



**Children's Religious  
Education Committee**

Grace Lutheran Church and School  
7300 West Division Street  
River Forest, IL 60305  
Phone: 708-366-6900  
[www.graceriverforest.org](http://www.graceriverforest.org)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY DAY**  
*August 29, 2010*  
9:45 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

*Do you enjoy crafts or puppets  
or dress-up or games or cooking?  
Can you take pictures or videos?*

*We need parental help  
to teach 4 -5 week rotations.*

*Shepherds will be in each classroom to  
provide consistency and structure.*

*Teach with your spouse!  
Co-teach with someone  
you want to get to know!  
Choose a workshop  
that you are interested in (see inside).*

*Look for other Sunday School Volunteer  
opportunities at Rally Day!*

*Contact Krista Johnson  
[kjohnson@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu](mailto:kjohnson@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu)*

**Rally Day Breakfast  
for Sunday School  
Families**

*Sunday, August 29, 2010  
9:45 a.m. in Fellowship Hall*

*Calling all children age 3- 8<sup>th</sup> grade and  
their families!*

*Please join us as we kick-off the new  
Sunday School year with a pancake  
breakfast! We will also worship, sing,  
make something to take home, and  
register for a year of fun-filled bible  
learning.*

*Then, join the children as they participate  
in the procession*

August 2010

# Children's Religious Education Committee Newsletter



*Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*  
Matthew 5:16

## Teaching Our Children To Worship

*You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.*

*-Deuteronomy 11.18-19*

*While visiting my sister and her family in Florida last Spring, I took my five-year-old nephew to church with me. The last time he was in church was about two years ago when the family visited Grace while they were in town. He's not a frequent worship-attendeer at all, so when I announced that I would be going to church on Sunday morning, I was surprised by his proclamation, "I want to go to church with Aunt Kelly."*

*My proud pastor-aunt heart skipped a beat; I was delighted. Bryan wanted to go to church. Although I was confident in my choice of church and its traditional worship style for me, I found myself beginning to worry about my nephew. I wanted him to like church. I wanted him to be engaged in the service. Most of all, I wanted to help him encounter God and get to know Jesus a little better.*

*Bryan had a good time at church. I suspect in part because it was time away from his older sister. I hope in part because I helped him participate in the service. He stood when the congregation stood. He knelt when we knelt. He's a beginning reader, and as I helped him follow along, he could spot the "Amen's" and was ready to say them aloud with everyone else. He dipped his fingers in the baptismal font, and I reminded him that he is a baptized child of God. After the service, we watched the organist's feet as he played a lively postlude.*

*I hear God's words to Moses and the people of Israel echoed in our baptism service when parents and baptismal sponsors promise to faithfully take their children to services in the Lord's house. I think of these words when I see our families with children coming to worship on Sunday mornings. And, it isn't always easy: infants learning to use their God-given voices, toddlers trying out their God-given legs, older children who are experimenting with their God-given, growing minds and independence. And yet, so many of you take the time and exercise your patience and creativity in engaging our church's children in worship.*

*In our Sunday School opening worship this year, we will teach about and continue to incorporate parts of our sanctuary worship. My hope is that the lessons learned up in the Commons will help the children (and us adults too) engage in the worship life of our congregation in new and exciting ways.*

*In Christ,  
Pastor Faulstich*



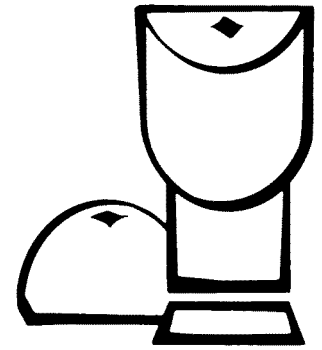
## Spark Bibles

Still want to purchase a Spark Story Bible for your young children or as a gift for nieces, nephews, neighbors, and other special kids in your life? The Spark Story Bible will be available on Rally Sunday for \$15. Checks can be made to Grace Lutheran, memo line: Sunday School.

## First Communion Instruction

(Fifth Grade)

At Grace, young people are invited to participate in a formal First Communion Instruction during Lent of their 5<sup>th</sup> Grade year in school. They receive their First Communion (or celebrate with their classmates if they already commune) on Palm Sunday. Some children who worship regularly might express to their families that they would like to commune earlier than Fifth Grade. If this happens in your family, please talk with Pastor Faulstich or Pastor Modahl and they will be happy to help discern what is best for your child and family.



