Grace Lutheran Church

239 E North St Hastings MI 49058



Website: www.grace-hastings.org Facebook: Grace Lutheran Church-ELCA Hastings, MI Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 2:00 pm-6:00 pm

> Phone: (269) 945-9414 (269) 945-2645

Pastor Ken Scheck II Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music March 30, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 30, 2025

Lent is a season of preparation and renewal. The color purple has become a symbol of the extravagance of God. The music of the season reflects our need to prepare for God's forgiveness and renewal, which draws us into God's forgiving action toward humanity and all of creation.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP! We are promised that the earth will not be destroyed by God's commitment to renew all of creation. God pulls us into life by saving us and removing our sin through Jesus Christ. We are called to allow God's reign of life to sustain us in our times of trial and to stand with God who gives us life, so that others can experience God's grace in their life.

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Welcome

Gathering Music

Afterthoughts
Tranquil Chimings
played by the Clapper Kids

arr. S. Eithun arr. S. Eithun

Arise in body or spirit.

Greeting

The pastor and the assembly greet each other.

- P The grace and mercy of God, who in Christ bears our burdens and saves us from sin through the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
- And also with you.

Gathering Song

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

ELW 807



- 1 Come, thou Fount of ev-'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
- 2 Here I raise my Eb-en-e-zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
- 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt-or dai-ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise. and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home. let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end-less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love, Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-d'ring from the fold of God; Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good-ness prove. he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter - posed his pre-cious blood. Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Dialogue

- P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us, anoint us, and make us new.
- Amen.
- **A** Behold, now is the acceptable time;
- **now** is the day of salvation.
- P Let us celebrate that Christ bears our burdens.
- **Saving us from sin through the Holy Spirit.**

Kyrie W&P 81





nour - ish our souls . . . with your bo - dy and

blood,

that you

Prayer of the Day

- ⚠ Let us pray... God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy.
- **B**y our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

 Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading Joshua 5:9-12

By celebrating the Passover and eating the produce of the promised land instead of the miraculous manna that had sustained them in the desert, the Israelites symbolically bring their forty years of wilderness wandering to an end at Gilgal.

L A reading from **Joshua**.

⁹ The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

- L Word of God. Word of life.
- **☑** Thanks be to God.





Refrain



Be glad, you righ -teous, and re - joice in the LORD.

² Happy are they to whom the LORD im- | putes no guilt, and in whose spirit there | is no guile! ■

³ While I held my tongue, my bones with- ered away, because of my groaning | all day long.

⁴ For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.

⁶ Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in ¹ time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they ¹ shall not reach them. **■**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble; you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.

8 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go; I will guide you | with my eye.

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near you."

¹⁰ Great are the tribulations | of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust | in the LORD.

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice [|] in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are [|] true of heart.

■

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven, and whose sin is | put away!

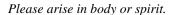
One way to describe the gospel is the promise that in Christ everything is transformed into newness. All mistakes, all deliberate sins, all old history is reconciled with Christ's resurrection. This is Paul's strong message to the congregation in the city of Corinth.

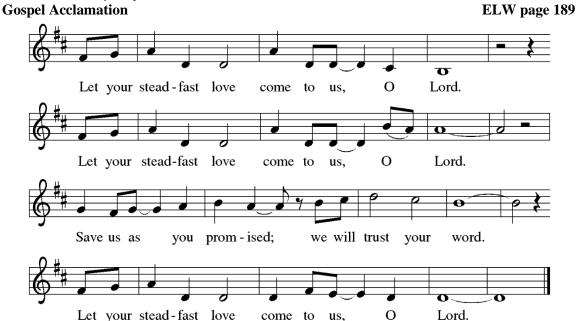
L A reading from **2 Corinthians**.

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

L Word of God. Word of life.

☑ Thanks be to God.





Gospel Reading Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

P The Holy Gospel, according to Luke.

