



HOLY COMMUNION OFFERED EVERY SUNDAY

From the Pastor's Desk White, Yellow, Gold-From Death to Life

by Pastor Paul Kuhlman

This year, the holiest week of the Christian calendar is in March. March 20th we will begin a week of worship and reflection that is both central to the Christian faith as it is meaningful in our personal and congregational journey in life. This week is a kind of “whirlwind” of remembrances and experiences through the last days of Jesus’ life on earth, including his resurrection on Easter Day.

Yet, the day we love to celebrate the most, the one filled with such joy, excitement, and warmth is Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday is actually the “first” Sunday of Easter, a season that stretches out over 50 days, ending with the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday. All through the season we witness the resurrected Jesus, now the Christ, in all his glory, calling his disciples to mission and ministry.

The color for Easter is “officially” white, the color of all major Christian festivals except Pentecost. White is the color of purity, resurrection, Easter lilies, and more. White is what the baptismal candidates wear when they come out of the waters of baptism, washed clean by the blood of the Lamb (remembering some of the imagery of Revelation). Sometimes the church uses gold or yellow. Of course, yellow is much like gold, and probably is an acceptable replacement for gold. Gold is a regal color, the best gift someone could give another to show how precious and honored the receiver is to the giver. Gold reveals refinement of a metal that now shines bright in the brilliant sun. Whether we use white, yellow or gold, all the colors of Easter help us to celebrate the importance of Easter—going from darkness to light, winter to spring, wounded to healed, dying to living, slave to free—death to life.

GRACEGRAM

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



OUR
MISSION

Saved by Grace.
Called to Worship.
Sent to Serve.

March 2016

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A Look @ Next Month—April, 2016

Theme: “Pentecost – The Road Show”

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- Building Renovation – six month plan

*Deadline for inclusion in the April
Gracegram is **March 17, 2016***

*Send your articles to Victoria Alt at:
parishadmin@grace-hastings.org*

Living Liturgy — Walking Through Holy Week

A Holy Adventure

by Pastor Paul

Lutherans would say that something is holy because it is grounded and centered in Christ. The church is confessed to be the “holy catholic church” because throughout its history it has been grounded in the events and words of Christ. Christ established the church and he is the focus of all that the church does and says. The Spirit is a “Holy” Spirit because it continues to remind the church of Christ and “calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on Earth...,” says Luther in the *Small Catechism*.

Holy Week is “holy” because it is focused on the most important days of Jesus’ life and resurrection, and the church begins a “holy adventure” as it relives and remembers those sacred days in the life of Jesus. Beginning with Palm Sunday, which many of us prefer calling “Passion” Sunday, we remember Jesus’ final entry into Jerusalem, while the Gospel of the day is usually the complete reading of the Passion Narrative of Christ.

The real adventure begins on Holy Thursday, “holy” because it reflects on the Last Supper of Jesus and the announcement of the cross through the washing of the feet of his disciples. Lent ends with the final confession of the season on Maundy Thursday and the administration of absolution by the pastor. From this time forward, the great Triduum begins, three days of contemplation and remembering of the major events of the life of Jesus. We will witness again and focus our lives on the actions of Jesus as the Son of God; his passion and death. The three days end with the first hint of the resurrection in the announcement of the empty tomb on Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil.

Grace has not participated in an Easter Vigil for a number of years, and this year we will not worship on Holy Saturday. Nonetheless, we will incorporate a few of the vigil elements, like readings, affirmation of baptism, and light in our Easter sunrise service.

On Maundy Thursday the table and chancel are stripped of all the paraments and vestments, taking everything down to wood and plain furniture. All things are bare so we can stand before the cross on Good Friday and contemplate the painful but faithful death of Jesus, our Lord. No blessing completes the services on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday, since the services of these two days and the vigil represent one complete service. Rather, we leave the church these two days in silence to focus our attention on the gift of Jesus and his life, death and resurrection for our lives and for all humanity.

The “holy adventure” of Holy Week is not complete without a joyful celebration of the resurrection of our Lord on Easter morning. We return to a complete Holy Communion liturgy, including a rousing sending hymn, as we celebrate with joy the victory of Christ over death, the grave, and the Devil. Jesus promises that the same gift of life is ours as well.

