



HOLY COMMUNION OFFERED EVERY SUNDAY

From the Pastor's Desk

by Pastor Paul E. Kuhlman

Lent: A Time for Renewal

When I lived in Argentina, in the southern hemisphere, the focus of Lent was on darkness and repentance, pointing our lives in the direction of Good Friday as we also prepared for winter. By Maundy Thursday, when things were truly dark and the days shorter, the stripping of the altar took on new meaning as we moved in silence toward Good Friday and the season of cold and rain.

For those of us in the northern hemisphere, Lent takes place in the latter months of winter and the early months of spring. Our focus is on renewal as we wait expectantly for Good Friday and Easter. Lent is a season of expectations and preparations for a surprise, when we will be made new in the events of the cross and the empty tomb.

In other words, Lent is a time for renewal, and Grace is deep in this process. We have renewed a Gathering Area that sees more and more people staying after service to talk and; well gather. We have spent 20 months trying to renew our commitment to the mission and ministry of Christ. And now we have entered another stage of our lives of renewing our congregational commitments to each other by preparing to call a full-time, settled pastor to serve the Lord in faithfulness and joy for many years at Grace.

Lent is a time of renewal, and Grace is now deep into that task. May Lent be a time to face our demons, confess our sins, and prepare to be surprised at Easter and beyond.

GraceGram

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



OUR
MISSION

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

March 2017

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Deadline for inclusion in the April GraceGram is March 17, 2017.

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

On the Cover – Thinking about Lent

by Pastor Paul

One could say that this window is more focused on Good Friday than Lent. One could say that and one would be right, except Lent is as much a focus on the event on Golgatha as it is a time for renewal and focusing on one's baptism. After all, Paul reminds us that baptism (and I would add Lent) is the act of dying with Christ in the water and rising to new life with Jesus as we come out of the water. So baptism and Lent are our Good Friday events.



Three crosses stand on a hill. The center cross is higher since we know that this reminds us of the position of Jesus on the cross on Good Friday. We know through scripture that Jesus was placed on a cross between two thieves. Though the hill is covered in green, a color that was probably not present in the event of Good Friday, it does remind us that the cross must grow out of our everyday experiences and bring life to the world, as did the event of Jesus on Good Friday.

In the background is a rising sun with all its beautiful golden and red rays streaming across the sky. Though the event of Good Friday is framed in scripture as a dark and cloudy event, we the Easter people, after the events of resurrection, now perceive Good Friday and the cross as the highpoint of redemption and salvation. As in a novel or story, the climax finally reveals what the author had in mind when he wrote it. Good Friday, though a silent day in the liturgy of the church, still shines with the promise that everything God promised in Jesus is now being revealed. The color yellow reminds us of the glory of God revealed in Jesus' resurrection. The color red reminds us that the event is grounded in the spilling of the blood of Jesus and his death. The death of one man brings glory to God because it brings redemption to humanity.

President's Perspective

by Doug Neeb

It has become apparent after the announcement of the proposed start of **Phase Two** of our remodeling project that not everyone either remembers or heard what we hoped to accomplish. One of the short comings of our present church lay out that has been noted by previous Vision Teams is that the entrance of our worship area is not clearly visible when you walk in our front door. When the Choir loft is removed along with the Cry room and the present entrance to our worship space we will create space to move the entrance 90 degrees and it will be facing people as they walk in. The removal of the Choir Loft will open up space to add back into our worship space 4-6 pews to increase seating, and create a space for a technology control booth to control sound and special video presentations.

Apart from the Choir Loft removal the plan includes moving the Pastors Office next to the Parish Administrator's office and opening up this space to be used as an overflow/ cry/ class/special gathering room. Once the Choir Loft is removed a large window and sound system will be installed in the wall separating the office from the worship space. This will eliminate the need for people to walk up stairs to use the overflow area and the safety concerns that go along with using the Choir Loft for worship overflow.

The last part of Phase Two is to remove one step in the Chancel area. This will make the area more useable for the Bell Choir or special productions.

Transition Team -A Work in Progress

by Melissa Patton

The Transition Team will be meeting again on March 5 after second service. Each Transition Team member can be identified by a red nametag. If you would like to share thoughts or concerns beyond the survey you completed, please do not hesitate to let the Transition Team know.



