

GRACE NOTES

News from and about Grace Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

#20

September 2009

Sunday School News

Sunday School begins on September 27. Jotham and Marie Ippel will be coordinating this program, although at first they wondered if they were qualified, since they don't have the gift of singing funny little duets together in church! After meeting with the Education Committee and the Knoester's to get ideas from past years, the Sunday School is going to incorporate a few new things this year: We want to work out a carpooling system to help families get their children to Sunday School. A light breakfast will be offered at 9:45 a.m., before Sunday School starts. The schedule is: 9.45 a.m. breakfast; 10:00-10:15 a.m. singing led by Manny Phillips; 10.15a.m. --10.50 a.m. classes. We are trying to arrange carpooling for interested families.

The Elementary classes will be using Kid Connection -- a new curriculum from Faith Alive. Katie Timmermans and April Monker are teaching K-2nd grades. Pat Stubbs and Kim Van Harn are teaching 3-5th grades.

The Middle School class will be doing Walk with Me materials covering



a range of topics from diversity to sharing your faith, to making tough choices. This class is taught by Anthony Owens and Andy Kok.

The High School class will be using the

Questions in the Chatechism and will be interviewing members of the congregation about their journey of faith. Teachers for this class are Becca Timmermans, Karl Westerhof and Carena Shannon. Substitute teacher will be Jim Decker.

Harry Lew is organizing the Adult Education class.

We are very aware of God's faithfulness at Grace Church as we look at the wonderful group of people that are committed to nurturing the faith of our youth. If you would like to participate with any of these activities - the carpool, providing breakfast, or participating in the "Journey of Faith" project either as a leader with the class, or as someone willing to share your faith story, please talk to Jotham or Marie Ippel. And, as always, continue to pray for the youth of our community!

Marie and Jotham Ippel

GEMS

The GEMS Girls Club program will be starting again on September 16. The theme this year is "Prayer: No Worries." Look for the GEMS to participate in worship at Grace as we learn more about prayer!

We have a wonderful group of leaders; Barb Hamlin, Amanda Hart, Jill Hauseman, Megan and Barb Haviland, Marla Hoekwater, Marie Ippel, Melanie Karr, Eileen Kooreman. Some who come every meeting, and others who come when they can. If you would like to join this program, please talk to any GEMS counselor.

CADETS

Mary Nasca is coordinating this youth program for boys at Grace Church. The Calvinist Cadet Corps is an international, church sponsored, church club organization that is involved in building tomorrow's leaders today.

Here is the heart of the Cadet organization. Boys and their counselors working side by side on Bible lessons, Christian service projects, outdoor activities (camping, cycling, hiking, canoeing, and much more), and working on merit badge projects -- selecting from a wide range of interests and skills. The 3rd grade Junior Cadets will work on beginning merit badge projects so that they can advance in rank.

The 4th, 5th, and 6th grade will explore a wide range of interests and skills as they work towards the more than 100 badges towards the goal of becoming either a recruit, a pathfinder, or a builder of ministries.

Cadets will begin meeting on Thursday September 24 at 7:00 p.m. Call Mary at 452-8920 for more information or visit the website: www.calvinistcadets.org

FROM THE GRACE HOUSE

Oh yes it's exciting and a privilege to travel to Jackson, MS and do projects and do Bible study with John Perkins! BUT.... It's just one week out of our lives. And "real life" is here in Grand Rapids - day



to day living together, doing our jobs, taking our classes, taking out the garbage, putting up with each other's odd behaviors and even maybe learning to get along. Living the eternal life now, as Dr John taught us, is not always glamorous, and it takes persistence.

In Jackson we found fire ants, and frequent rain, bees, humidity, and mud like you wouldn't believe. We also found a few moments here and there to think in new ways about what it means to live faithfully Christ-like lives in the every day humdrum.

And even in the every day, God's grace breaks through. A phrase of Scripture holds us for an extra moment. We glimpse appreciation for someone who bugs



Bible Study with Dr. John Perkins

us. We feel forgiven, or we learn a new game together.