Try not to miss any of the adventures of Holy Week. At a time when so many things distract us from God, move us away from faith, and we lose hope and sight in the blessings of God, during Holy Week we receive the powerful reminder and promise that we are important characters in God’s plan. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son...” Participating in this holy adventure, we affirm our presence and participation in the Holy Christian Church.

President’s Perspective

by Doug Neeb

Our house is about 26 years old and it is time to start to work on some of the areas that need attention or we would like to update. One of the projects we decided to start with was adding can lights in the ceiling of our living room. Since I did a lot of the wiring when we built and I have access to a trained electrician, it did not sound like too much of a challenge. We purchased the components and scheduled a day to install the lights.

It did not take too much time to cut the dry wall for the 6 lights and two switches or to run the wiring. When it became time to wire up the three way switches and get the light to work I ran into problems. I could not get the three way circuit to work properly. I wired and rewired the

switches over and over. It did not matter how I hooked up the three wires to the three terminals the lights would not turn on and off as they should. Thinking that the electronic switch was bad I replaced it and the circuit still would not work properly.

In true “manly” fashion I gave up and started to read/study the directions that came with the electronic three way switch. It seems that on one of the three way switches you do not use all three terminals. Two of the wires get wired together and attached to one terminal. Once I wire the switches properly the lights worked properly. The lesson I learned was that sometimes you just need to forget what you think you know and read the directions. I think this is a good lesson for our church family as we move forward trying to discern where God is leading us. I would encourage everyone at Grace to look for an opportunity to

join one of the bible study groups and/or a Sunday school class so that they can start to read the directions. Then we can start moving forward to answer God's call to mission.



Notes from the Veep

by Chris Bush

Thanks to everyone who has given coffee in the narthex a try. This has been quite the visual (and audible) display of Grace extending God's welcome and showing His love. Council decided at its January meeting that we will extend this time of hospitality and fellowship in the narthex till the end of April. We have tried to address concerns raised during the winter trial period and are wondering if there are quirks that could become apparent as the seasons change. Do be aware that we are making sure that the lights (and heat!) are on in the Fellowship Hall and the conference room/library so that it is more apparent that those areas are open and available. We are also making sure that the coffee maker in the kitchen has coffee in it between services so that if you are in that end of the building and want a refill, there is coffee nearby. If God has been nudging you to try out greeting people and serving coffee, please indicate so on the worship participation cards, or let the office know, and the scheduling team will work you in, even if it's just to try it once.

You should have received in your church mailbox a copy of the proposed Constitution, along with a guide that briefly discusses the suggested changes. There are three forums scheduled for this March in which suggestions and questions can be voiced, discussed, and recorded: Saturday, March 5, 9-11 AM; Sunday, March 6, 9:30-10:30 AM; and Thursday, March 10, 6:00-7:30 PM. These forums will take place in the Fellowship Hall, and there will be a slide show to explain the rationale the Constitution Task Force used. Please attend and provide your voice, or submit your suggestions and questions in writing to the Vice President's mailbox (the right side of the mailboxes).

Hippity, hoppity, Easter's on its way! Grace will be having "Breakfast Bites" for Easter breakfast. This will be a "mini potluck", something in the order of a continental breakfast. Please bring food or beverage to share on Easter Sunday (March 27), 8 to 9:30 AM. Finger-food is great, but if you want to bring a hot dish, your crockpot or casserole will also be welcome on the serving table. This will be quite informal: you can load up your plate and sit at a table, or just grab a few items and stand and visit. Grace will provide tableware. Some people have already signed up on the worship participation cards, and we'll also have a sign-up sheet, so we don't get 20 quiches. If you don't bring something, come on back to the Fellowship Hall anyway. After all, we are Lutherans - we always have plenty of food!



Website Upgrade - Editing and Rewrites

by Pastor Paul

The updated website is still a work in progress. The basic format is set, and additional pieces are being added, edited, and rewritten. This is a major project that will take a few more weeks, but we hope to have a major part of the site online by April.