Give a Gift That Can Benefit Everyone

by The Varkulas

As some of you know, people who have a **Traditional IRA** and are 70½ years old or older are required to take a certain amount out of their IRA every year. Usually the funds withdrawn from a Traditional IRA are considered taxable income – which means Federal and State taxes are assessed on that amount.

Did you know there is an alternative for people in this situation? It is known as a **Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)** allowing individuals to donate up to \$100,000 from a Traditional or Roth IRA to a qualifying charity of their choice (Grace, perhaps?). If done correctly, a QCD can be used to satisfy a required minimum distribution without having to be included as income for the individual year-end tax obligation. **This option may be of benefit to both the owner of the IRA and the local charity.**

For instance, let's assume an individual meeting the age criteria of 70½ or older needs to withdraw a minimum of \$1,000.00 from their IRA. Simply making the withdrawal brings an approximate tax assessment of 20% in Federal tax and 4.25% in State tax. This is a total of \$242.50, which leaves \$757.50 for the owner to use as they desire (spend it or donate it).

However, taking advantage of the Qualified Charitable Distribution, the same individual required to withdraw the \$1,000.00, through their financial representative, authorizes the funds to be sent directly to a qualifying charity, such as Grace Lutheran Church, with no tax obligations. The charity receives the entire sum and the individual has no tax obligation and may further use the gift as part of their itemized deductions (where appropriate). For more information, please contact your financial advisor and plan your distributions for the future!



Lent Worship

by Kristi Winick & Cindy Olson

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1st. Come to worship at 7:00 p.m. and receive the sign of the cross as a reminder that “we are dust, and to dust we shall return.”

On the remaining Wednesday nights in March, join us for dinner at 6:00 p.m., and worship at 7:00 p.m. We will once again be using Holden Evening Prayer, with a new arrangement of Psalm 25 that is very easy to learn.

Bishop Satterlee will be preaching and presiding on Passion/Palm Sunday, April 9th. We will have one service at 10:00 a.m.

The Worship Committee encourages you to join us each of the Three Days (called the Triduum) of Holy Week: Maundy Thursday (April 13th at 7:00 p.m.), Good Friday (April 14th at 7:00 p.m.), and Easter Vigil/Holy Saturday (April 15th, worship time to be determined; we plan to follow it with a gathering of food and fellowship). Holy Week is the crux of the Christian faith, and by attending all of the worship services offered, you will more fully experience the emotions and meaning of our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Easter Sunday (April 16th) worship times will be our usual Sunday morning worship times, 8:00 and 10:45 a.m. There will be some form of breakfast available between services.

We look forward to seeing you in worship!



A Courage and Faithfulness Update

by Kate Watson

Last April I wrote a GraceGram article entitled *Going out on a Limb With God, or How the “Hang In There” Kitten is Connected to The Duke*. The article shared my thoughts on courage and faithfulness; two fruits of the spirit that I believed GLC was and is being called to embody. I went further to share that during my prayer time it had been impressed upon my heart that in the wake of our difficulties in 2015, God had stopped sending visitors to our congregation for a season because we were not embodying peace, love, joy, and the other fruits of the spirit that He desired us to bear. During that time we had a rift in the unity of our congregation and we needed to learn how to deal with conflict in productive, healthy ways.

The article also outlined that as we learned how to deal with the conflict among us and mend our brokenness, there were small confirmations that showed us our courage and faithfulness were bearing fruit – visitors who complimented our coffee hour, new members joining because of the spiritual support and love they felt coming from us as a congregation.

I am thrilled to share today that since December 2015, we have had SIXTY visitors come through our doors and fill out a participation card. Fourteen of those sixty (six of whom are children) have become members of GLC. This, brothers and sisters, is much cause for celebration. We were given the opportunity to serve these people and we did so graciously and with great courage and faithfulness.

Faithfulness means serving and loving without regard for what the outcome will be. We leave that outcome totally up to God, because we trust Him to use our efforts in whatever way he deems best for His plans. It is a great gift when we can actually see the results of our faithfulness – 60 visitors served, and 14 people joining our congregation.

Of course courage has been the companion to our faithfulness these past months – courage to embrace a lot of newness and courage to face old problems in new ways. Implementation of the participation cards, the changes to coffee hour, the huge physical changes through the building’s renovation – all of these things have required courage and faithfulness to implement.

