

Grace Methodist Church
 Growing Disciples of Jesus Christ
 901 N. Main St.
 Decatur, IL 62521

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m.	Worship in the Sanctuary
9:30 a.m.	Children's Sunday School
10:45 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
	Hebrews 10:25 Group
11:00 a.m.	Comcast Cable Channel 6
	Comcast Cable HD Channel 914

Anytime or any day, watch the service on our YouTube channel, Grace Methodist Church of Decatur Online. Our webpage is www.decaturchurch.com where you will also find a link to the worship service on YouTube.

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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Upcoming Sermons

July 30 -
 1 Peter 4:10-11
 Loving the church of Jesus Christ by using our spiritual Gifts and Talents - Part I

August 6
 Romans 12:4-8
 Loving the church of Jesus Christ by Using our spiritual gifts and talents, Part II

August 13
 Matthew 6:25-34
 Worry: Christ Jesus Tells Us Why Not to Worry

August 20
 Matthew 18:21-35
 Forgiveness and the Mandate to Forgive

August 27
 Ephesians 1:3-14
 Forgiveness and the Model of Forgiveness

Grace Notes

Grace Methodist Church • 901 N. Main St. • Decatur, IL 6252 • 217-429-5374
 Volume 169, Number 8, August 2023

Dear church family,
 Greetings!

I hope that you are well and staying cool in this hot weather. At the time of writing this newsletter, I am thinking about Ida Sutton who passed away this afternoon. She finished her course in this life and is now with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am thinking about her faithfulness to Christ and to the church all her life. I will miss greeting her at the end of the Sunday worship service and her smile. Please keep Ida's family in your prayers as they grieve their loss.

I thank God the Father for sending Jesus Christ who came to give us the good news of the forgiveness of sins, his abiding presence in us by his Holy Spirit, and the hope of eternal life. God's promise of eternal life gives us the hope that we will see our loved ones in heaven when we finish our time on earth or when the Lord returns to take us home. In the meantime, we continue to live for God's glory and give Christ to the world so that they may also have the gift of eternity.

These past two months we have been learning a great deal as to how God is accomplishing his mission through the church to save the world. On July 2nd we heard from Sarah and Joel, the missionaries in South Africa and the country of Mozambique, that our church supports, how God called them for his mission, and their encouragement for us at the Grace church to continue God's mission in our context.

Having Rev. Brian Choi and his family at our church was another blessing as we heard him deliver a wonderful sermon during the service. After the service, their presentation on Church Planting and mission, and their personal testimonies of God's call and faithfulness in directing them to go into church planting ministry were very uplifting.

Church family, let's be encouraged to join God's mission in the city of Decatur, surrounding communities, and overseas as the Holy Spirit leads us for the expansion and strengthening of God's kingdom in this world.

On a personal note, we were seeking God's direction for our oldest daughter Ria for her next step. In answer to our prayers, Ria felt peace as she prayerfully sought the Lord and applied to go to Asbury Seminary for MA in Christian Leadership. Please keep Ria in your prayers. Our niece Shannon will be returning from Korea by the end of July, after her summer vacation with her family. Vienna is growing in love with Jesus. She has started taking guitar lessons so that she can play at the worship service. Our little dog Nino is doing well too. Ruth and I are thankful to God for our church family.

I invite you now to pray with me for God's peace and comfort for those who have recently lost their loved ones and those who are recovering from surgeries and dealing with health concerns and other challenges in life. I am grateful to God for you all, you are a wonderful congregation! I am so blessed to be your pastor. Thanks be to God for the privilege and honor to serve Christ Jesus alongside you all!

With Love, prayers, and blessings,
 Pastor AP

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift His countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

DISCIPLESHIP

SOAPY Personal Daily Reading Schedule



We use our SOAPY daily readings for preparation for worship. You'll find the daily readings corresponding to the coming Sunday's message. As you read and study the texts, you will be preparing your hearts for worship and plowing up the ground for receiving the seed of God's Word. In case you have not yet engaged the SOAPY readings, you may wonder what is SOAPY? SOAPY stands for:

Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer and Yielding.

