

MAY 2024 Newsletter

IT MUST NOT DIE

You know how I sometimes ask you to do the “neighbor nudge” during a sermon?

Well, here’s one for you. What do these have in common?

- Printed encyclopedias
- Writing checks
- Fax machines
- Silverware, china and china cabinets
- Carpet everywhere (except kitchens and bathrooms)
- Travel agents
- Newspapers
- Paper maps
- Film cameras
- Cable TV
- VHS recorders
- Landlines
- Pagers

What they have in common is that most are gonna disappear as we baby boomers die off.

Here’s another list:

- Pot-luck dinners
- Egg coffee
- Scofield Reference Bibles
- Sword drills
- Hymn sings
- Flannelgraphs and easels
- Organs
- Sunday School Christmas programs

- Release time classes
- Home visitations
- Sunday night church services
- Evangelistic crusades
- Quarterly business meetings
- Faith-Promise pledges
- Sunday School quarterlies
- Offering envelopes
- Sermons on tape
- Suits, ties, hose, and heels

Which ones in the second list should we baby boomers demand that our kids and our grand-kids keep alive in our churches? Which ones have served their purpose?

If you’re like me, you don’t even realize when you’ve in-gold-cated a cow and sacred-ized it to idolatry status. I have to remind myself that what was impactful and meaningful for me won’t be for many who come after me. I rationalize, “But, it was sooo good!” (Key word: was.)

As Grace paddles through the rapids of change and adventure, we have a window of opportunity to hand off the ship’s wheel to our kids and grandkids. Let’s not do what I’ve done in past pastoral ministry and white-knuckle my grip on my church’s fine china and Kodak Flashcubes...cuz I knew better than anyone what **MUST NOT DIE!**? (Eyeroll here.)

--Steve S, Interim Pastor

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, SUNDAY, MAY 5

Members, please plan to attend the meeting that will be held immediately following the Worship service this Sunday. Grace members will vote on calling Jon Christenson to be our Sr. Pastor.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

May 19 - Final Bible Hour of Spring Term
May 26 - Sept. 1 - Worship Service 9:30-10:30a,
nursery provided & KidsChurch
Sept. 8 - Return to regular schedule

BAPTISM EVENT Sunday in Early June



If you are interested in following the Lord in believer’s baptism, please contact the office at office@gracefree.org or 763.784.7199

MOTHER'S DAY BOUQUETS

For those who placed orders - arrangements will be available for pick up MAY 12, following the Worship service, in the Commons.

Thanks to everyone who participated! Your kindness will make it possible for Grace Youth to attend the Challenge Conference this summer.



Please pray for the kids, their families, and the volunteers as the season wraps up.

FINAL Games will be played this Saturday, May 4th, 9a-3p, with a season-ending celebration at noon.

UPCOMING LADIES EVENTS

May 17, 12p-9p & 18, 9a-9p

Ladies Craftastic, bring your sewing, knitting, scrapbooking, etc to work on in your own space. Register at the Welcome Desk.

May 19, 1:30p-7:30p

Revive Women's Retreat, Isanti, MN
Register online at ReviveMNRetreat.com
Cost is \$64.00
Contact Cindy Markham to carpool.

Sept. 27-29

Camp Shamineau Rejuvenate weekend for Women
Register at: <https://shamineau.org> > rejuvenate-2
\$155/person

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER TEAM

Be a part of the Grace Prayer Team and intercede for those with urgent requests, and specific needs. Emails will be sent weekly on Saturday evenings, and as needed.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

(2nd Friday of each month)

Set up: 10am-3pm

Serving: 4:30pm-7:00pm

Clean Up: 7:00pm-9:00pm

MUSIC MINISTRIES OUTREACH

The Music Ministries Outreach, facilitated by Carol Clem, ministers to care homes in our area.

This ministry is growing quickly, and is in need of pianists, guitarists and ukulele players.

Pianists should read music and play simple hymns and easy secular music arrangements. Guitarist and ukulele players should read a lead sheet with chords.