Thanks be to God for His faithfulness to GLC! Please pray for our congregation that we will continue to courageously and faithfully follow God’s lead. He has big plans for us, and they are good.

How Well Do You Know the Reformation?

by Pastor Paul

☐ TRUE
☐ FALSE

1. T or F Luther viewed Carlstadt as a Radical Reformist who misused Luther’s views.
2. T or F When Luther returned from exile in the castle of Wartburg, he returned to the same situation he left. Nothing had changed.
3. T or F Erasmus was a talented Humanist thinker who challenged Luther’s views on freedom.
4. T or F Erasmus believed that bishops would help the church agree on the meaning of those parts of scripture that individuals could not understand.
5. T or F Knowing how difficult it was to understand the meaning of scripture, Luther agreed with Erasmus that bishops and councils were necessary to bring order to the Bible.
6. T or F Most humanists believed that the bread and wine of communion actually became the body and blood of Christ, and challenged Luther to support this long-held view.
7. T or F Luther did not want to have anything to do with the humanist view of the body and blood of Jesus in Communion, but rather supported the Radical Reformist’s view that Holy Communion was just a meal to remember the Last Supper..
8. T or F The peasants went to war with the nobles over higher wages and better health care.
9. T or F Luther never supported the peasants in the grievances against the nobles and lords.
10. T or F Luther’s eventual opposition to the violence and chaos of the peasants led them to pull their support for the reforms proposed by Luther.

Answers appear on page 7.



Reformaton Memories

by Pastor Paul

Luther returned to Wittenberg after his exile in the castle of Wartburg, to his duties and leadership at the university. In his return, however, he found only change and chaos. Though he tried to remain focused on his theological and pastoral duties, the world would no longer be the same and Luther would be forced to address the changes. His desire to reform the church had opened the door to new political and social perspectives which would challenge Luther for the rest of his life.



The first of these challenges came from von Carlstadt, as I mentioned last month. He was a close follower of Luther and became expanded many of Luther's thoughts and ideas to religious and political reforms. While Luther was in exile, Carlstadt assumed the leadership among those who wanted to see radical change in church and society, and he became a leader among the Peasant wars of late 1520's. Luther defended his opposing views of Carlstadt and would label him a "Radical Reformist."

Another challenge came from Erasmus, the leading Humanist thinker of Luther's day. He thought of himself as a linguist, and Luther actually used his work while translating the Greek New Testament into German. Early on in Luther's writings titled, *The Heidelberg Disputations*, Luther believed that freedom of the will existed in "name only" after the fall of Adam and Eve. Erasmus picked up the cause of freedom and addresses his opposing position in a document written in 1524 titled, *On the Freedom of the Will*. Some say that Luther's response in *Bondage of the Will* is one of Luther's most crowning theological achievements, even though he lost the philosophical war.

In response to Erasmus' view that scripture can be interpreted in many different ways and that a council of bishops is needed to bring clarity and unity to scripture, Luther stated that scripture is clear if we interpret it from its core; the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Luther believed that where some texts are unclear, they are to be understood through those parts of scripture that are clear and concise—scripture interprets scripture. No "council" of the church is necessary to understand them.

Luther was challenged by other humanists and Radical Reformists as well. Several Swiss and German humanists questioned Luther's view on the Mass (Eucharist or liturgy of Holy Communion, to use present language). They felt Luther had given up on the church's understanding of transubstantiation, the view that the bread and wine of communion actually became the body and blood of Christ in the Mass. The Radical Reformists, especially Ulrich Zwingli of Zurich, felt Luther had not gone far enough to destroy the Catholic view of transubstantiation, proposing

Communion as merely a memorial meal. Luther always believed that Jesus' words, "This is my body," was promise enough of Jesus' presence in bread and wine.

The greatest challenge to Luther as pastor and theologian were the Peasant Wars, which came to a head in 1525. A new economic reality was taking hold in Europe, led by the financial lending institutions of Italy and the growing trade routes to the New World. Medieval Europe functioned under a symbiotic relationship between the lords and nobles who owned the land and the peasants who worked them, giving parts of their work back to the nobles and keeping enough to live on. All of this was now being threatened by money or cash. Cash and gold were replacing the barter system and the peasants were being caught in the middle with nowhere to go.