Here's how to put the SOAPY principles to work: You might want to keep a SOAPY journal for notes. If you are able to find a place of solitude for your time of reading, read aloud the Scripture passage for the day. Hearing the Word is a powerful spiritual discipline. Make some Observations in your SOAPY journal by asking these questions:

- 1) What is the **Scripture** about?
- 2) **Observe:** What does this passage mean?
- 3) What truth or teaching can I **Apply** to my life?
- 4) Then write and offer a **Prayer** that helps you
- 5) **Yield** more of your life to Jesus so that your study is not for information only, but for transformation as you grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ and into His likeness.

July 23	Genesis 1-2	August 13	Genesis 39-40
July 24	Genesis 3	August 14	Genesis 41-42
July 25	Genesis 4-5	August 15	Genesis 43-44
July 26	Genesis 6-7	August 16	Genesis 45-46
July 27	Genesis 8-9	August 17	Genesis 47-48
July 28	Genesis 10-11	August 18	Genesis 49-50
July 2	Genesis 12	August 19	Exodus 1
July 30	Genesis 13-14	August 20	Exodus 2-3
July 31	Genesis 15-16	August 21	Exodus 4-5
August 1	Genesis 17-18	August 22	Exodus 6-7
August 2	Genesis 19-20	August 23	Exodus 8-9
August 3	Genesis 21-22	August 24	Exodus 10-11
August 4	Genesis 23-24	August 25	Exodus 12-13
August 5	Genesis 25	August 26	Exodus 14
August 6	Genesis 26-27	August 27	Exodus 15-16
August 7	Genesis 28-29	August 28	Exodus 17-19
August 8	Genesis 30-31	August 29	Exodus 20-21
August 9	Genesis 32-33	August 30	Exodus 22-23
August 10	Genesis 34-35	August 31	Exodus 24-25
August 11	Genesis 36-37	Sept. 1	Exodus 26-27
August 12	Genesis 38	Sept. 2	Exodus 28

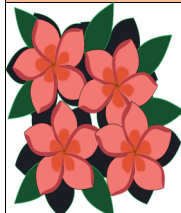



*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.
Jeremiah 29:11*

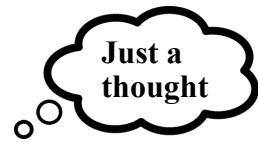


*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and Forever
.- Hebrews 13:8*

AUGUST 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 4:30 - Prayer Gathering	2 6:00 pm- Bells 7:00pm - Choir	3 10:00am- Women's bible study	4	5
6 9:30 am - Worship 10:45 - Hebrews 10:25 group	7 6:00 pm - Bible Study	8 4:30 - Prayer Gathering	9 4:00pm- Education meeting 6:00 pm- Bells 7:00pm -	10 10:00am- Women's bible study	11	12 Farewell Party for Alice and Glenna 2-4pm
13 9:30 am - Worship 10:45 - Hebrews 10:25 group	14 6:00 pm - Bible Study	15 4:30 - Prayer Gathering	16 6:00 pm- Bells 7:00pm - Choir	17 10:00am- Women's bible study	18	19
20 9:30 am - Worship 10:45 - Hebrews 10:25 group	21 6:00 pm - Bible Study	22 4:30 - Prayer Gathering	23 6:00 pm- Bells 7:00pm - Choir	24 10:00am- Women's bible study	25	26
27 9:30 am - Worship 10:45 - Hebrews 10:25 group	28 6:00 pm - Bible Study	29 4:30 - Prayer Gathering	30 6:00 pm- Bells 7:00pm - Choir	31 10:00am- Women's bible study		

