

# Grace Family Weekly Message

28 July 2022



**WORSHIP AT GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
THIS SUNDAY, THE 31<sup>ST</sup> OF JULY, IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL.**

Sunday's Gospel reading is Luke 12:13-21. (See page 3 for more information)

## A BIBLE STUDY ON EXODUS 15 – THE SONG OF MIRIAM

*Our Bible Study on Moses continues with a special study about one of the oldest texts in the Bible and what it says about faith in God.*

For this week's Bible Study, we will examine selected verses in Exodus 15 to see what they tell us about the faith and beliefs of the Israelites who, under Moses' leadership, escaped out of slavery in Egypt. We will also consider how this record of their faith instructs our faith today. Exodus 15 is called the "**Song of Miriam.**" It is unique because it is written in verse; it is Hebrew poetry. Exodus 15 belongs to a class of liturgical or epic poems that were likely used in worship much like how we chant Psalms or recite Creeds in worship today.

Most Bible scholars believe these songs are the oldest parts of the Bible. They were composed in verse because poetry was easier to remember and orally transmit to the community. Exodus 15 has been dated "as early as the twelfth century BCE."\* That means it was created at least 200 years before the first written Old Testament texts were recorded in the tenth century BCE.

Exodus 15 is familiar to many of us because it is one of the classical 'deliverance' texts that are read each year during the Easter Vigil. It is called the Song of Miriam because of its reference at the end of the chapter to Moses' older sister Miriam "**taking a timbrel** (musical instrument) and leading the women in a victory dance as they sang this hymn.

To begin this study, you are encouraged to read the entire chapter 15 in your Bible before you turn your attention to the following selected texts (as translated from Hebrew):



Ex. 15:20: "**Miriam took a timbrel in her hand and all the women followed her.**"

**Ex. 15:2**

**The LORD is my strength and my song,  
and he has become my salvation.  
This is my God and I will praise him. (v2)**

\* Cross, Dr. Frank Moore; *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*; doctoral dissertation, 1950; p. 90.

This verse is the Song of Miriam's fundamental confession: The **LORD** (Yahweh) saved me, he is "**my salvation.**" The Hebrew word for "**salvation**" is 'yēshûah,' which became the basis for the names Joshua and Jesus. This hymn begins by confessing belief in a God who really does act on behalf of his people; God's primary gift to the Israelites then and to us now is "**salvation.**"

3,000 years ago, in the Ancient Middle East, it was especially important for the Israelites to claim "**this is my God**" because they were wandering among many peoples and tribes who all had their own gods. For the Israelites, their God, Yahweh, was in competition with these other gods. They wanted this hymn not just to confirm their faith in Yahweh, but to emphasize that he is the only true God. We don't think much about God being in competition with false gods today, but maybe we should.

**Ex. 15:3** ***The LORD is a warrior (v3)***

This assertion may be difficult for us to process, but the Hebrew text literally says, "**Yahweh is a man of war.**" When the Israelites escaped from Pharaoh's army, they believed God was actually fighting for them. This belief in a God who was physically engaged in their battles appears many times in the Old Testament. When the Israelite army prevailed in a battle, it was the **LORD** (Yahweh) who fought and won the battle. Today, it would be hard to envision God being directly engaged in armed combat, but the Israelites' belief should still help us understand how God is concerned about the well-being of all who fight in wars.

**Ex. 15:7b,8a** ***You sent forth your fury...  
At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up, (v7b, 8a)***

This description of how God acted to cause the sea passage to open gives us a vivid picture of how the Hebrews understood God's real presence in the workings of their world. Wind was not just a meteorological phenomenon; wind was God's breath. God's anger was associated with his nostrils. God expressed his fury with the Egyptians with a "**blast**" of wind from his nostrils that parted the waters of the sea. Today we understand the wind as a working part of God's creation but connecting how creation works with God's real presence should strengthen our faith.

**Ex. 15:11** ***In your benevolent love, you led the people whom you redeemed  
and, in your might, guided them to your holy abode. (v11)***

The key word in this verse is a Hebrew word for love, but it is a word that means a special kind of love. It is a word that speaks to God's mercy, kindness, and benevolence. It is unconditional love. Being loved by God is not conditioned upon people doing something to merit that love. Here in one of the oldest texts in the entire Bible, this hymn of victory is already a testament to God's unconditional love.