In the beginning, Luther supported the efforts of the peasants, but as their actions became more and more violent, Luther found himself opposing the peasants and proposing action that would restore order. In *An Admonition to Peace*, Luther called the nobility to negotiate with the peasants, warning them that their intransigence could bring about a peasant revolt. Luther viewed the outbreak of violence on the part of the peasants through biblical eyes and felt it was leading to chaos and complete destruction. In his pamphlet, *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*, Luther called the lords to put down the revolt using violence if necessary in order to restore order. The lords, however, continued to oppress the peasants, and Luther's words would come back to haunt him, long after his death. He tried to explain his position in *On the Harsh Book against the Peasants*, but by then he had lost any and all support of the peasants.

Thank you!

Pastor Mike Kemper for helping us in ministry during Pastor Paul's vacation.

Renovation Project—painters, trim workers, and those who are continuing to assist in the finishing touches for Stage 1.



Sunday Adult Forums -Liturgy 101

by Pastor Paul

Liturgy 101 is an introduction to the history, structure and meaning of the liturgy we use on Sunday morning. Now you can get an answer to all those questions you have stored up:

- why don't we use the Kyrie every Sunday?
- why do we omit the Apostles's Creed some Sundays, and why do we replace it with the Nicene on others?
- what parts on our Sunday liturgy are essential?
- why are there "seasons" throughout year, like Lent, Epiphany, etc?
- I don't like all of this pomp and stuff. Why can't we be more like the church of Acts?
- etc, etc, etc.

Come and find out where our liturgy came from, where the Bible is in worship, why we do what we do, and the meaning of the things we do in worship. Pastor Paul will offer this forum throughout the month of March in the new classroom next to the coat rack room during the Adult Forum Hour.



March Birthdays

- 3-2 Luke Domke
- 3-3 JoLynn Leary, Tara Schoessel
- 3-8 Lance Ogden, Jordan Davis
- 3-9 Ingrid Morgan, Alleyna Davis
- 3-13 Danielle Drumm, Kayla Pohl
- 3-14 Bonnie Rapp
- 3-19 Brianna Neeb
- 3-23 Rick Palmer
- 3-24 Kim Domke
- 3-26 Amy Poholski, Lisa Pohl
- 3-27 Evelyn Granzow, Derrick Rosenberger
- 3-31 Paul Pruitt

March Anniversaries

- 3-09 Ed & Jeanette Markwart
- 3-16 Karen & Bill Halstead
- 3-21 Jonathan & Deanna Reid
- 3-23 Rob & Lisa Pohl

Call Committee – how it works

by Pastor Paul

The Call Committee includes members of the congregation who do the actual work of interviewing ministry candidates and proposing to the council the candidate they believe best fits the profile for this congregation. The 6 members are chosen by the Congregation Council and usually are members who are not part of council. Sometimes they include 1-2 members from the previous Transition Team.

So this is the process: 1) once the Transition Team completes the Ministry Site Profile—the document that describes the needs and ministries of Grace—the Call Committee begins its work; 2) the Call Committee will be formed before the Transition Team work is completed, and will participate in a Synod Training Event in April; 3) the Call Committee will meet to discuss the Ministry Site Profile, organize possible questions for future candidates and contact the synod for a list of candidate names; 4) the Call Committee will interview the candidates in various ways, some might include a face-to-face interview; 5) when the committee has agreed upon a candidate, they will introduce her/him to council, a preaching opportunity at Grace would be set, and a financial package would be agreed upon; 6) the council would then set up a special congregational meeting to approve the candidate for a call to Grace; 7) a letter of call is then drafted, signed by the council, and sent to the candidate and the synod bishop for final approval; 8) when the candidate agrees to accept the call, a start-up date is established and the congregation begins scheduling events to welcome the pastor.

Though the process may seem involved and long, commitment to the process on the part of all parties involved is key for determining the length of the process.

Pastor Paul is actively involved with the Transition Team, to keep them on task and to assure the Ministry Site Profile is true to the needs and ministries of Grace, but he will have no contact with the Call Committee, and will always refer the committee to the synod staff for assistance and advice.