Commitment is at your convenience. Serve when you can. And/or be a sub for pianist or guitarist and ukulele players.

Contact Carol Clem at 704.733.8085

Contact the Grace office at 763.784.7199 or office@gracefree.org for more information, unless otherwise noted.

GRADUATION OPEN HOUSES



Seniors, contact the church office with your Open House plans, and they'll be promoted in upcoming eblasts.

Grace Family Resources are now available at the West Commons Doors, while the Welcome Desk contains information that newcomers may find helpful.

KIDSMIN UPDATE:

Grace has benefitted from the service and ministry of Trisha Pull as our KidsMin Lead this year. However, as you have been informed before, her role on the Grace staff is coming to a close. Trisha has established some procedures and protocols that Grace plans to continue after her departure. Expressing your appreciation to her would be encouraged! She has been a dedicated, energetic, forward-looking, organized child of God (slash) staff member, who loves God, kids, and their families.

Here are some bits of information as we go forward with our kids ministries:

- Trisha's last official day as a staff member is May 31.
- Mariya Wiens is continuing in her staff role in Grace's KidsMin department.
- Sunday, May 19, is the last day of Kids Sunday School before the summer break.
- Nursery (9:30) and Kids Church (~10:00) are planned for the summer.
- Big Church will meet for all ages at 9:30am May 26 through Sept 1.
- VBS (YAK) has been suspended this June.
- A KidsMin Interim Leadership Team is being formed to work alongside Mariya.
- Plans are to navigate kids ministries next fall similarly to those of this last school year.

Contact the church office at 763-784-7199 or office@gracefree.org for the Camp Shamineau Code

\$50 Camp Scholarships are available to children of Grace church families for any Christian Bible Camps.
Please complete voucher below and turn in to the church office.



Christian Bible Camp
SCHOLARSHIP

\$50

Child's Name _____

Bible Camp Name _____

Highlights: 2024 North Central District Conference Annual Meeting

Liz Christie and I were blessed with the opportunity to represent Grace Church-Fridley at the Annual Meeting held April 8-9 at New Hope Church. The North Central District of the Evangelical Free Church of America includes most of Minnesota.

1. The Conference celebrated the ministry of David Linde, Director of Placement and Credentialing, who is retiring at the end of May. Frank Lanier will be taking on his duties in Pastoral Placement and Dave Abernethy will be serving our churches in Credentialing.
2. Additional staff changes include Kelly Larson, who is now serving as NCD Director of Finance, freeing Paul Anderson to increase his focus on the North Central Foundation, Resource Development, and direct ministry to churches.
3. It was announced that Dave Bliss (a longtime ReachGlobal missionary in Bulgaria) will be serving as our new Director of Missions Mobilization as of July 1st. Steve Austvold will continue to serve part-time alongside Dave to establish him as NCD's Mission Mobilizer for the future.
4. Kevin Kompelien, who transitioned on April 1st from EFCA President to serve as the 17th President of Trinity International University, greeted us in person on Tuesday morning. The EFCA Board of Directors appointed Carlton Harris, Executive Vice President of National Ministries, as Acting President of the EFCA to fulfill the remainder of Kevin Kompelien's elected term.
5. A highlight was the acceptance of two new churches for NCD membership: Living Hope Church in Maple Grove and Northside Neighborhood Church, North Minneapolis.

We were challenged through three keynote messages on "Faithfully Loving His Bride", delivered by Brian Berg, retired pastor of Woodlands Church in Plover, Wis. His messages explored why church leaders should consider loving the church they serve central to their calling; what it looks like to love a local church; and how to stay faithful to that calling for the long haul.

Liz and I enjoyed meeting new and old friends, plus connecting with missionaries supported by Grace. We attended ministry affinity groups and workshops including: "The Church and Gender Confusion," "Doing Excellent Missionary Care in Your Church," and "Care Ministries." We also attended the Shamineau Ministry Lunch where we heard an update on the exciting ministry happening at camp.