By March 13th, I hope to be able to show the congregation an early glimpse of the site, after worship. Keep your eye on the bulletin for any announcement about the congregational unveiling of the "new" website.



Education News

by Lorraine Freedlund

At the last Grace council meeting it was agreed upon by the council members that a small group be formed to continue working on the youth faith building program during the Sunday services. The group of council members working on this faith building program are: Kate Watson, Doug Neeb and Lorraine Freedlund. This council group has met two times and has determined that a program would be presented as soon as possible to all of the Council members.

Also in the planning stage is determining if Grace will have a cry room for babies through toddlers. It was initially suggested that the cry room could be the room off the narthex with the view of the sanctuary.

The new room for the faith building youth program during the Sunday Services is being discussed. Youth between the ages of 3 years old through 5th grade would be able to attend. Children under 3 years old would need to be accompanied by a parent.

An Easter Egg Hunt is being tentatively planned for Easter Sunday morning on March 27th. Several Grace members will be needed to help with the egg hunt.

ELCA World Hunger 40 Days of Giving

by Bill Freedlund



The end of our Lenten season is approaching quickly. Please return your ELCA Hunger canisters to the church office by Sunday March 20th, 2016 (Palm Sunday). If you wish to add a check please make it out to Grace Lutheran Church and add "ELCA World Hunger" or "where needed most" to the memo line. Thank you for your help!

Evangelism News

by Bill Freedlund

At the Evangelism meeting on February 1st, we began the meeting with Chapter 2 of Living Lutheran by Dave Daubert. Highlights of Chapter 2: Moving a congregation forward is a communal task. We need to be ready to listen to God in a new way. As a result, purposeful discussion is not an option but absolutely necessary. Most of us learn more in a community setting rather than by ourselves. The basis of our Lutheran teachings are found in our doctrine. However, they do not give us the last word on our Lutheran voices. God will continue to speak to us, through our conversations, and study. The three keys to finding our Lutheran voices are: praying alone and with others, Bible study, and dialog with others. The Christian is charged with the task of regularly speaking to God on the behalf of others and also speaking to others on behalf of God. Dialog with others is essential in order to truly be the church.

At the end of this chapter we discussed how we might increase and foster the discussion and dialog about what Jesus is doing in our lives.

Wendy Johnson will be coming to Grace on Sunday, April 3rd to explain the Honduras Mission Program. She will give the message at both services.

The annual Good Friday Cross Walk will be on March 25th at 9:30 AM. We will alter the route from last year and include both sides of East State St. in the downtown area. Invitations will be sent to area churches and the newspaper in March.

The ELCA World Hunger Drive is in progress. Donations will be brought back to Grace on Palm Sunday, March 20th.

The Grace Lutheran Banner is in the process of being updated.

Plans will be made for a brunch to be held between services on Pentecost Sunday (May 15th) sponsored by the Evangelism Committee.

There was discussion on the possibility of participation in the Barry-Roubaix Bike event in April and some type of Summerfest participation in August.



Grace's Youth

by Jana Bishop



High School youth met once in January and Gwen led devotions from a faith-based book that she used much of last year. Our focus was on youth and making good choices.

In February, three youth joined Joe at Biggys for coffee, faith chat, and light planning for the balance of the year.

Future plans...as best we can with erratic attendance – in March, Joe hopes to lead a devotion focused on God leading us through the desert on a "horse" with no name. Also a "lock-in" on March 19 (Saturday with no Sunday night meeting). Details are emerging.

We are planning on Geranium sales in May and a homeless event likely in June (details now being discussed). Otherwise; likely to roll with opportunities, meet challenges, and pray the good Lord carries us through.

Middle school continues to meet every other week, averaging 6-8 youth, with 2-4 non-Grace youth each week. Awesome!!

When we met in January we continued discussing prayer –we talked about how to pray when you have a decision to make.

On 1/24 Hope and Emma Peck came to discuss their experiences at the National Gathering in hopes of getting kids excited about the 2018 gathering in Texas. Carol Vos came and led the youth in some Yoga moves. Chris Bush led this meeting. Chris is putting together a meeting for youth and their parents, sometime in March, to get the ball rolling for 2018 youth gathering trip to Texas.