**Ex. 15:18** ***The LORD (Yahweh) will reign forever and ever." (v18)***

The song ends with an affirmation that God's reign is eternal. A key word is "**reign.**" The Hebrew word means to serve as king. The concept of the Kingdom of God where God truly rules as King goes all the way back to these ancient texts.

The faith of the early Hebrews who came to know the LORD (Yahweh) through their exodus from slavery is a compelling description of how we should also know God. God is our salvation; God fights to redeem us from what enslaves us; God is present

wherever we are; God is a God of unconditional love; God is bringing near his eternal Kingdom (Matthew 4:17).

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## WEEKLY NEWS AND ACTIVITIES AT GRACE

- © **WORSHIP ON SUNDAY.** This coming Sunday, the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, is the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost. The Gospel reading is Luke 12:13-21. The liturgical color is green. Worship starts at 10:30 AM, in the Fellowship Hall. Pastor Jaci Tiell and Church Musician Bobbie Bean will lead the worship service.

### WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING ALL MEMBERS OF THE GRACE FAMILY AND VISITORS TO WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY

- © **PRAYER CONCERNS.** Please keep the following persons in your prayers:

Jody Angelone, Mandi Palmer, LaVerne Edwards, Bev Burroughs, Kathy Spangler, Ken Pettit, Pastor John Bock, Carol Jacob, Bethany Collier, Leslee Bundy, Tom Szor, Shelly Sherman, Barbara Harger, Patricia Morral, Karen Southwyck, Jay Southwyck, Jessica Southwyck, Carol Morgan, Dustin Schmidt, Chris Marquardt, Stephen Andrew, Dean Crandall, Kelly Troyer, Nadine Crisologos, Cheryl Hoot, Heather DeWitz, members of the Grace family who reside in nursing homes including Jim Flick (Commons of Providence, Sandusky), Donna Foss (Parkcliff), Sandy Cutchall (Genoa), Joan Dietrich (Genoa), and Bertha Marquardt (Orchard Villa), and members of the Grace family and their colleagues who serve in the Armed Forces. If you know of someone to add to the prayer list, please inform Pastor Jaci or the Church Office.

- © **ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING LAST WEEK.** 36 persons attended worship last Sunday. Offerings last week were \$1,112. Offerings need to average \$2,789 per week to meet the 2022 Offering budget target. So far in 2022, offerings are ahead of that budget goal. **Thank you to all who attend worship and contribute regular offerings.**

UPCOMING ACTIVITES AND EVENTS			
Date	Event	Time	Location
31 July, Sunday	Book Bag Distribution	Before or After Worship	Grace
31 July, Sunday	New Members Class	After Worship	Grace
7 August, Sunday	New Member Recognition during worship	10:30	Fellowship Hall
9 August, Tuesday	Board of Witness & Mission	4:00 PM	Grace
9 August, Tuesday	Board of Worship	7:00 PM	Grace
11 August, Thursday	Council Meeting	7:00 PM	Grace
16 August, Tuesday	Board of Congregational Life	7:00 PM	Grace

11 September, Sunday	Rally Day ( <i>Personal Care Kit Assembly with Ice Cream Social</i> )	11:30 AM	Fellowship Hall
25 September, Sunday	Chicken BBQ Fund Raiser	11:30 AM	Grace
<b>Regular Weekly Events:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday mornings, at 10:30 AM, Worship, with communion (<i>in the Fellowship Hall</i>)</li> </ul>			

© **SCHOOL BOOK BAG PROJECT.** One of Grace’s annual benevolence projects is the preparation of school book bags that are filled with school supplies. The book bags will be delivered to Lutheran World Relief for distribution to students in many parts of the world who need them. Last week, a group of volunteers met at the church to insert ropes in the back packs and prepare them for distribution to volunteers who will fill them. Starting this coming Sunday, the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, the book bags will be available for distribution to volunteers who will take them and fill them with school supplies according to the list that will be provided with them. If you would like to help with this benevolence project, pick up some of the book bags to fill and bring back so Grace can send them to Lutheran World Relief.

