



THE FRIENDLY VISITOR

Grace Lutheran Church

To Remember

As I sit here in my office looking at the calendar for May, I cannot help but reflect upon Memorial Day, 2010. It was an odd day for me. Being new to the Brunsville, Iowa area I was asked to be the speaker for the town's Memorial Day celebration. I gathered with about 200 people as this town of about 140 people saw more than 200 flags placed in memory of veterans.

I was both humbled and scared by the experience. Why would a Lutheran pastor be the Memorial Day speaker, especially one with no military experience? In fact, there is very limited military experience in my family. It didn't make sense to me, yet I gathered with the people of Brunsville and offered words of hope.

The uniform of service is not something I have worn, but I do wear a uniform of sorts, a uniform known by its black tone and collar. It is a uniform that connects me with hundreds of years of ministry by countless pastors and priests. It is a uniform that has walked with countless families and veterans. We have seen so many flags folded and presented. We have seen dirt poured on so many caskets. We stand with families, as voluntary chaplains, and walk through these realities together.

In walking with families, I have found this to be true: these are stories of ordinary men and women placed in extraordinary circumstances. They are not stories about the achievements of an individual, but the narrative of the strength in the collective whole. They are stories of brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, mothers and fathers, some whose only experiences were at school playgrounds and ball fields, who were thrown into realities beyond comprehension. Our story, our history, began with the Minute Men of the Revolutionary War. Many of those men were not trained soldiers, yet together they could accomplish far more than as individuals. They were knit together as the very fabric of freedom. As it was said by Jed Bartlet on "The West Wing", "What began in the greens of Lexington & Concord, in the fields and farmyards of Gettysburg, in the trenches of Europe and the tropic hilltops of Iwo Jima, in the frigid nights of Korea and the tropic landing zones of Vietnam, in the desert sands of Iraq and the perilous Korengal valley of Afghanistan, that American Spirit, that willingness to sacrifice for the cause of liberty still lives on today in hallowed halls like these and in the hearts of those who served, and still serve today."

As I gathered with the people from this small town, in the midst of so many flags and names, the question haunted me: Who could stand under the weight of such loss? The truth is that no one could, not one. But together, we can stand. Our stories are all the same, whether in service or in the church. We embrace the truth that it is not about our individual achievement, but is always about the collective whole, gathered as the Body of Christ. There are many parts, but one body. The whole is much more than the sum of its parts. We are ordinary men and women, yet when working together we become something extraordinary. We are knit together in the same way. We lift up one another, whether sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, or neighbors. Together we stand. We are never alone. They are never forgotten.

Pastor Mike

Cottage Meetings, May 8 and 10, 7-9 p.m.

Would you like to be more involved but not sure how? Are there things you wish we were doing here at Grace? Do you have ideas for ministry, fellowship, worship, or a myriad of other aspects of the work of the community of faith known as Grace Lutheran? If you answered "yes" to any of those questions (or even if you didn't) mark May 8th and 10th on your calendars. From 7-9 p.m. on both nights we will have a mass gathering of ideas as we gather in groups to brainstorm on needs and ministry possibilities here at Grace. We will gather in 4-5 groups based on topics and then rotate every half hour to bring as many voices and ideas forward as possible. It is time to see where the Holy Spirit will lead us. We hope to see (and hear you) there!

**April 24, 2012
Everyone is Welcome!**

**Sunday Worship
8:15 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
Holy Communion at Both
Education Hour &
Adult Forum at 9:30 a.m.**

**Summer Schedule begins
May 27
Holy Communion at 9:00 a.m.
Coffee & Fellowship to Follow**

**Tuesday Adult Bible
Study Classes 8:45 a.m.
May 29- final class for the season
6:00 p.m. Bible Study Class
May 1 & May 8-final for season**

Contact Us

Pastor Michael Schmidt
pastormike@gracedm.org

Director of Laity Ministries
Stephanie Johnson
stephaniejohnson@q.com

Director of Music Ministries
Jennifer Wohlenhaus Bloomberg
jennwohlenhaus@yahoo.com