We will be meeting March 6th and 20th. We are hoping to plan a trip to either Craig's Cruisers or Sky Zone for early March.

God's Children is scheduled to meet on March 16 – this is a Lent service so the kids will be meeting at 6pm and joining the congregation for dinner, then they will be breaking out until the Lent service is over (approx. 7:30-45). Any questions see Lisa Pohl, 269-945-9969.

Sunday Morning Adult Forum - Samuel 1 & 2

by Pastor Paul

These are two books loaded with important people and events that have affected the people of Israel and offer us insight into human nature and God's intentions. You will come away with questions about your own faith and commitment. Come join us every Sunday at 9:30 A.M. in the Fellowship Hall.



by Kim Domke

Just a reminder, that you are all invited to a great hand bell concert on March 12th. (Free will donation) Carpool will leave the Grace parking lot at 3:00P.M. After the concert, we will have a dinner out at a local restaurant (to be determined).

WHAT: L.A.M.B. 32nd Annual Spring Ring
WHEN: Saturday, March 12, 2016, at 4:30 p.m.
WHERE: South Church 5250 Cornerstone Dr., Lansing, (off Snow Rd., south of I-496).

This facility is handicap-accessible and located near Waverly High School.

Come hear the bells ring at Grace on Wed, Mar 2nd at 6:50 pm for the Lenten service.

A new ringing season will begin rehearsals on Thursdays, starting April 14th. If you would like to be part of the after school group or evening group, please talk with Kim Domke, 269-908-0024.

Good Friday Cross Walk

by Pastor Paul

Grace Lutheran Church invites the Hastings community to the annual Good Friday Cross Walk. The walk will begin at 9:30 A.M. from Grace Lutheran Church, 239 E. North Street, Hastings, MI.

As we walk, we will engage in silent meditation upon our Lord's crucifixion. We offer up prayers as we open our minds and spirits to the revelation of the Lord for our own lives, ministry, and discipleship. We invite you to join us for this journey of holy contemplation and restoration!

ROUTE: From Grace we head south on Michigan Ave.; west on State St. ; south on Broadway ; east on State St.; north on Michigan Ave.; Ending at Grace. The walk usually takes 1 hour to 1 hour 30 minutes. If you can't walk the entire distance, join us for as long as you can. A vehicle will follow the walkers to offer a ride or assistance as needed.



Becoming a Member - How do we do it?

by Pastor Paul

In February and March we have been leading a New Member Class called, "Becoming the Body". With the introduction of this class, many asked me to publish the process for becoming a member. **Here is what I know about and envision the process to be:**

- 1) Generally people announce their desire to join. They can mark the Participation Card on Sunday mornings at worship, they can talk with the pastor, or they can express such a desire to a member who will communicate this wish to the pastor or church office.
- 2) Many members come to us from other Lutheran congregations. When we know that they wish to join us, we send a letter to their former congregation, requesting their membership be transferred to the care of Grace.
- 3) Most people come to us from other Christian churches or they want to begin their walk with Christ at Grace for the first time. Often times we will send a request for information from the former church, sometimes considering their response as a "transfer". Those who wish to join the church in their first walk with Christ are asked to participate in the New Member Class before becoming a member.
- 4) The names of all prospective members are then presented to the Congregation Council for their acceptance or approval. At Grace one becomes a "voting member" and our constitution requires approval by the council. Those names are usually presented by the pastor on a timely basis.
- 5) Once the council approves membership, the new members are invited to participate actively in the life and ministry of the congregation. Generally, we want our new members to become acquainted with the church before we invite them to positions of leadership.
- 6) Special Sundays are set aside as "New Member Sunday" and the new members are introduced to the congregation.
- 7) Prospective and New Members are encouraged to attend the New Member Class held twice during the year. It is a time to learn more about Grace, meet many of the leaders of the church, and discover areas in the ministry of Grace in which they might like to participate in the future. Members are encouraged to participate in the class to introduce the family, and caring nature of Grace.