We thank the Elders for giving us this opportunity to represent Grace and to hear how "our NCD family of churches exists to glorify God by multiplying transformational churches among all people." Together we were encouraged to move forward in our commitment to evangelism, the Gospel, and the Scriptures.

Clara Nydam

JON CHRISTENSON **Candidate for Sr. Pastor**

In case you missed it, following are links to the documents that have been circulating about Jon's personal life and ministry:

Dossier:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g-UraHTTrFvVWDc8WouhhyrOq0_W8hs8P/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=106049923774398187949&rt_pof=true&sd=true

Questions/FAQ:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tzEzuEJLvmIWMJnCoq8-5MFgPEwaG6_b/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=106049923774398187949&rt_pof=true&sd=true

Family Video: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qxcZstCLRL6okF7Noaf41ZWz3rQpEUv/view?usp=drive_link

Search Committee process: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oCtIM72mFQfIqix906fi-wSWL3LwFbid/view?usp=drive_link

April Food Distribution Ministry Update

It was a very nice evening for the April food distribution, and we were able to serve about 250 families. We continue to receive comments from many of our guests and volunteers about how grateful they are for this ministry, and for the people of Grace, who so willingly donate to make this happen. Our guests are also very humbled that you pray for them, that you pray for people you don't even know. Thank you for loving on these people!

There have been several opportunities to develop relationships with our volunteers. This month, cards were made announcing the children's program "God Squad". Several of our volunteers were interested in coming and said they would be asking others to join them for the concert.

We almost ran out of the bags that we use for produce each month. On a whim, Mark stopped at Cub to see if we could purchase some from them. He told them about the food distribution ministry at Grace and the person said we could have some bags. When Mark wanted to pay for the bags, he was told that this was a great ministry to the community, and they were pleased to be able to donate them. We received 2000 bags and were told to come back when we needed more. Praise the Lord!!

Our Daily Bread has a quarterly devotional book that we were able to give to every guest as a gift from Grace. Several of our volunteers took one. They were also available in Spanish. It was an opportunity to encourage our guests through stories that they can relate to, with scripture passages to reinforce what they read.

There is a gentleman named William who has come for a couple of months now. He is not very talkative or open to sharing much. He seems sad, defeated, and all he ever says is "life is so hard". We have a lady who comes in a small pickup truck, towing a very old camper. This is her home, everything she owns is in this camper and truck. She keeps running out of gas because she doesn't have much money. It sits wherever it goes empty until she can find a way to fill the gas tank again. She is afraid she will lose her home because the Fridley police are threatening to impound both vehicles.

We ask that you pray for William and this lady. We ask that you pray for the many people who have shared a recent cancer diagnosis. Pray for the people who need reliable vehicles, jobs, and family reconciliation. If you would like to pray for all of the requests/praises we receive please send an email to mmmbfinn@aol.com (Michelle Finnestad) and we would be honored to add you to our email list.

Jerry Hunstad
Gayle Boswell
Kevin Morris
Michelle Finnestad
Matthew Finnestad

Grace Family,

Since last spring Grace Fridley has been buffeted by strong winds of change, beginning with the Vision Team's recommendations, the ministry evaluations, and Pastor Gerald's retirement. And those were just the beginning! Through the months, the elders have heard sadness, worry, regret, and trepidation from a number of our brothers and sisters, about one or another of the gusts of change. Even the exciting adventure of calling and welcoming a new senior pastor can bring anxiety to our church family.

That's okay. It's even healthy, to give expression to those feelings and unburden ourselves of them. Scripture tells us to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Putting something that weighs us down into spoken words to another person can break the power of that weight to discourage and dishearten us. Speaking the worry out loud can allow a friend to answer with words of hope and truth that our soul needs to hear.

So -- the elders would like you to remember that we are always available to hear your thoughts and concerns about the church, to talk through them and think about them together. We can't guarantee that we will agree with you, but we want to hear you out and to help, if we can. If one part of the body is hurting, that affects us all. We especially want you to bring concerns about changes in the church directly to us, so that we can provide -- or track down, if necessary -- the right answers.