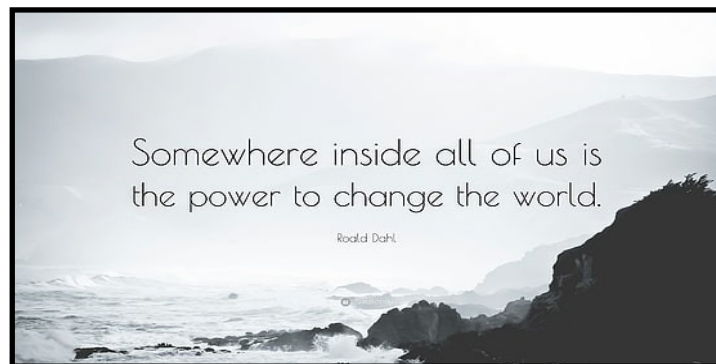
Sisters in Christ Bible Study is taking the summer off, and will restart on September 7th.



By - Arlis Dejaynes

Twenty-two years ago, I was privileged to be present when our first grandchild was born. Months earlier, we had been told about some problems with my daughter-in-law's pregnancy, including the fact that the baby's right hand was missing. Not certain yet of the exact cause, we were cautioned that it may indicate other problems, as well. After she was born and pronounced to be very healthy other than missing the lower part of her right arm, I went out of the room and shed not just a few tears. I cried because I didn't want her to do without. Without a hand. Without wholeness. Without friends, I feared. Without acceptance, I feared. I prayed in that hospital hallway for two things: that God would give her the strength, resilience, and talent that would allow her to cope with being "different," and that someday I would come to understand why God chose this for her. It didn't take long for God to show me the answer to my first prayer. On playgrounds, in preschool, and throughout her school years, Noelle seemed oblivious to the way people would stare or look askance at her. On the Forsyth Park playground, two boys saw her climbing the jungle gym and said, "You can't climb this with one hand." Immediately, she showed them that she could. Noelle had the personality that allowed people to see her smile first and then her hand. She had a fantastic preschool teacher who set the right tone with her and her classmates about her missing hand, and Chris and Sara were God-chosen parents for her and her sister, Caley. They never let her make excuses. She had to find her own way of doing things. At three, she was fitted for a prosthetic arm, and they showed her how to tie her shoes with the prosthetic. In the van on the way home, she took off the prosthetic and tied her shoes anyway. She was the first one in preschool to know how to tie her shoes. As I get older, I am more and more convinced that nothing is an accident or coincidence. Noelle was given the right parents, the right teachers, the right friends,

and people along the way who inspired her. A scholarship to DePaul University put her on a path to meet her coach, a former Olympian himself, who asked her to consider the Paralympic competitions. So many people have told me that watching her inspires them to be better people. Last year at the Phoenix Desert Games, two members of the Olympic committee told me she was inspiring to them, and I must say that when I see paraplegics or people with missing limbs in bicycle races, running competitions, and basketball games, I am inspired myself—and not just a little humbled at their drive, their talent, and especially their inner spirit and joy. God knew all along what path Noelle's life would take. Today, as I write this, she is flying home from Paris with a gold medal for breaking the world record for her category in shotput, and next year, she will be in Paris again for the Olympic games. A picture of her with the American flag wrapped around her shoulders and the gold medal around her neck put an exclamation point on God's answer to my second prayer that day she was born. There is a reason she has one hand. Every life has a purpose. Every breath has a reason. Our society has devolved into thinking that some lives don't matter. God answers a resounding rebuke of that. Every day you live, God has a purpose for you. Sometimes it may even be so that others can watch you walk through that day and be inspired by something you do or say. We think that girl is something special. We know God created her exactly as she is for a reason. He created me for a reason. He created you for a reason. Every breath, every step you take matters. There are no coincidences, no accidents. God called us by name, even before we were born. Isn't that just amazing?



Cha-cha-cha-Changes

Written by Carol Perry
And photos by Carol Perry

What started four years ago and seemed like a long way off is here. Bringing to mind 2 Peter 3:9

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

A big change came in May as we disaffiliated from the UMC and joined the Global Methodist Church. With that change came the need to change our name. We are now, *Grace Methodist Church*, which will soon be the lettering on the building.