The Call Committee only “recommends” a candidate for ministry at Grace. The members still approve the call of a candidate in a vote at a special congregational meeting to be determined by the Congregation Council according to the rules of the congregation’s approved constitution.

Mutual Ministry Committee

A new idea, much needed

by Pastor Paul

This committee that has been needed for some time, and will be a real asset for Grace as they interview candidates for ministry. The council hopes to have this committee up and functioning by the end of April, when the Call Committee may begin interviews. The constitution of Grace makes the formation of a Mutual Ministry Committee/Team mandatory.



In the months ahead, four members of Grace will work with Pastor Paul to draw up the rules of the committee. The committee's main function is to operate as a team that stands between the congregation and the pastor in dealing with issues that have previously divided the congregation. Membership usually includes two members appointed by the council and two members appointed by the pastor. Together they have the job of keeping communications open between divided parties; recommending avenues of discussion and unity, and proposing the involvement of synod staff in situations that the team feels threaten the stability of the congregation.

Though the committee is separate from the Congregation Council, it is still both accountable to the council and guides the council on possible actions and directions to maintain a "mutual" view of ministry at Grace. Ministry in congregations is both congregational and pastoral—it is a "mutual" ministry, each having its function and purpose and each trying to support the other in words, deeds and prayers. Sometimes this mutuality in ministry breaks down and needs to be repaired and healed. The Mutual Ministry Committee has this as their primary purpose.

As the rules and functions of this committee unfold, trust that the committee will inform the congregation of what is developing and how important these developments are for the function of the committee and the life of the church.

Answers to questions on page 4

How Well Do You Know the Reformation?

1. True Carlstadt took Luther's views to an extreme with which Luther did not agree.
2. False Luther returned to an empty monastery, theological chaos in the university, and violence among the peasants.
3. True Exactly.
4. True Luther opposed Erasmus on this point, believing that "scripture interprets scripture."
5. False Luther had no trust in councils. His trust was in the word of God.
6. True Luther believed in the promise of Jesus and opposed the Medieval view of transubstantiation.
7. False Luther opposed the Radical Reformists' views of Holy Communion—simple memorial.
8. False The peasants went to war with the nobles because they could not pay rent on the nobles' property they farmed, and the nobles no longer wanted just the produce from the farm.
9. False Luther initially supported the peasants, and even felt their grievances were God's judgment on the nobles.
10. True After the Peasant War, Luther lost all support from the peasants.

Give it up for Lent!

by Chris Bush

Throughout history a spiritual practice has been and continues to be giving something up for Lent. More recently, some have rather than giving something up added a new discipline to focus spiritual renewal. Whether you plan to "Give up" something or "take on" something we have created a seven part resource with the theme "Give it up for Lent."

Refrain: We can for a brief time in our life "give up" some vice or practice for a period of time. Perhaps we could refrain from drinking coffee for seven weeks so we better experience the joy or energy that it gives us when we drink it again on Easter Sunday. We refrain from eating dessert or drinking alcohol or watching television.

Engage: Another way would be to give it up in all caps with an explanation point as in to get really excited. GIVE IT UP! Lent is here and we can as a community of believers gather together and celebrate this often somber season in the church year. It could be completely possible to CELEBRATE Lent with our whole heart while we remain quiet and contemplative.

Retreat: What if we were to evaluate our lives and realize that we fight or resist a regiment of prayer and the use of scripture as a tool to experience our life of faith. What if we "Give up" the fight and actually spend more time in prayer or intentional relationship with God.

Sacrifice: Different than giving up sweets or caffeine, sometimes we take life's comforts for granted. It is more difficult but could be much more poignant to actually sacrifice so that we can better understand those without such comforts. Could consider giving up "hot showers or warm blankets or your car for a time to experience the life of those less privileged?"

Let Go: Stress can be a badge of honor as we go through our daily lives. We can with great satisfaction proclaim that life is hard and I am muscling through. Imagine rather than embracing or enduring through stressful situations actually "Giving it up" to God in prayer.

Thanksgiving: We live in a do it yourself society. We are quick to accept the credit for our successes and accomplishments. What if it became more common place to "Give up" the credit to God. Recognize daily that day to day activities are a result of God given abilities.

Accept: Sometimes we need to be challenged to "give up" our prejudice or bias that keep us from experiencing a broader more diverse community.

