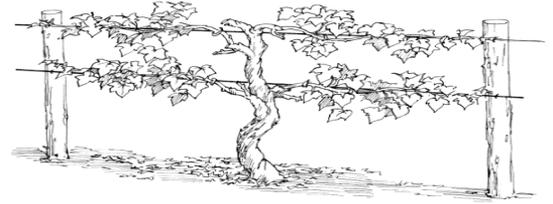


THE GRACE VINE

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



"I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit" John 15:5

FEBRUARY 2019

Rev. Timothy Spence, Pastor
Home Telephone: 304-905-6188 - gracelutheranwheeling@comcast.net

Called by God's grace, we commit to a life of worship, discipleship, and service in the name of Jesus Christ

FROM THE PASTOR

January and February always seem like a let-down.

It's cold and snowy. People would rather stay in than come out in the wind or risk driving on bad roads. We're bundled up like little kids who can't move and then discover they have to go to the bathroom. Life becomes more difficult.

Once we get past the excitement of the Christmas season, except for Groundhog Day it's all downhill as we hunker down and wait for spring. It is monochrome gray and white with a stark horizon and not much moving outside.

Unless you are a skier, January and February are simply made for us to get through.

And yet, we underestimate January and February. Something else is going on underneath. I learned a long time ago that without a certain amount of "chilling hours" certain fruit trees will not bear fruit. Bulbs have been storing up food and are getting ready to burst for that the first sign of warmth. Animals in hibernation are giving birth to new babies and preparing for new growth in spring.

It makes me think of Epiphany season. It's not as clearly defined in our minds as Advent or Christmas. It's not as compelling as Easter or Pentecost or as dramatic as Lent. And yet, something is going on.

The stories of Epiphany are about the beginning of Jesus' ministry. They are about the first sermons, the call of the disciples, the first miracles, and the first healings. The stories in the Epiphany season set the stage for what is to come. Like January and February, the Epiphany stories quietly prepare us for what will soon happen, and we should not underestimate them or think that not much is going on.

As I write this, it is another cold day and it is snowing. But underneath it all, God is at work caring for us, growing the church, laying the groundwork for what is to come. Don't underestimate those Epiphany stories, for they lay the foundation of faith and hope in the future that is waiting to burst forth in the fullness of God's time.

And don't underestimate what God is doing at Grace. God's work is quietly teaching, growing, and leading this congregation into new life, which, in God's good time, will burst forth in new life.

16 Ridgecrest Road
Wheeling, WV 26003
Church Telephone: (304) 242-5830
Sunday Morning Worship - 10:00 AM

ASK THE PASTOR

Question: A couple weeks ago in the sermon you said that if someone was trying to read the entire Bible, they shouldn't try to read it straight through but that there was another way. Can you repeat that?

Answer: Wow! Someone paying attention during the sermon. (OK -just kidding. I know you all pay attention.)

Seriously, the idea is that some folks start out with good intentions on reading all the way through, but that when you hit the "begats" and laws and census data in Numbers and Leviticus and Deuteronomy you kind of fade. So about 30 years ago a guy (whose name I don't recall) suggested that you break it up by the most important and sort of more interesting parts. That way when you hit the wall on the boring parts you've already gotten the key bits in case you don't finish.

The idea is to see the Bible not as one giant book, but as a collection of 66 books, each with its own story to tell.

It works like this: Alternate between Old Testament and New Testament. KIND OF read the books in order by group (history, gospel, Torah, poetry, letters, etc.) and alternating between a couple different groups at a time to keep it fresh and break it up to keep you from getting bored with any one type of book.

Start with Genesis and then skip to Mark. Go back to Exodus and then pick either Mathew or Luke. Jump to Judges and then Luke or Matthew, then go back to Judges.

Move on to John and then to First and Second Samuel. Jump to Acts and then back to First and Second Kings. Skip the longer Epistles and go to the shorter Epistles and alternate them with the Minor Prophets.

Go back and read the Major Prophets, alternating them with the longer Epistles (Romans, Corinthians), and then pick up some of the Poetry as a group (Song of Songs, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes).

Then skip to James, Peter, John, Jude and other short Epistles, alternating them with Esther, Ruth, and Job.

Lastly, go back and pick up the longer books of Leviticus, Revelation, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Chronicles.

The purpose of reading this way is to keep it moving but still be digesting key parts early in your read. After you've completed reading through once this way, then go back and try to read it through from cover to cover to pick up the sequence of events better, especially in the Old Testament story. The goal is to read it through once for overall content and important stories and events, and the second time through to get the sequence and get the chronological connections refreshed in our mind.

