

Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn

493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
www.graceglenellyn.org
Return Service Requested

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod - ELCA

MONTH OF AUGUST 2024
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Grace To You is the monthly newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn.

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FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Several people asked for a copy of this sermon. One asked that I preach it again. With that in mind, I provide a copy of it for all of you.

The text is Mark 5: 21-43. May it be a blessing!

There are three miracles in the fifth chapter of Mark. In the first miracle, a man comes to Jesus bound in chains, bleeding from deeply inflicted cuts, controlled by demonic forces. Jesus cast out these demons. He frees this man from the demons that plagued him.

In the second miracle story, Jesus encounters a woman with a terrible disease that is sapping the very life out of her. She has a continuous flow of blood that is slowly but surely killing her. She reaches out and touches the hem of Jesus' garment and instantaneously the bleeding is stopped.

And in a third miracle a little girl has died, 12 years old...the time when most girls are engaged in Jesus' day... Mark wants us to know that she has her whole life ahead of her which makes her death all the more tragic. Jesus raises this young girl from the dead.

So, the first thing I want all of us to hear this morning is that if you a man...if you are a woman...if you are a child, Jesus cares for you and for your needs. I say that because 2/3 of those identified in these miracle stories—a woman and a child--in Jesus day, were considered persons of no account. Women and children didn't count. *Well in the Kingdom of God they count, as attested to by these three consecutive miracle stories and have God's attention and love as much as anyone else.* "Identity" of any kind, does not exclude anyone from God's love and care. And in Mark chapter 5, God sends us this message.

Whatever disease you have—be it emotional, physical, spiritual, or everyday fear of death and loss, Jesus has a word of peace and healing for you. The **conventional wisdom** of Jesus' day associated disease with disobedience...Jesus does not. When asked in John's gospel (John 9:1ff) by the disciples about a man who had been blind from birth, "Who sinned? This man or his parents?" Jesus replies (clearly) "neither." *There is no impediment to God's care associated with sin, gender, age or nationality.*

So let's look at the diseases confronted by Jesus in this 5th chapter and what they **theologically** teach us about the character of God.

The first miracle illustrates that Jesus has authority over demons (emotional dis- ease) of every kind. The second, that God has authority over physical disease, and the third that God has authority over death. *None of these things are permanent. All can be overcome. And it is faith that overcomes them.*

Which of these issues do you want to point your faith toward today? I will focus on this second miracle for the moment: the woman, who is suffering from the flow of blood for 12 years, because her malady is most common among us and the remedy to this disease, is the same as for the other two.

Here are the circumstances surrounding the woman with the flow of blood. Jesus is surrounded by a tremendous crowd. People are pushing and shoving just to get a glimpse of this man from Galilee. This very sick woman is moving among them! We can imagine the toll this disease must have taken on her: She was broke from medical bills; all the procedures she endured over 12 years had made things "worse" the text says. She is physically weak, emotionally spent, and now desperate. *Can you relate to those symptoms? If so, where are you **moving** your concerns?*

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GRACE TO YOU

Proclaim, Build, and Serve



SUNDAY AND ZOOM WORSHIP

Sunday worship at Grace is at 10am followed by refreshments and Christian fellowship at 11:00am.

We also offer Zoom for our Sunday worship service. If you need a bulletin, remember you can view (on another device) or download/print a bulletin from Grace's website. Just click on *Quick Link to Worship*.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89031586315>

Dial In: 1 312 626 6799 Meeting ID: 890 3158 6315

CALL COMMITTEE CORNER

The Congregational Surveys have been collected. Now the Call Committee is in the process of compiling the information received to create a Ministry Site Profile (MSP) that is representative of Grace. The committee would like to thank all members who participated in the survey. Your responses will help us with the next step in the process of finding our new Pastor.



SUNDAES ON SUNDAY!

Join us on **Sunday, August 18** following during our fellowship hour for a special treat. Ice cream sundaes will be available and with a variety of toppings to make your Sundae special. As an additional treat on this Sunday, Pastor Robin Currie will be leading us in worship while Pr. Jeff is away.



FaithTalk

Scripture, theology, culture and real life for believers, sceptics, and everyone in between.



FaithTalk will meet on **Thursday, August 1st at 12:30pm**. The topic for our August gathering will be "The Holy Spirit." We will explore our confessional theology, Biblical texts and how the New Testament relates "faith" to those who do not confess the name of Jesus as Lord. We will concentrate on the text from Galatians 3:6. Hope to you see there!

All questions are welcome, and we almost always find some fascinating rabbit holes, too. Lots of insight, wisdom and laughter—you're welcome to join us.
--Pr. Jeffrey Koth

PEOPLE OF GRACE

Please join us for our next People of Grace for on **Tuesday, August 20**. The group meets monthly on the third Tuesday at **7pm**.