Director of Ensembles
Sherry Kocek
skocek@msn.com

Grace Kids' Care Director
Heather Nelson
heathernelsondc@msn.com
276-0943

Office Administrator
Jackie Holmes
worship@gracedm.org
276-6873

Office Assistant
Michelle Voelker
rvoelker1@mchsi.com

Receptionist
Diana Johnson
dianal.johnson@mchsi.com

Website
www.gracedm.org
276-6873
Fax 276-4048

- May 1** Margaret Olson
 Melinda Stickrod
2 Lillian Prickett
 Joshua Meadows
3 Helen Ringgenberg
4 John Roehrick
5 Vernon Fanning
 Michael Newell
 Jacqueline Wangerin
 Dylan Rutter
6 Ardis Olson
 Karla Swanson
 James Merkwan
 Daniel Dinnauer
 Hannah Honsey
8 Regan Nelson
9 Donna Kennebeck
10 Claire Kallestad
11 Jeffrey Farrell
 Jeffrey Rudisill
12 Charlotte Nielsen
13 Sally Preston
14 Frances Best
15 Laurie Helton
 Ellen Wonderlin
 John Kennebeck
 Dmitri Woodruff
 Katherine Bickel
16 Laura Wonderlin
17 Carol Krause
18 Inga Hoifeldt
 Kimberly Fenimore
 Lori Fry
 Tim Nehmer
19 Bruce Bergman
 Charles Denton
 Megan Jensen
21 Kenneth Carlson
 Barbara Zimany
 Brenda Mann
 Jacob Nordeen
 Christopher Janson
 Kaylee Ringgenberg
23 Jonay Trentmann
 Scott Neal
24 Melissa Newman
 Angela Chapman
25 Hal Turner
26 Shirley Davenport
 Devin Ashton
27 Sue Anderson
 Courtney Brandsfield
 Alexander Oberhart
 Andrew Oberhart
28 Willa Mae Johansen
 Linda Vernia
 Richard Fry
29 Ralf Hoifeldt
 Annette Taylor
 Kira Nehmer
30 Thora Henderson
 Loree Nelson
 Jonathan Fry
 Kiernan Hutton
31 Barbara Bergman
 Lindsey Nelson
 Brianna Adams
 Nathan Brown



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Grace Scholarship Fund

The Scholarship Committee is appealing to members of the congregation to support the Grace Scholarship program. The Scholarship program provides funds to Grace members attending Lutheran colleges or seminaries. In most cases the colleges offer matching funds for the students. Please support our young adults by giving to the Scholarship Fund.

Finance Report – March Results

Financial results for March YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$113,780, Budget \$112,048
- Other Income – Actual \$3,874, Budget \$4,261,
- Expenses – Actual \$119,169, Budget \$123,362
- Net activity – Actual (\$1,515), Budget (\$7,053)

Actual net activity was favorable to budget. Favorable expense activity is the result of certain expense activity that was budgeted but the actual expense has yet to occur. Additionally, savings was achieved due to lack of the Music Director position for a portion of the year.

In order to save paper and postage this year, we will only be distributing contribution statements twice (July and year end.) If you would like a quarterly statement, please call Jackie in the office.

The Finance Committee

Adopt A Space - A Clean Campaign!

Look around Grace. Do you see an area that needs some TLC? We have a Property Committee that coordinates large maintenance projects. Our Willing Workers are dedicated to light maintenance projects such as painting and repairs. Our custodian is contracted for general cleaning, floor maintenance and table set-up.

So...what about all of the rest? That's right, what about the housekeeping? It's something we all do at home, day to day, little by little -- dusting, straightening, surface washing, and de-cluttering. What a difference it makes when we do that for our church home as well.

A few areas of our church are already cared for in this way because of a group of folks who volunteer in the space. Three examples are the Library (by the Library Committee); the plants (by the Garden Club); and the office cared for by the folks who work there. We all feel good in a space that is fresh and inviting. Are you willing to choose a space (or even a whole room) and commit to looking after it on a regular basis? You can do it on your own or even with a group of friends. Some things can be done each time you pass by and for others you will want to bring a few supplies. You'll know when it's time to do the work, because you're looking and can see that it needs attention. And the great part is you can schedule the task whenever it's convenient for you.

There are three simple steps for getting started:

1. Look around (table tops, walls, baseboards, counters, seats, shelves, stairways) and notice the dirt and clutter.
2. Pick a space or a room (big or small, depending on your time and ability).
3. Take it under your wing and keep it clean and tidy.