Doing it this way means you don't get bogged down at any one point in the Bible, and hopefully by mixing it up find something fresh as you jump around.

One caution: Remember that here are 39 books in the Old Testament and only 27 in the New Testament, so the pattern doesn't work out exactly. Also, the Old Testament books tend to be a little longer.

You will notice I didn't mention the book of Psalms. His suggestion was that you read for content, using this method, but in addition that you read one Psalm each day (or night) as a devotion apart from this system. His exception to this was Psalm 119, and he suggested breaking that one up into smaller parts.

Psalm 119 is actually made up of a number of sections with each section starting with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet – kind of like a, b, c, etc. in English. So, you can read each section individually to break it up. But don't worry – the Psalm has been translated so the “alphabetizing” pattern of its first line doesn't make any sense in English, and nobody is going to quiz you on the Hebrew.

If you're one of those people who can manage reading straight through the Bible the first time, good for you! But if you need to mix it up a little bit to keep from losing interest at the boring parts, then try it this way and see how that works for you.

And as always, thanks for asking!

ONLINE GIVING REMINDER

Just a reminder that the work of the church – and its bills – go on even when you are not able to get to church because of the weather. Staff still must be paid along with utilities like the gas and electric bills, and other essentials and program expenses like Sunday School material to allow us to do our ministry.

If you can't make it to church or when you are traveling, remember that you can give electronically! Just go to our web page and click on the “donate” tab. Follow the directions to set up a donation account and make your donation. You will need your bank routing number and your bank account number (both found on the bottom of a check or on your statement) and your envelope number. Note that if you set up an account last year and your envelope number changed you will need to update your account to get credit.

You can donate to the General Fund, the Building Fund, or the Food Pantry account. You can also donate to Pastor's Discretionary account.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

This year's annual Synod Assembly of the West Virginia- Western Maryland Synod of the ELCA will be held on May 31 and June 1, 2019. Hosts this year will be the Upper Ohio Valley Cluster, which mostly means the Wheeling area. In particular, Grace is leading the event. In fact, most of Friday's events will be held at Grace beginning with the opening at 1:00 until the “After Mass” at 8:30.

Grace Members are welcome and encouraged to attend the dinner (reservations required), worship service, and reception after worship in the evening, but more importantly Grace members and friends will be needed to help with hospitality, registration, and logistics. This would include helping the various presenters with set up and equipment (like “where do I get an extension cord?”), choir and worship leadership for the worship service, and set-up and clean-up for the mid-afternoon break, barbecue dinner and reception.

So mark your calendar now for MAY 31 and SAVE THE DATE to help serve your church at this very important event!

CATHOLIC CHARITIES' NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER IN WHEELING LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

Through the meal delivery program, the Neighborhood Center feeds about 170 people each day and they are in dire need of volunteers willing to deliver meals. Meals are served to individuals who are home bound and unable to prepare their own food. Support and help is really needed and will truly be appreciated. For more information please contact Keith Miller at 304.650.9608.

VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENTS WELL RECEIVED

On Christmas Eve Grace started to offer its announcements digitally as well as in the bulletin, allowing more time to digest information in the gathering Roo either before or after worship during Fellowship time, and shortening the amount of time for announcements during worship.

With a couple minor tweaks, this has been well received. We changed the initial format from 3.5 seconds to 6 seconds per page to give folks more time to read and are in the process of adding color and graphics to the announcements to make it visually more interesting and to help folks who have reading difficulties.

Because of the format and the additional space, we've also been able to add announcements such as special welcomes and acknowledge various commemorations and celebrations that we would not ordinarily have had room to include in the printed bulletin.

We are glad you are finding this helpful and useful and look forward to continuing to improve this method of delivering information, along with all our other communication resources.

FUNDRAISING FOR GALLAHER FAMILY

Many people have asked how we can help the Gallaher family since Jim's accident.

As of this writing, Jim remains in the Shock Trauma unit at Allegheny General Hospital. Things are improving and we hope that Tami will be able to return to work part-time in the next few weeks. Jim will eventually be transferred to a rehab center to begin to regain the use of his hands and hopefully legs, but for now he is paralyzed from the chest down.

Since Jim is self-employed there will be no unemployment compensation and there is a waiting period before someone can begin to receive Social Security Disability Benefits. The immediate need is for help with those mostly unrecognized needs like gas for trips to the hospital, meals in the hospital cafeteria, and help with hotel prices when the family stays up, although Tami has found a nest with son-in-law Michael's cousin, who lives a few minutes from the hospital.