However you "Give it up!" this year, be it avoiding, experiencing or retreating, we hope that these weeks leading up to the resurrection will fill your soul and guide you to "The peace that passes all understanding."

Excerpted from the Old Lutheran.com newsletter

4 Reasons Your Church Should Offer Name Tags Every Sunday

by Pastor Paul

- **Guest Oriented** - People want to be known. I know that there is a school of thought that says that people want to be totally anonymous when they arrive at church. The dangerous application of this belief is that we go out of way to make it hard for people to connect. We want to give people space to control their experience with our church, but we want to meet them when they are ready to connect.
- **It's an Invitation to Talk** - The implication of the name tag is an invitation to talk with other people. Our hope is that when people come to church that they connect with the community ... the goal is to get people talking to each other! People love to hear their own name ... it's the sweetest word they hear all day. By offering name tags we are multiplying out lots of great conversations in church. What a positive emotion to associate with our church!
- **Helpful for Your Team** - Let's be honest ... you can remember maybe 200 people's names when you see their faces but you can probably remember stuff about 1,500 people when given their face and name. (Think about Facebook ... the fact that you see people's names and faces boosts your recall about the details of other people's lives big time!) The name tag helps your team remember a little bit more about your people by just giving them a little bit of information about your guests.
- **It's Not About You** - Name tags by definition are about the other people around us and not ourselves. It's a declaration that I'm not the center of this universe ... that I acknowledge that everyone doesn't know me ... that I'm not that big of a deal. When we put on a name tag we are serving other people who might feel uncomfortable coming up to us.

Grace is now a part of Amazon Smile!

by Victoria Alt

If you shop for yourself or your family at Amazon.com, there is a super easy way to support our church.

WHAT IS AMAZONSMILE?

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

HOW DO I SHOP AT AMAZONSMILE?

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

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CAN I USE MY EXISTING AMAZON.COM ACCOUNT ON AMAZONSMILE?

Yes, you use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

HOW DO I SELECT A CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION TO SUPPORT WHEN SHOPPING ON AMAZONSMILE?

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. We will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.



Learn with the Bishop

by The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

We are divided. We are divided as a nation. We are divided as a state. We are divided as a church and, I also suspect, our congregations are divided. All we need do is spend a little time on Facebook to experience the ferocity of our divisions. We are divided politically over the direction of our country and, more than that, we are divided over how we, as Christians and as the church, ought and ought not address and respond to civic, societal, political, and global issues.

So how do we find a way forward together? Do our Lutheran confessions and our Lutheran theological heritage offer anything that can guide us? I decided to find out and have invited Dr. James M. Childs, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Theology and Ethics at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, to teach me—and us. Dr. Childs will be the second (hopefully) annual Learn with the Bishop lecturer and I invite you to join me on Saturday, March 25, from 9:30 AM to 3 PM at Faith Lutheran Church in Okemos.

Dr. Childs earned his B.A. from Concordia Senior College, M.Div. from Concordia Seminary (St. Louis), S.T.M. from Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Ph.D. from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago—he took his exams in what would become my office. After serving as a pastor in Richmond, VA, Childs became Associate Professor of Theology and Chairperson of the Division of Theology at Concordia Senior College, Lecturer in Philosophy at Purdue University, and Associate Professor of Theology at Valparaiso University, before being called as Professor of Ethics at Trinity. I knew him best as Dean Childs. In 1998, he was named Joseph A. Sittler Professor of Theology and Ethics and in 2011, Edward C. Fendt Professor of Systematic Theology.

Learn with the Bishop is intended for all rostered ministers, congregational leaders, and members and friends of our synod. Please call the Synod Office to register so that we know how many to expect for lunch. A free will offering will be taken.

I'm also excited to invite you to Learn from the Bishop in a workshop focused on John's Lenten texts. This Lent, we will hear beautiful readings from John's Gospel. I am very much looking forward to exploring those texts with preachers on Tuesday, February 21, at Zion Lutheran Church in Comstock Park. Again, please contact the Synod Office to register for this event.

See you in class!