© **NEW MEMBERS CLASS AT GRACE.** Pastor Jaci will conduct a new members class after worship, this Sunday, the 31<sup>st</sup> of July. New members will be received and recognized during worship on Sunday, the 7<sup>th</sup> of August. Two new members have expressed a desire to join. If anyone else is interested in membership at Grace at this time, please contact Pastor Jaci.

© **OPERATION OREO.** Please keep all military personnel in your prayers, but especially: SSG Stephen Simkus, Cadet Julian Sanchez, and CPL Theodore Ozanski.

- Anyone wishing to donate to Operation Oreo to help offset the cost of shipping and the contents of the Goody boxes -- Just mark “Op Oreo” on the memo line of your check.
- If you have a name to add to our list or if you have any questions about Operation Oreo, please contact Jennifer Marquardt

© **DEACON AND LECTOR SCHEDULE.** Deacons and Lectors scheduled to serve in upcoming worship services are listed in the table.

DATE	DEACONS	LECTORS
31 July	Deb & Jeff Boos	Jean Weng
7 August	Mary & Mike Schlievert	Rachel Beeler
14 August	Randy Jacobs & Gary Anderson	Judy Zimmerman
21 August	Steve Simkus & Steve Blausey	Joan Eckermann

© **BETHLEHEM WOMEN’S RETREAT.** The 2022 Bethlehem Women’s Retreat will take place at the Staybridge Suites in Rossford on 23-25 September. Women from Grace are invited to participate in this exciting opportunity for Christian growth. Anyone who is interested should contact Ruth Ann Anderson (419-607-3164 or [ruthannand@gmail.com](mailto:ruthannand@gmail.com)) for more information or to make a registration. The retreat

theme this year is based on Psalm 100:5 "**For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.**" Discovery sessions during the Retreat will center on genealogy, both in the Old and New Testaments, and in participants' personal lives.

- © **GRACE CHICKEN BBQ FUND RAISER.** Grace will hold a chicken barbecue fund raising event on Sunday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, starting at 11:30 AM. Proceeds from this year's Chicken BBQ will go to the **Ottawa County Family Advocacy Center.** This organization needs financial contributions to provide financial assistance to grandparents raising grandchildren and to feed Ottawa County children during summer months, to name two of their many programs. There is a flyer on the Center on the Fellowship Hallway bulletin board. The Ottawa County Family Advocacy Center is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization (<https://ocfamilyadvocacy.org/>).



- © **ELMORE FOOD PANTRY.** The Grace Food Pantry item for August is 6 oz. cans of tuna. Grace hosts the Elmore Food Pantry. It is open on the second Friday of each month, from 9:00 AM until noon. Anyone who wishes to drop off food items at the church may bring them to the church on Sunday or leave them inside the north door during times when the church office door is open.
- © **GOD'S WORK PROJECTS.** 112 personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief will be assembled at the church on Sept 11th, **God's Work Our Hands Sunday.** The appeal for donated items to place in these kits was successful—no more items are needed. **Thank you to everyone who responded to this appeal.**
- © **BACKPACKS FOR HUMANS** (<https://backpacknation.space/>). This 501(c) (3) organization serves people in crisis in the Toledo area. Now that it is summer, its current priority needs are for ball caps, sunscreen, and ChapStick. Anyone who has extras of these items is urged to bring them to the church and place them in the collection box in the Fellowship Hall.

***Our Prayer: Benevolent God, you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives. Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and to treasure what is precious in your sight.***

GRACE CONTACT INFORMATION		
PASTOR	COUNCIL PRESIDENT	CHURCH OFFICE
Pastor Jaci Tiell <a href="mailto:pastorjacitiell@aol.com">pastorjacitiell@aol.com</a> 419-215-8370	Gary Anderson <a href="mailto:dcmgaryanderson@gmail.com">dcmgaryanderson@gmail.com</a> 419-607-3036	Joyce Bruntz <a href="mailto:graceelc@gmail.com">graceelc@gmail.com</a> 419-862-3630

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