The location varies each month to keep it fresh.

Please RSVP to Jeff Nelson if you are planning to attend. jeff.nelson@vlses.com



- **Wednesday August 7th:** Pool Party at Mrs. Drager's House. 1585 Deere Lane, Glendale Heights 5:00-7:00pm dinner provided.
- **Sunday September 8th:** Rally Day & Faith Formation Registration Immediately following worship.
- **Sunday, September 15th:** First Day of Faith Formation.

FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The woman seeks out Jesus believing that any contact with Him, would help her. *She knew not how!* As this Jesus approaches, she comes up behind Him and touches Jesus' cloak. St. Mark tells us her contact with Jesus IMMEDIATELY HEALED HER! *"Is getting in touch with Jesus part of your current self-care?" "Are you moving toward Him, in spite of the crowd that inhibits you?"*

How does Jesus respond to her? Did he ask for her insurance card? A co-payment? Her identity? Or anything else as compensation for her healing? NO! **You aren't ill because God is waiting for payment, or a pre-exam to see whether you are a good candidate for God's care!**

The woman's response is typically **religious**. The text says, "She approached in fear and trembling. She came to Jesus on her hands and knees and confessed that she had --without permission from any priest, or powerful man-- sought His care. And "Jesus zapped her dead on the spot for her bad behavior!" --(LOL)

That's what many religious people expect from God, and how many dis-eased people approach God. On hands and knees, filled with fear of punishment, payment and proof of privilege. But we, like this woman are not religious, are we? We do not confess that God helps *the holy*, but we confess that God so loved the world—and that is now defined for us—every man, woman and child--that God sent Jesus, not to condemn, but to heal and save.

When religious people speak of God they speak from creeds, of limited access, within examinations, and expected payment. **We** speak of a faith that has nothing to do with creeds, limited access, examinations or payment of any kind.

There is nothing *religious* about this story of contact with Jesus and the healing result. (N. B. The Pharisees were very religious and in their piety, they killed Jesus!). Take religion out of your pursuit of healing. Out of your quest for contact with God. Just seek Him in the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not yet seen...which we call faith.

In the end, Jesus calls this woman, **daughter**, signaling an important change of "identity" and status. Jesus then teaches her *that it was not His clock or his person that healed her...but it was her own faith!* **A faith that every one in this room shares with her!** You don't have to come into physical contact with God, or any object identified with God's presence. You need only, teaches Jesus, to get in touch with your faith! *The assurance of things hoped*

for, the conviction of things not yet seen, and you will be liberated from your disease, and find peace.

Isn't that what Jesus gives her in the end? Jesus says to her "Go in peace." You see, along with the flow of blood, the **trauma** of all those 12 years of pain and disappointment and poverty is also healed. Too many people who have been "touched by God" carry their past trauma with them. Their "identity" becomes that of a "victim." Forgiveness is part of the healing process, if you ever want peace. This daughter of Jesus was no longer angry... she was not critical of those who hadn't helped her. She did not hire a lawyer and sue the doctors that had mistreated her! But she responded as a person of **faith** does, loving herself by releasing past trauma, and sharing with others the same kind of grace that made her well. **Her well-being that would forever now be sustained by that same faith, for it is faith that puts us in touch with Jesus, and a healthy identity.**

Jesus final words to this daughter of God add a personal touch. The text says (vs. 34), "and be healed of your disease." A better rendering of those words would be: "take care of yourself so that you remain healthy, by remembering **what** healed you." Jesus reminds her that being in touch with Him, is not to be associated with physical contact, *but with the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not yet seen.* Faith. Mark 5 teaches us plainly that God desires that we live in "peace"—not *dis-eased* because of ill health, poor identity, or a piety that is not conversant with love. So, the story has a happy ending. Happy ending are usually associated with fairy tales. Is this a fairy tale? Disney kind of unattainable outcome?

That's up to you. It is up to you what you hope for. This I can say with certainty: if you believe you cannot be healed, or if you believe that you will, you are right. Real hope is manifest in conviction, and conviction is manifest in action. "Where are you going to come in touch with God?" Seek Him where he may be found... here, in bread and wine and the fellowship of believers, out there, wherever two or three gather in His name.

St. Mark wants to be very clear; it wasn't the physical touch of Jesus' cloak that made this chronically sick woman well, it was her faith. A faith that wasn't shared by the crowd, for they believed she must be doing something wrong, but which is shared by you. Religion makes "blood continue to flow" in the streets. Jesus puts a stop to that. The miracle of peace is NOT beyond our reach.