Are Your Prayers Too Bold for God?

by Kate Watson

If you are a fan of Beth Moore's bible studies, you may know that her most recent book is titled *Audacious*. Mrs. Moore defines audacity as:

Audacity (noun):

1. Intrepid boldness.
2. Bold disregard for normal restraint.

Audacity is a fun word; one that rolls off the tongue, often times with a negative connotation. However; how would it change the mission, ministry, and worship of our church if we were to apply some intrepid boldness? Reaching out beyond that which is familiar and comfortable; out into a realm that is unrestrained by "normalcy"?

Do you think that God is defined or restrained by normalcy? Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:20 that we are loved by a God who is able to do immeasurably (some translations say abundantly) more than all we ask or imagine.

Can we lean into that for a moment? There is nothing you can ask or imagine that God cannot take and multiply to abundance, to immeasurable quantities, to a truckload bigger than anything you have ever understood. No matter how intrepidly bold, audacious, or without regard for normal restraint you are with your prayers – be they of praise, thanksgiving, or petition – God can take those things you lift up to Him and make them *more than any of us can imagine*.

There's more....watch the next words from Paul to the Ephesians (3:20)

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us,

Not only does God magnify that which we ask or imagine, but he does this through His power that is at work within us. Just consider that for a moment. Our God loves us so much that not only does he want to magnify whatever we ask or imagine from him, he wants to do it through us and he gives us the power to accomplish those immeasurable, Godly, things in His name. I have seen that power at work at GLC. I have seen it in our council meetings, in worship, and in fellowship. Paul finishes his words to the Ephesians (3:21) by giving glory to God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen!

Once God has magnified our prayers and abundantly granted them by His power at work in us, how can we do anything but give Him the glory?

So ask yourself this: how audaciously do you pray for the mission, ministry, and community of GLC? Remember that you can't ask for anything too bold from God. As I heard Beth Moore say recently in one of her teachings - our lives, [our church, our ministry], will never be bolder than our prayers.

So pray audaciously, believe God's power is at work in all of us, and then give Him the glory!

Nametags – Have you forgotten why?

by Pastor Paul

Ok, either there is some confusion about the purpose of nametags, some of you are just protesting the use of nametags, or many of you are just forgetting to put them on. I know that the use of the nametags was reintroduced in June of last year in order to help the pastor learn the names of the members of Grace. This is only partly correct.

You are probably saying, "I know my name, and I have been here for so long, most everyone knows my name as well." That too is only partially correct. Everyone does NOT know your name, and the visitors who come to us do not know your name at all.

Therefore, the MAIN reason we wear our nametags is to introduce ourselves to visitors. When we all wear our nametags, then we know that those who do not have one MUST be a visitor. Identifying visitors without nametags, we can then introduce ourselves and introduce them to other members each Sunday morning. The opposite will never work—making the visitors wear nametags while we do not. This sends the wrong message to our guests.

Furthermore, many of you do not know each other. If your friends are your only concern, well sure, they know your name. But, we are called to be welcoming to ALL people. Knowing there are those who do not know us, we must wear our nametags for them. So, we wear nametags NOT for ourselves, but *always* for others. The church needs to always be more concerned about others than about ourselves.



New Positions at Grace

by Tim Schoessel

As many of you know Linda Trongo stepped away from her long held financial coordinator position this past October {thanks to Linda for all her hard work and service over the years to Grace}. The coordinator position was responsible for several things, but mainly money management at Grace. The one thing that it did not fill though was a position in our current constitution. According to our Grace constitution we are required to have a treasurer position which includes money management as well as being part of the Executive Committee, Stewardship Committee, and Council.

A temporary group (Financial Task Force) was put together to plan on how best to fill this treasurer position which would then take on the duties of the financial coordinator. Over the past three months this group laid out job duties, and approached possible candidates. At the January council meeting the FTF presented the plan and people involved to the council for a vote. Luckily for my sanity and Grace's well-being this plan was approved.

The plan involves the following positions, duties, and people:

Victoria Alt graciously accepted the duties of the Financial Secretary, as well as continuing in her current capacity as Parish Administrator. Some of the main duties of the Financial Secretary will include; working with the counters, and entering weekly contribution data into our Church Windows program. This will also include entering in memorial gifts and donations. She will work and coordinate with the Treasurer and the church accountant **but is not in charge of paying bills**. She will also be doing some financial filing and record keeping for the treasurer and Stewardship Committee.