Neighborhood kids call our names with joy when they see us. And they ask us the hard questions, good questions, about where you go when you die, and what is a Christian, and why shouldn't we kill every

bug we see, and do you have any more books, and do you think gangs are bad.

Elderly neighbors are asked if help is needed. A conversation takes place at the Pantry. Interest in Cadets begins to build. Friends in the neighborhood come for help with transportation to the emergency room on a couple of occasions. There is a good working relationship with Well House and opening of relationships between their ministry and ours. Relationships are fostered through Grace's garden. All of that stuff didn't happen by accident; it takes hard work. Transformation happens slowly like a glacier sometimes. We are learning to keep our eyes open to the Holy Spirit at work.

Karl Westerhof

StreetFest 09..... Saturday, September 5, 2009



Answer: A whole lot of cleaning, digging, clipping and sweeping gets done for that church. The students were one of the groups that Calvin sent throughout Grand Rapids to work on service projects. At our church, some people trimmed shrubs, dug up weeds and cut the grass. With Tom standing on top of the church, branches of the large Maple tree were cut back while

Question: What happens to a church building and its' grounds when 12 Calvin College students, dressed in work clothes, arrive by bus on a Saturday morning and are welcomed by four Grace Church Facility Committee members (Dave Vander Hart, Steve Van Kooten, Tom Vander Laan and Mary Van Harn) who are handing out tools, garden equipment and cleaning supplies?



students picked up the branches and put them in Tom's trailer. Glass and litter were picked up from the playground and the area cleaned. All the windows around the church were washed. Several inside walls were scrubbed. Some tables were washed and some sanctuary chairs cleaned.

What did the students learn? Besides learning that old newspapers are great for cleaning windows and that S.O.S. pads work well on scuff

marks on walls, they learned about the mission of Grace to be a witness in this neighborhood and the rewards of serving others, What did the Facility members learn? They learned that a whole lot of work can get done when you get a group of dedicated, hardworking young people together. And, maybe they learned that working physically for a day proves that they don't have bodies that are 18 years old.

Grace Church Facilities Committee

New banners for Grace Church.

Several people have been working behind the scenes to create new banners for Grace Church. Some have done that with financial contributions others have been involved in the production. The reason for changing the banners is that the old felt banners have lost their color and are falling apart. Some were created as far back as 1968 and have served us well in worship in the "old church" and in the current sanctuary. The first quilt banner was created after we completed the Pall some years ago. Ted and Ellen Rottman commissioned Chris Stoffel and Greta Overvoorde to create the Pall. Later



Ellie Van Harn added some wonderful quilting to the Pall. That first quilt banner is the Easter Banner and we have begun to use this banner throughout the year when we have funeral that use the Pall. Chris did the design and Ellie Van Harn did the construction and quilting for the Easter banner. The second banner was the Pentecost banner which was a redesign of the old felt image.

Now we have completed the banner for Ordinary Times, which was based on the concept of the flowering cross. The season of Ordinary Times emphasizes the concept of Christian growth. We grow in Christ in our daily walk with him and it is in his grace that we can do that. It is the flowering cross which reminds us of that visually. Green is the major color for this banner.



Ellie Van Harn with the new quilt banner

The next banner has been approved by the Worship Committee and is in production. It will replace the wooden cross we have used in the past. The cross is too heavy for the wires that we use to install it. The new quilt banner will be much lighter.

The design is now completed and Chris and Ellie will go to the quilt store to select the various colors and patterns needed to create this work. Ellie will wash all the materials, cut

out the patterns and construct the image according to the actual size paper design Chris has made. When the construction is completed, backing and padding will be added. It is afterwards that



the final quilting is done. It is all very time consuming, but once it is done it will assist us in our worship in which that

are not easily put

into words. It will be something for our eyes rather than our ears, which is another way to praise and glorify God.

Chris Stoffel Overvoorde