The winds and waves toss, but the church sails on through any storm. Our Captain holds it all in the palm of His hand -- no, in the word of his mouth. Our trust is in Him, and we follow Him best when we follow Him together. Let's bear each other's burdens.

Brian Beecken - bbeecken@gracefree.org

David Caneday - dcaneday@gracefree.org

Eric Comer - ecomer@gracefree.org

Nick Keane - nkeane@gracefree.org

Tom Markham - tmarkham@gracefree.org

Joe Pull - jpull@gracefree.org

Bryan Seiffert - bseiffert@gracefree.org

Jeff Vogel - jvogel@gracefree.org

David Wong - dwong2@gracefree.org

Steve Schoepf - sschoepf@gracefree.org



The yearly church directory update is upon us! Please email me with any updates, additions, or negations you would like made. Let me know if you would like access to the directory and/or would like your profile to appear in the directory. Send these changes to me by **Sunday, May 5th**.

Also, in light of a possible new pastor joining the staff soon, we would like to add family pictures to Church Center profiles so that the new pastor can begin to put names to faces. If you would like to provide your own family photo, please email it to me. Otherwise, I will be stationed in the lobby for the next few Sundays, where I can take a quick family photo.

Blessings,

Hannah Hedlund – hhedlund@gracefree.org

Grace Calendar

Sundays:

- 9:15 am Bible Hour for All Ages, Nursery (0-3 yrs)*
10:30 am Worship Service, Nursery (0-3 yrs) and Kids Church (Ages 3-2nd Grade)**
5:30 pm Young Adult Bible Study & Dinner

Tuesdays:

- 6:30 am Fe² Men's Group
11:15 am Staff Meeting
7:00 pm Adult Volleyball

Wednesdays:

- 1:00 pm Hilltoppers Small Group
5:30 pm Fellowship Dinner***
6:30 pm Awana, Youth & Adult Bible Studies***
8:00 pm Orchestra Rehearsal

Thursdays:

- 6:00 am Ladies' Bible Study
5:30 pm Worship Team Rehearsal
6:30 pm Chorale Rehearsal

Fridays:

- 8:15 am Bread Ministry

Saturdays:

- 7:00 am Open Basketball

* 5/19 Final Bible Hour of the Spring term

** 5/26-9/1, 9:30 am Worship Service, nursery provided & KidsChurch (thru July).

***Wednesday evening dinner and classes will conclude on 5/8

May 2

- 5:30 pm Upward Practice

May 3

- 6:00 pm Game Night

May 4

- 9:00 am Upward Final Games & Celebration

May 5

Communion Sunday

- 11:30 am Congregational Meeting to vote on calling Jon Christenson to be our Sr. Pastor
1:00 pm Mia Knutsen's Open House

May 6

- 7:00 pm Youth Leaders Meeting

May 7

- 7:00 pm Adult Volleyball

May 8

- 5:30 pm Final Fellowship Dinner
6:30 pm Awana Awards Night and final classes

May 10

- 5:00 pm Second Harvest Food Distribution

May 12

- Mother's Day Flower Bouquets- may be picked up in the Commons*
10:30 am Youth Sunday & Sr. Recognition

May 13

- 7:00 pm Youth Srs. Graduate Reception

May 14

- 6:30 pm Missions Meeting
6:30 pm Elders Meeting
7:00 pm Adult Volleyball

May 15

- 3:30 pm Food Distribution
Leadership Meeting
6:30 pm KidsMin Interim Leadership Team Meeting

May 17

- 12:00 pm Ladies Craftastic

May 18

- 9:00 am Ladies Craftastic

May 19

- Term 3 Bible Hour Ends*
6:00 pm Taste & See Prayer Gathering

May 21

- 7:00 pm Adult Volleyball

May 22

- 6:30 pm Calendar Planning Meeting

May 26

- 9:30 am Worship Service (new Summer hours)

May 27

Memorial Day - Office Closed

May 28

- 6:30 pm Elders Meeting
7:00 pm Adult Volleyball