Randy Teegardin has graciously accepted the role of Treasurer for Grace. His duties will include all bill paying and review, which will require him to work hand in hand with the council chairs and the budget, and non-budget line item money managers. He will be responsible for coordinating with the Financial Secretary and the church accountant to insure proper information is reviewed and processed on the current budget. He will also occupy a seat on the council, and be part of the Stewardship Committee and Executive Committee.

There are several other duties that aren't covered in this article. If you have a question about payments, contributions, or budget items you are involved with please ask Victoria, Randy or myself and we will get you pointed in the right direction.

Thanks again to Linda for her service over the years, and the willingness of Victoria and Randy to step forward and take on these new positions.

Living Fire Ministries On-going Spiritual Formation March – May, 2016

by Lorie Gladyness

A four-part series is being offered by Living Fire Ministries of DeWitt, Michigan, March-May, 2016. The title of the series is, "Finding Your Inner Compass: From Edge to the Center."

In his book, "What the Mystics Know: Seven Pathways to Your Deeper Self," Fr. Richard Rohr asks these questions: How do we find what is supposedly there? Why isn't it obvious? How do you awaken the Center? So how do we get there—to the Center? We know such ways as, 1) think about it; 2) pray and meditate; and 3) more silence and solitude.

For sure these are ways to moving from the edge to the Center. Most importantly, spiritual teachers tell us that the most important way is by living and living consciously. Our world continues to evolve and this evolution is opening us to a higher consciousness. How does this happen? What does the "edge" have to do with it? What is your "edge"—the irritations in your life, your pain, your suffering?

What is this "edge" saying to you, what information is it sharing with you? Letting go, releasing "edges" consciously can be experienced in our daily living and then we discover the Center as it stands revealed--and sufficient. This series is about entering into a process where we do not find our Center; we let it find us, we welcome God who seeks us.

Please join us for this community adventure into the God Center. The facilitator is Sister Nancy Brousseau, OP, and she will guide the reflective study, deep listening and dialogue. This event will happen on March 23; April 13, and May 4 and 25, at 10:30 am - 3:30 pm. The series is scheduled at Christ United Church, 1000 W. Weeb Rd, DeWitt, MI 48820. The cost is \$75.00, and you are asked to come prepared with materials for journaling, a Bible, and your lunch/beverage. Hot water and coffee will be provided.

If you would like to participate, either talk with Nancy Brousseau, by phone 616-560-4580 or by email, nancybrousseau@mittensynod.org, or pick up a registration form in the office.

Wednesday Prayer Group— The Quest Has Begun

by Pastor Paul

Wednesday Prayer Group began its ministry on February 3rd. Since that time, the group has continued to meet every week. This group is dedicated to praying for the present and future ministry of Grace. We request the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us to a broader mission to the community of Hastings and the world.

If you have not yet participated, join us at any time, or when you are able. A core group seems committed to prayer, and that group could use your support and encouragement through your presence and petitions, every Wednesday in the sanctuary at 6:00-6:30 pm. If you are unable to come, just take that time in your home or car to join us in asking God for guidance in our ministry.

Praying for the Church

by Lorie Gladyness

Brothers and Sisters of Christ, we have known transition and change within our midst. You may ask; what am I to do? When change is among us, prayer has to be open within us and this is where the invitation starts. I invite you to pray for the church and pray for the members of the church.

The following is an exploration of areas for focus. Our guide, John Maxwell in his book *Partners in Prayer*, speaks to what Jesus started on earth and has been continued through His body of believers. Maxwell starts with the book of John 17:9-24; following with John 17:20-23, 26.

²⁰ “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us,^[1] so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me..... ²⁶ I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

There are five areas of meditation says Maxwell. Following each item you will find an invitation for a pause or reflection and for prayer.

1. That People Would Sense the Glory of God.

“The glory that you have given me I have given them....” John 17:22a

Jesus gives us the glory that God gave Him. When God is in our midst and we are serving or worshiping Him glory is evident on our faces and in our hearts.

Pause for reflection: Consider a time within the church where you have experienced the glory of God.

