

Grace Seeds Ministry Update



7/26: Mid-Summer Picnic!

Bountiful Baskets~Baskets of Blessings

You're invited to our **Grace Seeds mid-summer picnic** on **Sat., July 26 (5-7:00 p.m.)** at **Mt. Zion Lutheran Church** in Oak Lawn (10300 S. Kostner). We'll be **celebrating, fundraising and sending** – and we'll have a wonderful time doing all three!

Celebrating: We'll be celebrating the great growing and giving we're doing together through **Share the Harvest** this season!

Fundraising: You'll be able to bid on some fabulous, fun baskets during a silent auction before dinner and bid on two, Grace Seeds baskets after dinner. (See the next page to learn more about our fundraising!)

Sending: We'll be sending **Clarissa Sents**, our wonderful, year-long Young Adult Volunteer, off to new adventures with our thanks, love and blessings. (How did her year of service fly by so quickly?)

The picnic is a potluck – with Grace Seeds providing the entrée. Your contribution will help make our summer feast a meal to remember! We've divided up the alphabet so we'll end up with a great, well-rounded potluck picnic! Depending on the first letter of your last name, here's a suggested dish to share: A-K (salad), L-R (side dish), S-Z (dessert). **If you can bring a single copy of your recipe, we'd love to add it to our Share the Harvest cookbook!**

We hope you can join us! Please mark your calendars, invite a friend, and come to the picnic. Please RSVP by July 20 to graceseedsministry@gmail.com or 773-495-7865. **See you at the picnic!**

Picnic Plans:

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| 5-5:30 | Gather! Bid on a basket in the silent auction, Try your hand at a craft! Play a game! |
| 5:30-6:15 | Share a meal! |
| 6:15-6:30 | Basket verbal auction |
| 6:30-7 | Thanks, Blessing, Sending |

Grace Seeds Summer Field Trips!

We're getting out of the city and suburbs this summer to learn more about growing on a large scale – way bigger than our own backyards or Share the Harvest gardens! We hope you'll join us for one – or both – of these opportunities to learn and grow!

Saturday, July 12 (8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.) Tour of The Northern Illinois Agronomy Research Center in Shabbona (associated with the University of Illinois Department of Crop Science): "The 160 acre center conducts research projects with corn, soybean, small grains and bio-fuel crop production." Come learn more about the research being done on crops that are in a lot of what we eat! (According to the Corn Refiners Association, "nearly 4,000 food items in a typical grocery store contain corn ingredients.") **Please RSVP to Grace Seeds Ministry by July 9** – if you'd like to be part of the tour and conversation!

Link to check out: www.web.extension.illinois.edu/niarc

Sunday, August 10 (8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.) Tour Soil Sisters Farms in SE Wisconsin.

We're going north to take up the Soil Sisters' invitation: "Celebrate summer bounty by visiting small family farms led by Wisconsin women committed to local agriculture and a healthy, fresh future for our communities." Fresh produce and meat will be available for purchase – but the tours are free. We'll aim to visit three farms – with a lunch stop someplace in between! **Please RSVP to Grace Seeds by Aug. 3**

Link to check out: www.soilsisterswi.org. See the FAQ page of their website for what to wear, etc.!

Growing Grace Seeds!

Grace Seeds Ministry is growing!

- **We have new Share the Harvest growing partners and pantry partners** this season...and are deeply grateful for our returning partners. This season our partners have already contributed bins-full and bags-full of *kale, chard, mustard greens, collard greens, lettuces, herbs, radishes, squash, beans, broccoli, and more!*
- **We've expanded our Grace Seeds programming** and we've got more coming up! In the works: our two, summer field trips you read about on the front page; a Share the Harvest celebration in the fall; a retreat on tending our inner gardens; films and more!
- We're working to update **graceseedsministry.org**, our home on the web. Our goal: to make it a "go-to site" where you'll be able to connect with a variety of resources related to food justice and creation justice – including worship resources and more!
- **We're building a cookbook online** – featuring recipes collected from Share the Harvest growing partners, and food pantry partners and guests! The electronic version is available any time on our website. This season, we'll be featuring a "recipe of the week" and distributing it (on paper) when we make food pantry deliveries. Those recipes will feature, as key ingredients, the wonderful, fresh produce our Share the Harvest partners are growing and giving! We're still seeking recipes and the stories behind them. So please keep them coming! Thanks!
- **We have a new logo** that's helping us to get the word out about what we do! At the picnic on July 26, you'll see our logo displayed in some fun, new, usable ways! Come see what we mean!

How to keep all this great, new growth going strong? See the article on our funding needs on this page!

Growing Grace Seeds with People Power!

So, how did all the growth at Grace Seeds happen over the past year? A big reason is that, since September, we've been blessed by the gifts and talents of **Clarissa Sents**, who has been serving half-time, through the Young Adult Volunteer Program of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Our experience with Clarissa has been so positive that we'd love to be able to invite another YAV to work with us beginning in the fall! **The challenge:** we need to continue to fund our **basic program expenses (\$4,500 per year)** and also raise enough funds to pay the **\$400 a month (for 11 months)** stipend we contribute to the expenses of a YAV serving in Chicago. (We were able to invite Clarissa this year – thanks to the generous donation of Alice and Dale Valaskovic. Thank you, again, Dale and Alice!)

So...how to have fun, celebrate, and raise some of the funds we need to keep Grace Seeds Ministry growing? That's where our mid-summer picnic comes in! We hope you'll bring your checkbook (or cash!) to bid on some great baskets to support program and person expenses! Not interested in a basket? We'll also have a "Support Grace Seeds Growing!" box – where you can leave a donation!

We are grateful for the **many** ways our partners have helped Grace Seeds grow: your time, energy, monetary and in-kind donations! We look forward to working together, by God's grace, to grow more!

Thank you! See you on the 26th!

Need to contact Grace Seeds? Here's how!

Grace Seeds Ministry

www.graceseedsministry.org

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773-495-7865

Rev. Linda Wygant

Clarissa Sents, YAV

graceseedsministry@gmail.com or on Facebook at our Grace Seeds Ministry page!