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INTRODUCING GRACE CONNECTS CORNER

Grace Connects is the program Grace and Glen Ellyn Senior Center is providing with programs and activities for seniors in our congregation and community.

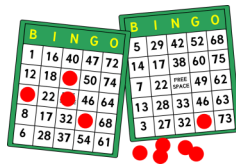
Did you know there is an exercise class, book club, movie club, FaithTalk, quilting group and knitting club taking place right now at Grace and is free of charge and available to all! We are not asking you to help with these activities, but invite you to come and take part in any of these activities. The bulletin board in the fellowship room has a calendar and more information, and watch this column for more information.

AUGUST ACTIVITIES:

Thursday August 8 1:30-3:00 Bingo

Hosted by Cyndy Drager

Come have some bingo fun and win some prizes!



Sunday August 25 1:30-3:00 Open Game Day

Hosted by Sue Davison

Thursday September 12 1:30 Medicare Open Enrollment Info Session

Hosted by Sue Davison

Get your questions answered on Medicare and Open Enrollment and changes for 2025.

The Grace Connects task force is seeking volunteers to host activities on the 2nd Thursday and 4th Sunday of the month. With these programs, we are reaching out to engage members of our congregation, as well as our neighbors living in surrounding apartment buildings and the Village of Glen Ellyn. All are invited to participate!

Do you have a talent to share, a program you know about or you've always dreamed of hosting? If you are interested or want more info, contact a task force member, Susi Nelson, Karin Slenczka, Cyndy Drager, Cathy Milleville, Paul Rom or call the church office.



FROM THE INTERIM PASTER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

This has been quite a theological sermon, so let me leave you with a lighter story that captures the essence of what God is saying to us today. You are probably familiar with the name Larry Bird; he is a former basketball star of the Boston Celtics, who grew up not far from us in French Lick, Indiana.

During a retirement party for Larry Bird in Boston Garden, former Celtics coach K.C. Jones told the story of diagramming a play on the sidelines, for a last second shot that would win the game. It seems, however, that Larry Bird dismissed it, and said, "Just get the ball to me and get everyone out of my way."

K.C. Jones, (the coach), responded: "Hey, hey, hey, I know you are a star, but I'm still the coach, and I will call the plays." Jones then turned to the other players and said: "Get the ball to Larry, and get out of his way." Larry did not disappoint!

If you think time is running out and you need a win...give the ball to Jesus, and get out of the way. Let faith do what only faith can do!



JUNE DINNER AT JACOBO WOODS





**RECONNECT RALLY DAY
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH**

Mark your calendars! Plans are underway for another awesome *Reconnect Rally Day* featuring food and games for all ages following the service. Additional information will be provided as plans are finalized. Be sure to join us!

Wanted: Grill Master - The Social Committee is looking for a few good men that will grill for us on Rally Day, September 8. Could you help us? Please contact Heather Graf or Cathy Milleville.

PADS (PUBLIC ACTION TO DELIVER SHELTER)

Tuesday, August 6. Thank you to all our generous volunteers for everything you do!

We have meal containers if you need them. Or, if you let us know ahead of time, you can bring meals over to our house and we'll package them.

We pick up food from Grace Lutheran around 2:00 on Tuesday. We leave our house for the site around 4:30 so please make donations by those times. The upstairs refrigerator and freezer at Grace will be turned on to receive your donations.

As always all other foods are also needed and well received - fruits, snacks, desserts, juice boxes ... These can be left on the counter in the upstairs kitchen.

We'll be serving food at the IHC from 5:00 to 6:30 (1113 Butterfield Frontage Road, Downers Grove). Additional volunteers at the site would make the serving so much easier. We hope you can join us.

Please contact us for any questions.

Joe 630-740-4527
Donna 630-470-4542;
Sarah 630-388-9778



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania Avenue
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
Office: 630.469.1555
Emergency Pastoral Contact: 224.355.4213
Email: info@graceglenellyn.org

www.GraceGlenEllyn.org

Every Member: Minister & Missionary!

Pr. Jeffrey Koth, Interim Pastor
Sandra Thompson, Pianist
Cyndy Drager, Children's Ministry Coordinator
Barbara Sudds, Office Manager
Carole LoGalbo, M.S., LCPC Parish Counselor

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30am - 3:00pm
Tuesday and Thursday 1:00pm - 3:00pm



ATTENDANCE

DATE	IN-PERSON	ZOOM
6/2	52	4
6/9	47	8
6/16	50	5
6/23	36	8
6/30	30	11

PRAYER REQUESTS

George LaRocco, brother-in-law of Jean Derrico, Erik Sudds and Jake Jacobson, members, for Healing & Strength.