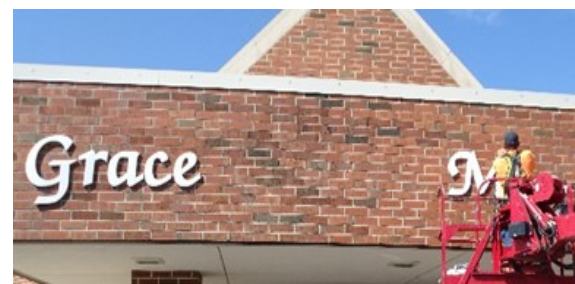
All of these things are good changes for the growth and future of Grace as we drop the baggage that has hung over us and start to move forward. Whenever something new comes along that's different the first thing we need to do is go to God in prayer and into His Word.

What does the Bible say about change and how can it inspire us in times of change? Change is something we tend to fear and become anxious about because we do not feel in control of life. The good news is that God has a plan for our life and for Grace that includes hope, future, and prosperity. We need to learn to trust in God and allow the change to grow us to become more like Jesus Christ. As you will recall our mission statement is "More People Becoming More Like Jesus" and that includes us.

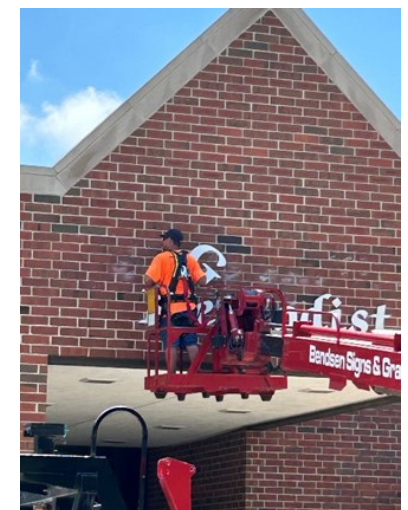
We are promised that all things will work together for good for those who love Him and keep His commandments. God is walking this life journey with us - His presence is always with us and guiding us. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. We need to follow his voice, which we can hear in prayer, in quiet times, while meditating on His Word, as well as words spoken to us by other people.

As you view some of the photos of the changes that are physically starting on the building, meditate on the verses that are mixed with them. Ask in prayer how the Lord can help you to bring more people to Jesus through the ministries at Grace and for more people to become more like Jesus.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.
2 Corinthians 5:17-18



See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.
Isaiah 43:19



**Operation Enduring Support
Requested Donations
2023 Christmas Care Packages for our Troops**

APO/FPO Addresses of Individual Soldiers


Letters from School aged Children
Candy Canes & ind. wrapped Christmas Candy
Beanie Babies
2024 Calendars
Puzzle Game books, Playing Cards
Gorilla Tape/ Duct Tape
Protein Bars / Granola Bars
Nutritional snacks, Pop Corn
Slim Jims & Beef Jerky (they really like these)
Nonperishable snacks with crackers (peanut butter or cheese)
Nonperishable chicken salad and Tuna/spreadable snacks with crackers *(**NO Pork items**)
Individually wrapped snacks (No chips- too easily crushed)
Individually wrapped Hard candy/Gum
Hand warmers
Individual powdered drink mix (such as Crystal Lite) & Hot Chocolate
Individual packets of Instant Coffee
Hanging Deodorizers (air Fresheners)
Solid Deodorant/**Gold Bond Powder 1 oz**
Unscented Body Lotion; Body Wash/Shampoo combo; Bath Sponges -(**NO BAR SOAPS**)
Hotel size Shampoo, conditioner, lotion
Eye drops / Chap Stick
Funky Character Socks
Q-tips (travel size), Chap Sticks, Band-Aids
Alcohol Free Wet Wipes, eyeglass wipes
Toothbrushes/Toothpaste
Black Ballpoint pens/ 4 x 6 note pads
Fine Point Permanent Markers
5 Blade Razors
Small American Flags
Greeting Cards
Monetary Donations (**POSTAGE FOR THIS MAILING IS \$21.20 PER BOX**) (12x12x5 ½)

OES will meet on Monday evenings starting on September 25th to get Christmas packages ready.