☑ Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable: ^{11b} "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." 20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' ³¹ Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

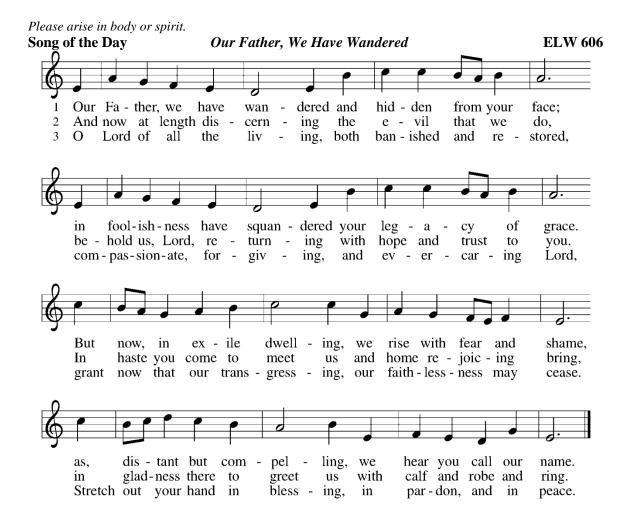
- P The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Children's Time

All children [including infants] and youth who desire to come forward for the children's sermon are welcomed and encouraged to do so. Parents/caregivers are welcome to accompany their child during the children's message. There may be a time of dance and celebration that is offered.

Message



Please be seated.

Pravers

We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, God, in your mercy. The assembly prays, Receive our prayer.

- **A** Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need. *A brief silence*.
- A God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ. As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love. Bless our leaders and partners, especially Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and Kjersten, our synod companion University Lutheran Church, East Lansing; St. Cryil Catholic Church, Nashville; St. Edwards Catholic Church, Lake Odessa; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken. God, in your mercy,
- **☑** Receive our prayer.
- ⚠ God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth. Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy,
- **☑** Receive our prayer.
- (A) God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family. Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all. Be with those who safeguard the world, including *Parker Stancil (Freedlund)*, *Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements)*, *Cynthia Rudesill (Hansen)*, *Joel Taggart (Varkula)*, *Seth Domke (Domke)*, *and Nathen Schick (Markwart)*. God, in your mercy,
- **☑** Receive our prayer.
- Anderson, Pastor Michael Anton, Mark Arens, Bob Bolton, Frank Bolton, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Pat DePew, Kim Domke, Bonnie Ehredt, Greg Franks, Lori and John Giacalone, Lisa Golnek, Heather Gore, Larry Griswold, Joy Jenks, Michelle Kaufman (pregnancy), Dana Lepien, Samantha and Ashton and baby Colton Lee Mead, Linda Melcher, Larry Maupin, Dawn McElgunn, Sandy Mikolajczyk, Martha Misak, Kate Muraski, Jody Neagle, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Kali Ranguette (pregnancy), Tammy Rodriguez, Lynnze Rudesill-Nuyen, Sandy Scheck, Ron Smith, Kathy Surratt, Lorelei Tate, Al Throop, Claudia Throop, George Ulrich Jr., Jeanette Ulrich, and Brenda Watson. Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. God, in your mercy,
- **@** Receive our prayer.

A God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded. Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all. God, in your mercy,

Receive our prayer.

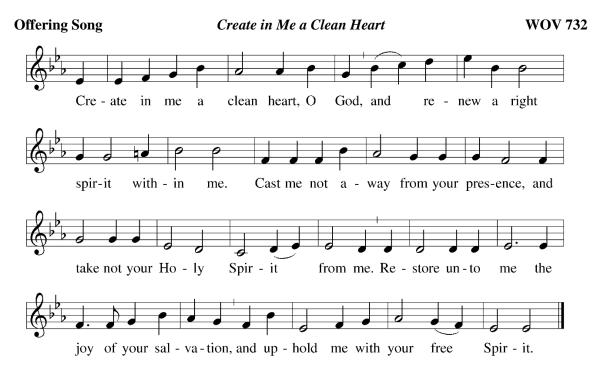
Here other intercessions may be offered.

- A God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died, *especially Doris Allerding and Elsie Merrow*. We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy,
- **☑** Receive our prayer.
- P Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.
- **9** Amen.

Please arise in body or spirit.

Sharing the Peace of God

- P The peace of Christ be with you.
- **And also with you.** (We share the peace of Christ with one another.)