That's all it takes. It doesn't even matter if someone chooses the same space. That area will simply look extra clean!

As an initial point of communication, you'll find sign-up charts hanging on the brick wall in the Gathering Hall. I'm sure you'll get ideas from one another and you'll also be able to see areas that still need attention.

Let the campaign begin! Help our facility shine with CARE!

May 2 Michael & Tina Meadows

6 Mark & Annette Taylor

7 Justin & Carolyn Andersen

7 Jon & Cherie Rissman

11 Carter & Carol Woodruff

14 Richard & Betty Hirschauer

14 Steve & Mary McCann

14 Drew & Karla Tillotson

15 Matt & Amy Ziska

18 Matt & Tammy Hagerty

22 Michael & Susanne Carney

22 Wayne & Debbie Curry

23 Bill & Joann Jensen

23 Richard & Michelle Voelker

25 Lyle & Norma Black

25 Robert & Prudence
Campbell

25 Harlan & Jayne Mortenson

25 Robert & Jeanette Ziesman

27 William & Linda Biegger

27 Todd & Angela Ringgenberg

30 James & Kimberly Fenimore

31 Duane & Linda Ulrick

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Why Do We Give?

Our Salvation was paid for by Christ's obedience to God's Will. It is free to us. What we offer (give) to the church is not in payment for or a prepayment to help pay for eternal life.

Then why do we give to our congregation, to our SE Iowa Synod and to our National ELCA? We give because the Holy Spirit of God moves us to share with others what God has given to us. Why? Because we are thankful for what Jesus has given to us in this life and the assurance of eternal life. We want to be obedient to what we know is God's will.

We show our obedience by being generous in meeting the needs of our congregation and its efforts to serve others locally.

We show obedience by generously giving to our S.E. Iowa Synod so they can extend the mission of God to people and situations we cannot reach – supporting local congregations to minister more effectively, to support the work of pastors and lay people in ways we cannot do as a local congregation.

We show our obedience to God by helping our Synod be generous in its support of the National Church, ELCA, work of starting new churches, in training pastors in ministry, in helping at times when disasters strike parts of our country and world – floods, hurricanes, earth quakes, disease and malnutrition.

Why do we give? Because we know God wants us to. Because we know it helps get results.

- 60 new congregations begun last year to spread the gospel, to help and support people in their lives of faith, to found new centers to do God's work.
- 163 congregations helped to renew their ministries rather than close their doors
- 50 young adults trained to spread the gospel and serve around the world
- 43 scholarships given to promising young leaders to be trained to be international leaders of the church in foreign lands

Because of your obedience in giving, God's will is being accomplished.
The Grace Stewardship Committee



Senior Members Meeting Featuring the Grace Brass

Announcing a Grace Brass "event" Sunday evening, May 6, in Grace Hall. Come for a light supper at 5:00 p.m. Sponsored by an all-church fellowship group, the Senior Members.

Exercise and Aging

Exercise is for people of all ages, even for those of us over the age of 60. Exercise can strengthen bones and muscles, improve your balance, prevent falls, and keep you active longer. A wonderful resource is a free book and DVD from the National Institute on Aging, "Exercise and Physical Activity" and the DVD "Go 4 Life". Three copies of this book and video have been ordered for our library. Take a copy with you on your next doctor's visit to get approval for you to start this program.

You can go online and order your own free copy at: National Institute on Aging then click on Exercise and physical activity. If you do not have a computer, a friend may order an extra copy for you or call 1-800-222-2225. You can do these exercises alone at home or ask a friend to join you. You don't need a lot of fancy equipment, just a chair, a towel and some light weights (2 or 3 #). Get started and maintain your health!

You're invited to an afternoon of music...

Piano & Trombone Solo Recital

Presented by Grace's own...

Adam Dostalik

Sunday, May 20 at 2:00 p.m.

Temple for Performing Arts

1011 Locust Street, Des Moines

Thank You

Men in Mission want to thank everyone who attended the Easter Pancake Breakfast. Hopefully everyone had a great meal and enjoyed the fellowship of the Grace family. A special thank you goes out to everyone who helped with this special event and we hope to do it again next year.