Pause for Prayer: Pray for ways members or visitors can sense God’s glory in our midst.

2. That We Would Follow the Word of God.

“For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them.” John 17:8

By hearing God’s Word in worship and reading the Word at home we are given the gift of God’s promises.

Pause for reflection: Do you recall a time in your life that a verse from the Bible transformed you?

Pause for Prayer: Pray for ways we can be people who follow the Word of God.

3. That We Would be United in the Love of God.

“...so that they may be one, as we are one,...I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one...” John 17:22b and 23a.

Jesus’ desire is that we are unified through love.

Jesus is in each of us. When we look to our neighbor we are looking upon Jesus.

Pause for reflection: Has there been a time you felt united in love with your sisters and brothers in Christ?

Pause for prayer: Pray for ways to create unity in love.

4. That We Would Go Forth in the Mission of God.

“As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.” John 17:17-18

To sanctify is to set apart for a purpose. As sanctified disciples we are called to share the love of God.

Pause for reflection: Do you recall a time you shared your faith with another?

Pause for prayer: Pray for the courage to reach out to another with God’s love and for members of the church to do so also. Ask God to show Grace Lutheran Church where our mission is.

5. That We Would Experience the Joy of God.

“But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.” John 17:3

Often we confuse joy with happiness. Happiness is an emotion that often is fleeting. Joy is a deeper sense of well-being knowing that God will never leave or forsake you.

Pause for reflection: Consider a time when everything about you went wrong and everything within you was at peace.

Pause for prayer: Pray for how we can show each other, visitors and people in the community the joy of God.

“...the goodness of God is the highest object of prayer and it reaches down to our lowest need.”

— Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love

Sarah Circle

by Kay Howell

In January not much seems to get done or it seems that you have lost your ‘get up and go’. Mostly it’s being a little lazy and waiting for someone else to do the job for you. At least at my house.

Tying up loose ends has a way of reminding me of all that needs to be done, cleaning the house, laundry, dishes, reports and doing things I have already committed to doing.

Sarah Circle is an organization I have loved being active in. I worked during the day and at night Sarah Circle was the only group I could attend, listen and participate in if I so desired. I was able to keep up on Church news, learn about the needs of others from the group and over the years many friendships were formed.

Sarah Circle has been involved in numerous activities, Bazaars, Pasty sales, “work bees”, Christmas parties, prayer pals, Easter breakfasts, Mother’s Day celebrations, graduations and dinners out. A former member, Helen Cole was the first one to say, ‘Let’s do it!’ when it came to getting a job done. Irene Loughlin, Ruth Dalman, Jeanette Kogge, and Loretta Schoessel are just a few of the names that come to mind when I think off all the wonderful women who have been involved in Sarah Circle. Deb Watson is another person who has contributed so much with her handmade items, which she makes by the dozens!

To say that Sarah Circle has changed is an understatement. We have been very loyal in our ‘outreach ministry’ to purchase items for church use over the years, such as tables and chairs for the Fellowship Hall, table cloths, choir chairs, food baskets at Christmas time and donating to the Helping Hands fund to assist members in need. In the past, Sarah Circle also took care of funeral luncheons, which has now been delegated to others as it became too much.

One person who was very dedicated and had been for many, many years was Eileen Oehler. This poem reminds me of her and so many others.

I could have been

*I could have been an Easter egg all painted up so bright.
Instead, I pecked out of my shell one silent Lenten night
I could have been all reds and greens or violets and blues.
Instead, my feathers all are cast in sunshine yellow hues.
I could have been a jeweled shell admired by lads and
lasses.
Instead, I’ll grow up laying eggs to feed the hungry masses.
I could have been such lovely things, but this I’ll tell you
true.
It’s really not how good you look, it’s how much good you
do.*

~Beverly J. Lenox

In closing, I didn’t plan on such a long walk down memory lane, but to help everyone understand that Sarah Circle is more than just a group of ladies. Sarah Circle would like to remind all the women of Grace that if you are a member of Grace, you are automatically a member of this group. We meet once a month, so please check your calendars and plan to stop in and take part in the activities!