Offering Prayer

- Let us pray....Merciful God, receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives,
- **Q** that following in the way of the cross, we may know the joy of the resurrection, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.
- **P** Lift up your hearts.
- **W**e lift them to the Lord.
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- **■** It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Proper Preface

- P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast that, renewed in the waters of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with all the faithful of every time and every place, we praise your name.
- **9** Amen

The Prayer of Consecration

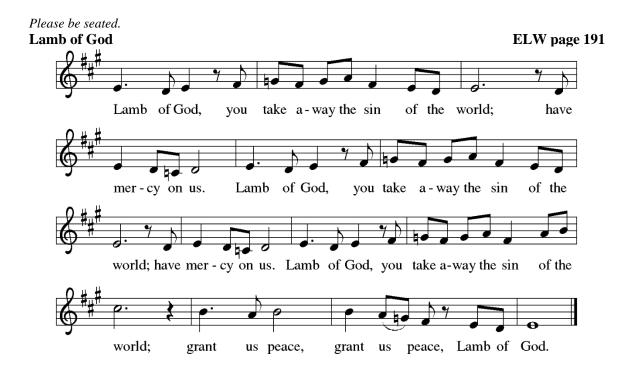
- P Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as Jesus comes to us in his holy supper.
- **G** Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
- P In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Lord's Prayer

- **P** Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us always to pray:
- Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

- P All who are hungry, Come! The feast of grace is spread.
- **M** Thanks be to God.

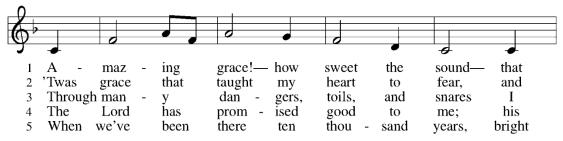


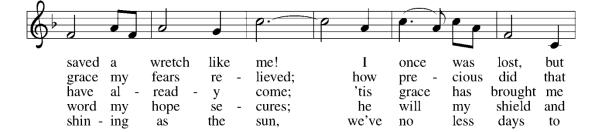
Special Music

Walk the Walk
Bell Duet

arr. K. Wissinger









Prayer after Communion

- A Let us pray . . . Generous God, you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
- Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mission Minutes

Arise in body or spirit.

Blessing

- Amen



- 1 My life flows on in end less song; a bove earth's lam-en ta tion,
- 2 Through all the tu mult and the strife, I hear that mu-sic ring-ing.
- 3 What though my joys and com-forts die? The Lord my Sav-ior liv eth.
- 4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev-er spring-ing!



I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion. It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing? What though the dark - ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth. All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?





Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth,how can I keep from sing-ing?

Sending

⚠ Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Postlude

9:30 am

Assisting Minister – Anna Scheck

Lector – Gwen Hansen

Musician - Cindy Olson

Cantor – Mark Anton

Pastor – Ken Scheck

Fellowship - Come Join Us For our POTLUCK!

Bell Duet - Gayle Marsh and Kim Domke

Clapper Kids – Tyler, Ethan, and Alicia Devroy; Emma, Tenley, and Amanda Wilkinson; Liz, David, and Alice Allerding; Shayna and Raylan Gibbons

Getting to the Fat Calf

Whatever you think of, however you feel about this story, don't fool yourself into believing that it is all about a party. Pie-in-the-sky piety skims the fat and squeezes the fruit out of the parable, reducing a teaching about what is wildly prodigal to a mere morality play.

Here's the bulk of the story: abandonment, longing, waste, famine, then hunger, humiliation, and dishonor, dying in pig dirt, shame unto pleading, resentment, sore bitterness . . . loss in every direction. Loss and falling—from comfort and certainty, respectability and character; from pleasure into pain, well-being into misery. Jesus told this agonizing, heartbreaking, undignified, lowdown, vanished-hope story for a reason. Jesus knew what life can be like. He recognized the deep ravines of loss and the gullies into which we fall. It doesn't look as if the story begins in those sad places, but it surely lands and sits there for a while, the kind of sedentary existence that is too much like an awful eternity.

A father, bereaved and insulted (Was he not the parent he hoped, thought, intended himself to be?), is left gazing into an empty distance. A child disappearing (Why such urgency to run from his birth home?) is left in disgrace. A child dutiful, hard at work, utterly dependable (How had he come to feel so cheated, denied of love?) is left mucking in thick refusal.

And while it is so . . . And though it is true . . .

Suddenly, or maybe it's eventually, the story becomes larger. The story collides with gospel. The late preacher and theologian Frederick Buechner observed, "The gospel is bad news before it is good news." Jesus knew how we fail the world and how the world fails us. Jesus was a truth-teller, the whole truth: rags and robes, pigpen and dance floor, defiance and embrace, but no pie-in-the-sky piety. Instead, a festive roast in the oven! That's how grace behaves.