There Will Be No More Evangelism Committee

by Rev. David E Sprang, Assistant to the Bishop

I hope that got your attention! At the recent Synod Council meeting the New and Redeveloping Mission Table (formerly the Outreach Committee) proposed that the Renewing Mission Table (formerly the Witness/Evangelism Team) be combined. The reason is rather straight forward. It's not that we will no longer be doing evangelism, although some congregations have adopted that stance. It's that evangelism is not a stand-alone effort or goal. It is really a part of all that we do as a church.

Evangelism begins with talking about Jesus. It is essential that we talk about Jesus when we do outreach, when we do service projects, when we advocate for our community, when we worship, when we teach, and when we talk about our money and resources. Evangelism is not an isolated effort. It's feeling comfortable and practicing talking about Jesus and sharing faith in all aspects of the mission and ministry of the church.

When the rotating homeless shelter is hosted in your church, doing evangelism means welcoming guests in the name of Jesus, telling people why we open our churches to others in the cold of winter, and inviting those who come in out of the cold to not just rest for a while, but to find rest for their souls as well. It means that when people come for the food pantry, we spend time talking to them about their life, and telling them about how faith in Jesus gives us hope.

Evangelism is not just inviting people to have a relationship with Jesus. It often means inviting people to serve. Bishop Satterlee reminds us that the early church did not

invite people to learn their way into serving. They invited people to serve their way into learning. People joined the community not by memorizing the catechism as a way to qualify them for service. They first were invited to serve. And then in the serving, more experienced Christians shared the motivation and reason for serving.

Congregations that are in renewal and growing have disbanded Evangelism Committees and have started asking; "How do we share our/your faith in every aspect of mission and ministry?" When every member of the congregation sees themselves as an evangelist, instead of a committee of 5 people, the effect is greatly multiplied.



Lutheran/Catholic Join Statement

by Pastor Paul

On Oct. 31, 2016, Lutherans and Catholics from around the world came together for the anniversary of the Reformation. The Lutheran-Catholic commemoration took place in Lund, Sweden, with a Common Prayer service lead by Pope Francis, The Lutheran World Federation President Bishop Dr. Munib A. Younan and its general secretary, the Rev. Dr. Martin Junge. The following is the Joint Statement from that gathering:

“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me” (John 15:4).

With thankful hearts

With this Joint Statement, we express joyful gratitude to God for this moment of common prayer in the Cathedral of Lund, as we begin the year commemorating the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. Fifty years of sustained and fruitful ecumenical dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans have helped us to overcome many differences, and have deepened our mutual understanding and trust. At the same time, we have drawn closer to one another through joint service to our neighbors – often in circumstances of suffering and persecution. Through dialogue and shared witness we are no longer strangers. Rather, we have learned that what unites us is greater than what divides us...

Our commitment to common witness

As we move beyond those episodes in history that burden us, we pledge to witness together to God's merciful grace, made visible in the crucified and risen Christ. Aware that the way we relate to one another shapes our witness to the Gospel, we commit ourselves to further growth in communion rooted in Baptism, as we seek to remove the remaining obstacles that hinder us from attaining full unity. Christ desires that we be one, so that the world may believe (cf. John 17:23).

Calling upon Catholics and Lutherans worldwide

We call upon all Lutheran and Catholic parishes and communities to be bold and creative, joyful and hopeful in their commitment to continue the great journey ahead of us...By drawing close in faith to Christ, by praying together, by listening to one another, by living Christ's love in our relationships, we, Catholics and Lutherans, open ourselves to the power of the Triune God...

Grace Lutheran Church

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Our Staff:

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

Minister of Music: *Cindy Olson*

Choir Accompanists:

Marcia Bowman, Chris Bush

Bell Choir Director: *Kim Domke*

Custodian: *Nathan Freedlund*

Organist Emeritus: *Donna Buehl*



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Regular

(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.

Children's Church

Winter

(1st Sunday after Labor Day – May)
10:45 AM

5th Sundays

Sunday @ 8:45 am



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Executive Committee:

President: *Doug Neeb*

Vice President: *Chris Bush*

Secretary: *Kate Watson*

Treasurer: *Randy Teegardin*

Church Council Members/Liaisons

Cherie Clements – Small Group Ministry

Margaret Wood – Congregational Care

Phil Poholski – Property Committee

Kay Howell – Community Outreach

Diane Neeb – Social Activities

Tim Schoessel - Stewardship

Jana Bishop – Children/Youth Ministry

Open – Worship Committee