A Special Called Meeting of the Congregation Council was held on Tuesday, May 4, 2021. The following are highlights of the meeting:

- The only agenda item was a recommendation by the Executive Committee and pastors to add an indoor worship option to the current digital and outdoor worship services beginning on Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2021.
- This addition of an indoor worship option was recommended at this time in light of the governor's easing of restrictions on indoor gatherings, updated guidance from the bishop, and the availability of vaccines.
- Survey responses from the Congregation confirm that a large number of members are interested in returning to modified indoor worship.
- The recommendation was approved.

A regular monthly meeting of the Congregation Council was held on Sunday, May 16, 2021. The following are highlights of the meeting:

- Approved a consent agenda including minutes of previous meetings and Ministry Council and committee reports not requiring action.
- Approved continuing the current plans for resuming indoor worship with the restrictions previously agreed upon, as CDC and government restrictions are eased, given that there are members of the congregation, including children, who are fully vaccinated.
- Approved a recommendation by the trustees to establish a line of credit against the Revell trust to help with the finance of future renovations, rather than taking funds directly from the Revell trust. There would be no cost to establish the credit line and no cost when we borrow against it. This would allow the trust to continue to grow and meet our current needs. This action does not impact the Congregation's role in approving large expenses.
- Appointed members of the Godfrey Miller Home Task Group in addition to other members to be added from the congregation. Those appointed so far: **John Matticks, Steve Thomas, Elizabeth Dame, Roger Milburn, Pastor Martha Sims, and Pastor Jonathan Boynton.**



Keri Mounts from Chick Fil-A came to surprise **Mrs. Phelicia Beachley** with the Awesome Sauce Teacher of the Year Award for her fantastic work this year piloting our virtual preschool program as well as instructing in person as students transitioned back in January or March. Mrs. Beachley did an amazing job connecting with families and students throughout the year on many different virtual platforms and in person. All her families came for the surprise and lined up in the alley way to wish her a much deserved congratulations!



SPECIAL THANKS TO PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR!

This year has been like none other in the world of Early Childhood Learning. As a congregation we give thanks for incredible work of **Jennifer Strickler**, Director of Grace Lutheran Preschool, and her staff.

At graduation, Jennifer told parents that the reason the preschool year was so successful was their trust in the school and their willingness to be diligent and cautious during this year. While that is true, Jennifer led this year in new and creative ways, while putting the safety of children and staff at the forefront of the ministry. The 2020-2021 school year was filled with less children and staff but the same excitement and joy that walks through the door each year. There was even a virtual 4-year-old class!

Jennifer's leadership, along with the staff's love for the children, allowed us to serve around 25 families, with the same commitment to "Learn, Play and Grow in a Faithful Community."

On behalf of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, thank you **Jennifer Strickler** and your staff for an excellent year!

CONSTANT CONTACT

Please sign up! If you have not signed up with Constant Contact email list, please do so at www.gracewin.org. This is an important way for us to stay in contact quickly and efficiently communicate with you, and also, where you will find links to our online worship services!

If you find you are not receiving the email, please check your junk/spam email folder, sometimes it gets placed there.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT



Our congregation has a rich history of Eagle Scouts, and some of them doing their final projects at the church. **Thomas Marsden** is the most recent Boy Scout to do his project at Grace. (like two of his brothers before him.) After 10 months of planning, numerous donations, and the planning/execution, Thomas led a team of scouts to build planter boxes for Church Alley. They provide safety barrier and

are also versatile creating outdoor class space. When you drive through the alley please admire our fresh new curb appeal! Thank you, **Thomas Marsden**, and thanks to all of our scouts over the years for their projects at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church!



- *New Worship Opportunities*
- *New Website*
- *Stewardship Thoughts*
- *Faith Formation News and Events*
- *Worship Survey Results*
- *Congregation Council Highlights*
- *Eagle Scout Project*
- *Special Thanks to Preschool Director*

Telephone: 540.662.6678
FAX: 540.662.6682
E-mail: grace@gracewin.org
Web Site: www.gracewin.org
Preschool: 540.678.0635
Godfrey Miller Center:
540.667.5869




Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
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THE PEOPLE OF GRACE - THE MINISTERS

- Martha Miller Sims - Pastor (msims@gracewin.org)
 Jonathan M. Boynton—Pastor (jboynton@gracewin.org)
 Joan R. Carroll - Parish Secretary (jcarroll@gracewin.org)
 T. Shafferman- Director of Faith Formation & Youth Ministry
 (tshafferman@gracewin.org)
 Beverly Dennis - Parish Administrative Assistant
 (bdennis@gracewin.org)
 Peter Stevens - Facilities Manager (pstevens@gracewin.org)
 Brenda Miles - Sexton
 Jason Gottschalk—Director of Music and Organist
 (jgottschalk@gracewin.org)
 Elizabeth Holmes - Children's Music Program Coordinator
 (eholmes@gracewin.org)
 John Romano—Interim Bell Choir Director
 Suzanne Reid - Assistant Treasurer (treasurer@gracewin.org)
 Erin Ritchey - Nursery Attendant; Jeanette Kline - ESL Nursery
 Lisa Zerull - Faith Community Nurse (nurse@gracewin.org)
 Jennifer Strickler - Director of Preschool (preschool@gracewin.org)
 - Director of Godfrey Miller Fellowship Center
 James H. Utt - Retired, Pastor Emeritus

Prayer Team
We invite all who are interested in caring for others through prayer to join the prayer team.
 Contact **Becky Swanson Stern**,
at prayerchain@gracewin.org

Prayers for those in our Military Services
 should include:
Seth Anton, Ben Bailey, Brian Baker, Chip Bierman, Brett Bozeman, Stuart Carper, Andrew Flanigan, Elizabeth Grove, Ben Grove, Ellen Haines, Mitra Haines, Pastor Nate Huffman, Tyler Manuel, Kristjan Rauhala, Brandon Reeve, Christine Sears, Alex Simpson, Danny Smith, Ronald Snyder, Cassie Trulock, and Scott Zerull.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Worship Service: In person Worship at Mount Hebron Cemetery at 8:00 a.m. and in the Sanctuary at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS
 Please call the church for hours

The deadline for input to the next issue of *TIDINGS* (covering July 1–31, 2021) is 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church is a Stephen Ministry Congregation.
 

stephenministry@gracewin.org