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Easter Sunday Worship is April 20 at 9:30 am

Know that you are welcome to join us for this celebratory service of God's abundant love and salvation that is shared with us all through the miracle of the resurrection.

Parish Administrator is Anna Scheck; office hours 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

Midweek Lenten Community Gatherings continue this Wednesday, April 2 at Noon. You are invited to lunch at Hastings Church of the Nazarene with a presentation by Pastor Nick on the theme "One Hope." Everyone is invited to join in on Wednesday lunches and community conversations throughout Lent, focused on the theme "The Things that Unite Us: Promoting Christian Unity." Lunch locations will rotate to a different one of our ecumenical partners each week, with a presentation from a community pastor. The final lunch is next Wednesday, April 9.

Midweek Lenten Services and Dinners continue this Wednesday night and throughout Lent. At 6:00 pm, we will gather for a meal in the fellowship hall. Then, at 7:00 pm, we will have a service of evening prayer in the sanctuary. This week's meal is provided by the Worship and Music Committee. Come enjoy soup and bread. Offering given during Lenten dinners will support United Campus Christian Fellowship, a campus ministry serving the Grand Rapids colleges of GVSU, GRCC, and Kendall College of Art and Design. They are led by ELCA Pastor Kate Van Valkenburg.

April GraceGrams are available in your mailboxes.

Study Statement: Sharing God's Grace with All People, Especially the Outcast Please join us Palm Sunday, April 13 during fellowship time for our one-hour discussion about our strategic welcoming of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Social Activities Committee meets next Monday, April 7 at 4:30 p.m.

Executive Committee meets next Tuesday, April 8 at 5:30 p.m.

Brothers at Grace meets next Thursday, April 10 at 6:00 p.m.

Devotional Materials for April-June are available in the Gathering Area.

MI Fiddler's Association Jamboree will be on Saturday, April 12 from 1:00-5:00 p.m. in our fellowship hall. This is not a church event, but the community has been invited to come enjoy the music by Mary Hansen, the organizer of the event. Fiddlers will be playing from 1-4, and open jam is 4-5. Musicians and dancers are welcome.

Holy Week Schedule:

Palm Sunday	Maundy Thursday	Cross Walk	Good Friday
April 13	April 17	April 18	April 18
9:30 am	7:00 pm	9:30 am	7:00 pm
Sunday Service	Evening Service	Reflective Group Walk	Evening Service

Welcome to worship today! We are thrilled that you are here. We hope you find what we have found - a loving Jesus who welcomes all. No matter your background or faith tradition, you will find that Grace Lutheran Church is a place that is full of love, care, and support. We are pleased that you are here among us to worship Jesus, who calls us to forgive, accept, welcome and invite others to live in God's grace.

Please use this QR Code to access online giving.

Attendance: 48

Stewardship InformationViews: 290

Weekly Giving: \$857.00 Budget Amount: \$4,366.17 In Memory of Doris Allerding – General Fund: \$460.00

Barry County Cares: \$10.00



 Grace Projects Goal
 \$ 25,252.00

 Received To Date
 -\$ 4,350.00

 Total Needed
 \$ 20,902.00

Given this week toward Grace Projects: \$10

Hand2Hand Thank you for generously supporting Hand2Hand this month - we are helping 101 students who may be hungry over the weekends. **March donations are due today.** April's need food items are Ramen Noodles, Slim Jim's, Yoo-Hoo Chocolate Milk, applesauce cups, individual pudding cups, and individual microwave popcorn. The donation deadline is April 27. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

Lenten Devotionals "Hope-Full Living" are available in the Gathering Area.

Women of Faith meets on Tuesdays at 11:00 am here at Grace. Join us in studying "Listening to God" on April 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29. All women are welcome.

The nursery is available weekly during the worship service. Aurora Collins is the Nursery Attendant. She would love to have some little ones visit her. Please spread the word that Grace provides childcare during this worship service.

Adult Forum Please join us after worship next Sunday with Pastor Ken, with a study on Hosea.

See the musical *Nunsense* **at Turkeyville** on Saturday, May 3. The Social Activities Committee is gathering a group to see this hilarious musical about a group of nuns from Hoboken. We will depart from the parking lot here at Grace at 10:30 am to get there on time for the lunch and show at noon. **Tickets are \$69.00 and money is due to Bill Freedlund by today.** The sign-up sheet and envelopes for payment are on the bulletin board. Carpooling can be arranged.