## Confirmation

(Sixth-Eighth Grade)

Our Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Graders gather on every Sunday morning and one Wednesday and one Friday evening a month for faith formation and catechism study, fellowship, and fun. Questions? Contact James Brooks at Grace or email him at [jbrooks@graceriverforest.org](mailto:jbrooks@graceriverforest.org).

## Sunday School Curriculum

Sunday School children in 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be taught using a rotation model. There are 5 rotations throughout the year. Each rotation is introduced at "Story Sunday" where all the children join together and stay in the commons to hear a story from one of our very own Elders or other adults from the congregation. For the 4-5 weeks following Story Sunday, the lessons will all focus on the rotation's theme. This year we are excited to be using the Spark-Activate Faith curriculum again.

Kids learn about their faith in different ways. Some kids learn best through hands-on activities. Other kids learn best through writing and reading activities. Still others learn best through a combination of activities. Spark is designed to accommodate all of these different ways kids learn. Each week of the rotation a lesson will be taught using one of the methods (also known as workshops) listed below. The teachers choose one of these workshops and teach a different grade each week, but still focus on the topic of the Rotation.

Children will come to know God and the stories of the Bible through creative and experiential workshops such as:

- Art and Music
- Cooking
- Video
- Bible Skills and Games
- Science
- Creative Drama



Preschoolers and Kindergarteners will follow the Spark Classroom model where classic Bible stories come to life with interactive Bible readings and engaging activities that get kids excited as they grow in God's Word. This curriculum walks through key Old Testament and New Testament Bible stories using the beautiful Spark Story Bible, colorful take home lesson leaflets and a variety of multisensory activities that integrate Bible learning with life. We know your little ones will be engaged and entertained as they get to know Jesus!!

## Joyful Voices Choir

(First-Fourth Grade)

"Singing glory, hallelujah! Jesus lifted me."

Those are words from a song the children in the Joyful Voices choir sang for the Sunday School talent show last May and sang again in the 8:30 worship service on the following Sunday. That phrase, from an African-American spiritual, sums up Joyful Voices: we sing the praises of Jesus who loves us and lifts us up.

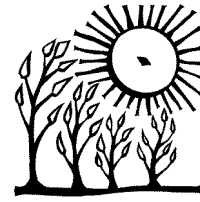
Joyful Voices is open to children in grades 1 through 4. The group rehearses at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings during the school year. In rehearsals children learn about singing technique, basic melodic and rhythmic notation, and musical form and expression in a variety of musical styles. Children also learn about worship, liturgy, and all the things that God has done for us. The choir sings for a worship service once a month.

Every child is welcome! Joyful Voices gives children an opportunity to connect with church and their faith in between Sunday mornings. It's also a chance to share their faith with others through the joy of music.

Rehearsals begin on Wednesday, September 1. If you have questions, contact the Joyful Voices director, Gwen Gotsch ([ggotsch@gracriverforest.org](mailto:ggotsch@gracriverforest.org); 708-366-6900, ext. 122).

## Mustard Seeds

(Infant - Five Year Olds)



Mustard Seeds organizes gatherings for families with children who are infants through 5-year olds. Some of the events this year may include:

- October Event - Halloween Party (Tentatively October 23rd, 11am-1pm.)
- January Event - Open Gym @ Grace
- April Event - Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch  
Tentatively April 16<sup>th</sup>, 9am - 11am

Look for more information in the weekly announcements and Grace Notes.

We are in need of a person or group of people to coordinate Mustard Seeds this year. If you would be willing to take the lead on one (or all!) of these events, please contact Pastor Faulstich.

## Grace Nursery

Come all ye little children: The Nursery is open every Sunday from 8:15 AM -12:15 PM for children aged infant to 4 years old. We have a silent paging system that allows us to call parents when needed. Come for a few minutes or stay for awhile.

## CAFÉ

(Coffee, Adult Fellowship, and Education)

Want to spend some time talking with other adults about faith? Ever wish that you knew the background of the stories your children are learning at Sunday School? Maybe you once knew the bible stories and people and places but it has all become a bit foggy?

CAFÉ is a series for adults that coordinates with the Sunday School calendar and time slot. Starting September 19<sup>th</sup>, CAFÉ will begin at 10:00 and end at 10:40, so parents can worship with their Sunday School children at 9:45 and meet them at their classrooms at 10:45.

We will be located in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom in the northeast corner of the upstairs commons. The discussions will be led in rotation fashion by the pastoral team (awesome!) with some special guest stars. Knowing that parents might need to come and go, the sessions will be very casual. Stop by and join the conversation!