Norm and I want to say thanks to Grace Lutheran Church for the prayers from the Church, they help, and for the beautiful Easter lily that was delivered to his room at Calvin Community. God bless you,

La Rue Buihner

A thank you to my friends at Grace for the beautiful Easter lily that was at my door on Sunday when I came home from my visit. I enjoy it so much. God bless you all,

Palma Williams

The Easter lily is beautiful. I'll always remember your kindness. Thank you so much.

Chris Lehfeld

I appreciate the thoughts and being remembered with the beautiful Easter lily.

Betty Maycock

Thank you for the Endowment Grant money for the Kidsight program. The Kidsight program is a program sponsored by the Lion's Clubs and carried out by the Lion's Clubs through out the state of Iowa. Don Peterson, Dave Gronert and I are members of the Des Moines Host Lion's Club. We go to preschools (including Grace Kids' Care) and take pictures of the children's eyes, checking for early eye problems so they can be corrected early. The money will be used for a digital camera. Thanks again

Len Ringgenberg

Sympathy Is Extended

To the Selander family on the death of Tom's father, Donald Selander, of Galesburg, IL. Donald passed away on April 8, 2012, at Seminary Manor. His funeral was held at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Galesburg.

To the Reha family on the death of Dennis Reha of Adair, IA. Dennis, father of Tim Reha (Robyn), and grandfather of Lee, Katey, Kynedee and Pressly, passed away on April 19.

To the Gronert family on the death of Linda's mother, Shirley Hummel, of Whiting, IA. Shirley passed away on April 20, 2012 at the Pleasant View Care Center in Whiting. Her funeral was held at Skien Lutheran Church in Sloan, IA.



An Invitation

You are invited to help us celebrate Jason Fry's graduation at an Open House on Saturday, May 19, from 4-7:00 p.m., at our home at 701 Brick St. SE, Bondurant, IA 50035.

Attention high school graduates!

On Sunday, May 13, we will be honoring all those who will be graduating from high school this spring. The recognition will take place at both services, so you and your families are welcome to come to whichever one you choose. There will also be an informal reception held at 9:30 a.m. If you are planning to be there on that day, please RSVP to Stephanie Johnson by Monday, May 7 so that we can plan accordingly. In addition, please mail or email (stephaniejohnson@g.com) a 3-5 sentence paragraph (about 60 words) about your current high school and any future plans for the coming year or years. We will print the bios in that week's bulletin. Please note that long submissions will be edited for space. Congratulations to the graduates!



Summer is on the way!

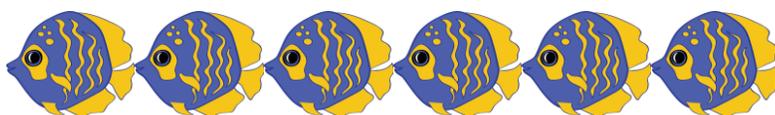
With the end of another school year rapidly approaching, VBS is right around the corner! **Registration and volunteer packets** are available in the Gathering Hall and on Grace's website under the Education tab. There are separate forms for preschool (yellow), elementary (green), and volunteers (purple). Last year we had 100 children in attendance, so get your forms in soon! We also love our volunteers, and if you would like to help, grab a volunteer packet or go to <http://www.volunteersignup.org/83LCQ> for the preschool week or <http://www.volunteersignup.org/CMQYJ> for the elementary week and follow the easy instructions provided.

Snack and supply donation lists will soon be available as well.

**Week 1: June 11-15 for preschool divers ages 3-5
(potty training required)
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Week 2: June 25-29 for divers who completed grades K-5
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. or 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
(aftercare available from 4-5:30 p.m.)**

Questions? See any member of your VBS Planning Team: Beth Flannery, Julie Honsey, Stephanie Johnson, Kristin Medhurst, Jim Merkwon, Ardis Schmelzer, Michelle Voelker. See you this summer!



Minutes
Grace Lutheran Church Congregation Council Meeting
March 27, 2012, 7 p.m.

Present: Kathy Bowermaster, Julie Honsey, Kristin Medhurst, Jim Merkwon, Gary Nehmer, Carla Peterman, John Roehrick, Ardis Schmelzer, Rich Snyder, Jay Wangerin, Pastor Mike Schmidt.
Absent: Mary Freimuth Helt

Pastor Mike led devotions from *Bread for the Journey*: "Where mourning and dancing touch each other..."