FINANCIALS

June 20023

YTD Income	\$347,860.80
YTD Expenses	\$285,055.78
Increase/(Loss)	\$62,805.02



August heat is on! Need cool summer clothing? The Economy Shop is the place to find it! Stop by soon to shop our clearance sales on remaining summer shorts, capris, slacks, blouses, knit tops, polos, T-shirts, dresses, shoes, and purses. Prices will decline weekly as we strive to make room for fall fashions.

The Economy Shop thanks the congregation of Grace Methodist Church for their continuing Generous support. Donations of clean, used clothing and household items can be dropped off on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to help cover part time vacancies. Please contact Judy Madding at 864-4522 or Marj Cline at 855-5060 if you are interested in volunteering.

Come join us at the shop!

GRACE FAMILY

We surround these families with Love & Sympathy

A thank you from Beverly Stern:

Thank you all again for the gift you gave the church and thanks to Dr. Paul for all of his work. Keep up the good work all of you. God bless all of you.
Sorry I can't get to church on Sundays.
With Bev's sense of humor her note was signed "Mel's old wife."

Contributions have been received in memory of the following:

Mel Stern:

Shirley Cribbet
Marilynn Logan
Jack & Joyce Keller

Diane Richardson (Gene Pride's sister):

Jack & Joyce Keller

Lester Bracken (Brenda Pride's father):

Jack & Joyce Keller

Greetings Church Family,
We hope you will save the date for the opportunity to wish Alice and Glenna farewell, as they leave to be close to family. They will certainly be missed by many in our congregation as faithful and caring followers of Jesus. This will be quite a move for them and I'm sure your words of encouragement and prayers will be much appreciated. Below you will find the details.
Hope to see you there.

Please join us for a
Farewell Party
In Honor of
Alice Eversole & Glenna Apsley



Saturday, August 12, 2023
Between 2:00 & 4:00 PM
Grace Methodist Church -
Fireside Room



RSVP TO Karyn - secretary@decaturgrace.org or 217.429.5374

FOUNDATION

Lupton Scholarship Applications.

If you are planning to apply for a stipend for the 2023 – 2024 school year from the Lupton Scholarship program, we ask that you submit your application by September 1st. Members of the Grace Methodist Foundation will meet shortly after that date to review the applications and award the stipends. The Foundation gratefully acknowledges a recent gift from Keith and Karen Alexander given in memory of Mel Stern. Please keep the Foundation in mind when reviewing your giving plans.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

BLESSINGS TO YOU ALL!

Summer is here and we are praying for rain. The farmers need it and so do those of you that have flower and vegetable gardens. The weeds are rapidly growing and even though they are God's creation, I am tired of pulling them out of my flower bed. We have been having some beautiful evenings to sit out and enjoy the sunsets. We give God all the praise and glory for blessing us with his beautiful vistas.

PRAYER WALK

Those faithful PRAYER WARRIORS are still meeting every Monday at 7:45 at Hope Academy to pray for the teachers and students. They would love to have a larger group; so why don't you join them. Listen to the Holy Spirit as he calls you to join this devoted group.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

These greetings are for all that are homebound or in care facilities



Aug. 1st, Junius Futrell,
Aug 7th , Beverly Stern,
Aug. 11, Penny Robinson,
Aug. 17th , Gerry Roustio and
Aug. 22, Shirley Schwesig.

If you do not know where to send a card feel free to call either Karyn or me at 429-5374.



THE LITTLE RED WAGON!

Thanks to the wonderful congregation at Grace, I always have something in that little red wagon to take to Oasis. They are very grateful and always help me carry items in and open the door for me. Jeff and his staff make sure that there is plenty out for them to enjoy.

God be with you and I'll see you next month.

Living under God's love and protection,
Mary Grace