March Birthdays

- 3-2 Hailey Converse, Luke Domke, Jessie DeDecker
3-3 JoLynn Leary, Tara Schoessel
3-8 Charles (CK) Converse, Lance Ogden
3-9 Ingrid Morgan, Alleyna Davis
3-13 Danielle Drumm, Kayla Pohl
3-14 Bonnie Rapp
3-19 Brianna Neeb
3-20 Joe Cole
3-23 Rick Palmer
3-24 Kim Domke
3-26 Amy Poholski, Lisa Pohl

February Anniversaries

- 3-16 Karen & Bill Halstead
3-23 Rob & Lisa Pohl
3-24 Therese & Travis-Maupin Moore

Memoriam

- 3-2-1980 Nancy Steeby
3-3-2011 Leona Bowman
3-8-1965 Joseph Schultz
3-9-2009 Laverne Bowman, Jr.
3-10-1986 Caryl Bowman
3-11-1990 Victor Mead
3-12-1989 Jeanette Ponitz
3-14-1999 Kathryn Stager
3-21-1998 Lena Rosco
3-24-1982 Hermine Disch
3-24-1994 Myrtle Daugherty
3-24-2015 Ruth Kane
3-28-2004 Marie Converse
3-29-1982 Rita Thompson
3-29-2007 Linda Hamlin
3-30-1957 Emelia Schultz
3-30-1998 Gladys Bolo

In Our Prayers

Continuing Prayers

Healthy pregnancies

Heather Baucom
Mary Beth DeVinney
Jessica Green

Military

Kayla Pohl, *daughter of Rob & Lisa Pohl*
Myrina Clements, *daughter of Cherie
Clements*

Aaron Endsley, Adam Miller, Alyssa Mills,
Amber Reid, Andrew Ferguson, Ashley
Gillons, Austin Endsley, Ben Curtis, Carl
Franson, Charles & Tim Krewson, Cole Davis,
Dylan Kelmer, Edward Frost, Greg Scott, Jena
Harwood, Jon Ingran, Jordan Swank, Josh
Lewis, Justin Ogden, Lena Jordon, Noah
Daniels, Phil DeVries, Ryan Davis, Spencer
Reid, Taylor Gould, Tom Fenoseff, Zackary
Green

Companion Synods in Honduras, Papua
New Guinea, and Latvia

Nursing home residents . . . Beth Oehler,
Dorothy Mayo, Deb Wood, Vivian
Allerding

Shut-ins . . . Dave Bolton, Ilene Hilson,
Jamie Coplin, Opal Gillons

Grace Lutheran Church

239 E. North St.
Hastings, MI 49058

Website: www.discover-grace.org

Facebook: Grace Lutheran Church
- ELCA Hastings, MI

269-945-9414 or 269-945-2645

Fax: 269-945-2698

Our Staff:

Parish Admin: *Victoria Alt*
ParishAdmin@grace-hastings.org
Mon – Thurs 8 AM - 3PM

Custodian: *Nathan Freedlund*
Minister of Music: *Cindy Olson*
Choir Accompanists:
Marcia Bowman, Chris Bush
Bell Choir Director: *Kim Domke*
Organist Emeritus: *Donna Buehl*

Executive Committee:

President: *Doug Neeb*
Vice President: *Chris Bush*
Secretary: *Kate Watson*



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Winter

(1st Sunday after Labor Day - May)
Sundays @ 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Summer

(June – Labor Day)
Sundays @ 8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

5th Sundays

Sunday @ 10:00am

Advent and Lent

Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m.

Nursery and Cry room are available

All Ages Faith Building/Sunday School

Winter

(1st Sunday after Labor Day – May)
9:30 AM

5th Sundays

Sunday @ 8:45 am



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Committee Chairs

Brothers of Grace – *Joe Longcor*

Congregational Care – *Margaret Wood*

Faith Building – *Lorraine Freedlund*

Community Outreach – *Bill Freedlund*

Property – *Tom Peck & Phil Poholski*

Sarah Circle – *Kay Howell*

Social Activities – *Diane Neeb*

Stewardship – *Tim Schoessel*

Youth & Family – *Jana Bishop*

Worship – *Lorie Gladyness*