The meeting was called to order and the agenda was adopted with changes to the order of items and two additions.

Minutes from the February meeting were accepted as printed.

Staff reports were presented in written form. A report from Jennifer Bloomberg, Director of Music Ministries, will be included beginning in April.

The Financial Report was presented. A question was raised about the utility budget/billing. It was clarified that the utilities budget is divided into 12 equal amounts for budgeting but only actual costs are paid each month. It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the printed reports as presented.

Old business:

As a follow-up to council discussions about present and future staffing needs for the church, Jay Wangerin presented some preliminary information from the property committee regarding our custodial services. Basic divisions of service include snow removal, lawn care, and inside cleaning. The committee has not developed any specific recommendations for future custodial services but was asked to continue researching the topic.

Congregational prayer – A small group met to develop recommendations for a new congregational prayer that would be easy to recite, learn, and memorize. Pastor Mike presented the draft prayer and after some discussion the council arrived at the following version: *God of love, have mercy on us. Pour out your spirit upon us. Center us in worship, hold us in grace, strengthen us in love, send us forth in mission. In Jesus' Holy name, Amen.*

The committee will email the final version to the council and perhaps the prayer can be introduced on Easter Sunday.

Filling appointed positions - Council: Rich Snyder will check with Mary Helt for names of potential candidates to finish out the term of the vacant council seat.

Synod Assembly: We are looking for two representatives (lay voting members) of Grace to attend the June event. They do not have to be council members. Rich asked Pastor to mention this in Sunday morning announcements.

Mutual Ministry: Members are appointed by the council president and the Pastor. Current members are Gary Nehmer, Kristen Snyder, Verda Swanson. Carla Peterman volunteered for the committee. A total of six persons are needed.

Executive Committee of the council: Carla Peterman

Committee night -

It was moved, seconded and passed that the standing committees (those established by constitution and bylaws) meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m., beginning June 19.

New Business:

The Scholarship Committee has reported that its funds are inadequate to meet the anticipated demand this year. The council moved, seconded and passed a motion to allow the committee to solicit donations from the congregation.

The Finance Committee has drafted a framework for a two-stage debt reduction campaign: 1) An appeal for one-time gifts in 2012 (August-October timeframe for pledging and payment) to reduce the principal when the interest rate resets. 2) Another campaign in 2017 prior to refinancing the loan. It was moved, seconded and passed to allow the Finance Committee to begin planning the debt reduction campaign. Representatives from the committee are invited to the April council meeting for more discussion.

Pastor Mike reported that a Grace family with a hospitalized member is in need of financial assistance. The family has not asked for assistance, but the Social Ministry committee would like to host a meal or some other kind of fundraiser for the family. It was moved, seconded and passed to approve a fundraiser.

Music ministry staffing - Pastor Mike reported that the search committee recommends hiring Sherry Kocek as ensemble director. She would be responsible for directing adult bell choir and Chancel Choir, and developing a Thursday night worship service beginning this fall and running through the program year. The salary package would be \$14,000 annually with \$400 for continuing education and no benefits for the part-time position. It was moved, seconded and passed to present an offer to Sherry Kocek.

Announcements -

The Property Committee is installing a drop ceiling and new lighting in the west entrance hall. The existing hanging lights would be moved to the south entrance. Funds for the project are covered by the budget surplus (reduced salaries for music staff and reduced cost for snow removal). They hope that new directional signage will be installed by Easter.

Rich Snyder thanked the council for the many expressions of thanks as he wraps up his position as interim organist.

Discussion was held about the possibility of a part time youth staff position. Kristin Medhurst and Jim Merkwon, along with Stephanie Johnson and representatives of youth, education and personnel will begin assessing the needs and working on a job description. They will report back to the council in May.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Bowermaster, Secretary

Congratulations

to the
**Grace Kids' Care
Class of 2012**



Good luck in kindergarten!
We know you are ready and you will have a great time!

We are proud of you!

Miss Heather

&

Staff at Grace Kids

Grace Kids' Care Preschool Graduation

May 20 at 2:00 p.m.

Grace Hall



Garage Sale, Bake Sale, Plant Sale Pick-up, Annual and Perennial Plant Sale, Breakfast and Lunch

Saturday, May 5
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Grace Hall and the parking lot

The High School youth and families are hosting this sale to raise money for the National Youth Gathering.

You can contribute by coming to the sale or by donating items.

Anyone can donate:

Garage sale items: Books, tools, small furniture, toys, clothes, housewares, clean and in good condition. (please, no golf clubs, golf carts, air purifiers or humidifiers, as Goodwill won't accept these.) Please bring donations to Grace Hall II beginning at noon Tuesday, May 1 through 5 p.m. Friday, May 4. Questions? Call Linda Gronert 254-0687 (home number) or you can email Chuck Denton at chastam@mchsi.com.

Baked items for Bake Sale: Please bring items to Grace Hall by 8 p.m. on Friday 5/4 or 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, 5/5. Questions: Susanne Carney 255-8073.

Perennial Plants: Perennial donations may be made Saturday morning, between 7 and 8 a.m. Please donate potted plants and provide the following information: Name of plant, sun or shade requirement, and flower color. Questions: Michelle Voelker 279-9283.



Grace Giving Garden

Watch for big changes in the garden! We're adding compost, a permanent new fence, and have new tools. Thank you to the Izaak Walton League for tilling and to the Willing Workers for all their smiling help and work. The Sunday school classes have started seedlings and will soon be helping transplant them into bigger pots.

This garden is a Grace Community Garden – while we give a larger percentage of the produce to the Food Pantry, it is also available for you. Come to the Forum on May 20 to hear about what is growing, how you can help (weed, water, give advice), and benefit too. We work together, do good together, learn from and share with each other.



Grace Music Ministry

Plan to enjoy the music on May 20. This will be our Music Sunday and all Grace ensembles will participate in worship music during both services.

Do you have a musical talent you would like to share? Please volunteer to share it with us this summer during worship. Look for the "Summer Music" special music sign-up in the Gathering Hall.

2012 Lutheran Lakeside Camp Quilt Auction

The Lutheran Lakeside Camp Quilt Auction held at Grace on Saturday, April 14th, was a **HUGE SUCCESS!** Over \$33,000.00 (including \$7,000.00 matching funds from Faith Lutheran Church, Odebolt) was raised for the Camp to be used for their Outdoor Ministry.

Thank you to all the members of Grace who volunteered their time and talents for this event. Your willingness to help is greatly appreciated whether you made quilt items for the auction; donated food items for the lunch; provided a monetary gift in lieu of quilts/food items; helped the day of the auction; helped spread the word by inviting friends to attend; supported the cause by your attendance; or bid and bought the quilts. Hosting the Quilt Auction requires many months of planning and organizing; but, with such wonderful cooperation from the members of Grace, it makes it all very worthwhile and rewarding.

Thank you to Jackie Holmes and the office staff for being so gracious in receiving quilts from the other churches around Iowa and for helping with the publication of the description booklet. Thank you to Beth Flannery and crew for preparing and serving the lunch--it was delicious! Thank you to Jonathan Fry and Pastor Mike for providing the entertainment prior to the Auction--GREAT FUN! Thank you to the Grace Youth who helped show the quilts during the auction--you did an awesome job! Those unable to attend missed a great day. The Quilt Auction is always a lot of FUN!

Helen Ringgenberg, Carol Krause, Gail Peterson

Intergenerational Gardening Event

Sunday, May 20

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Grace Hall

Garden activities for people of all ages

Sunday School Recognition

Sunday school staff – please attend one of the worship services on Sunday, May 20, to be recognized for your dedication to the Sunday school program this last year.

Parent/Child Sunday School Sessions Continue

There were two sessions for middle school youth and their parents. The topics were *Having Friends* and *Self Esteem*.

The 4th and 5th graders are having two classes with their parents. These two sessions are about *The Apostles' Creed*. The second session will be on April 29.

The preschool class will have two classes in May. They will be on May 6 and 13. These two sessions are titled *The Keys*. They will be about saying, "I'm sorry" and forgiving others.

These sessions have been a fun way to bring parents/grandparents and their children together to learn about different topics. Each session is a mix of large groups, family group discussions and fun activities. Most of the lessons were from the Together In Faith curriculum.