Long term there is a more immediate need to replace lost income and help with things like insurance deductibles and copays. Work will also be needed to modify the house for Jim's eventual return with limited mobility, whether (hopefully) temporary or (possibly) permanently.

The Special Needs Fund at Grace Lutheran Church was designed to be flexible and to handle funds for any number of individuals and also hold a reserve for undesignated emergencies. While currently the only monies in that account are designated for the DaGrava family, Council has now taken steps to add Jim to that account. Those wishing to give to the family can donate to Grace Lutheran Church. Make the notation on the donation or check "Jim Gallaher", and the money will be placed into that part of the Special Needs account for whatever the family needs.

Tami and the rest of family want the congregation to know how very grateful they are for all the prayers and support they have received from the congregation in the days since the accident. Tami will be continuing as Council President, but other Council members have stepped up to create an interim structure for 90 days to give her some "breathing room" in those duties while decisions are made, and the family finds what Pastor refers to as the "new normal".

LENT

Lent begins on March 6. The traditional service with the Imposition of Ashes will begin at 7:00 PM.

Devotional services will continue Wednesday evenings with a light supper of soup and salad at 6:00 PM and Evening Prayer with a short homily (a "mini-sermon") beginning at 7:00. You are welcome to come to the dinner, to Evening Prayer, or to both.

Shrove Tuesday

Our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on Tuesday (Mardi Gras), March 5, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. The dinner is free, but donations are accepted.

As usual, the men will be handling the cooking but everyone is needed and welcome to come and help with set up, serving, and clean up for all or part of the evening. See Chuck Koehler or Chris Schenkel if you are available to help.

THINGS TO REMEMBER/ONGOING ACTIVITIES

GRACE GUYS

Grace Guys will meet on February 9th at 8:30 am. Please mark your calendar for the workday. See you then!

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

Save "Box tops for Education" from food and other products for our "Partners in Education" partner, Bethlehem Elementary School. "Box tops" can be left in the bin under the Welcome Desk.

RUMMAGE SALE

Don't forget our annual charity Rummage Sale. This year's sale will be held on Saturday, April 6, beginning at 8:00 AM. Folks are needed to help with set up and pricing day time and evenings during the week before and to work the day of the sale and clean-up after 1:00 on Saturday. A few strong folks (men or women) are needed on Saturday to help as "loaders" for people who are buying furniture.

It's not too late to start housecleaning and bringing things in. The storage room is full, so put items for the sale on the stage in the Fellowship Hall!

CANS FOR WATCH

Grace members are collecting aluminum cans for WATCH. They will crush, recycle, and use the proceeds for client events. Please bring them at any time, and place them in the large box behind the kitchen door.

RIESBECK GIFT CARDS

Riesbeck Gift Cards to benefit Thrivent are available from either Judith Myers or Tami Tysk.

GAME DAY

A free Game Day is held on the last Thursday of every month, between 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM. You can play our games or bring your own. For more information, call 304-233-2990 or 304-242-2632.

PRAYER LIST

Ryan Deegan
Henri Fontaine
Michael & Brittany Shank
Stephanie Moore-Vetanze
Andrew Lemasters
Barbara Knollinger
Jodi Ennis (Hunt)
Dona'e Albert
Don McCormick

Hines Rotrigo
Amelia DaGrava
George Myers
Addison Lucas
Howard Shackelford
Keith McMannis
Susan Falbo
Carolyn Polverini
Nick Riggle

Betty Swartz
David Ausdenmoore
Thelma Moore
Cindy Roshak
Bill Scholley
Faith Hartzell
Dorothy Miller
Zane Neuhardt
Barbara Holberty

ON MILLITARY DUTY

Brian Coughlan

Casey Young

Parker Euri

HOMEBOUND

Mabel Winesburg
218 Elm Crest Drive
Wheeling, WV 26003

Rebecca Frazier
55801 Conno-Mara Dr
Bellaire, OH 43906

Bertha & Robert Loth
1604 Waddell Court
Durham, NC. 27703

Debbie Hawkins
Peterson Rehabilitation Hospital
20 Homestead Ave.
Wheeling, WV 26003

Betty June Wymer
201 Bachmann Drive
Bethlehem
Wheeling, WV. 26003



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Perri Cook 02/01
Apollo Nelson 02/07
Nettie Sue McClure 02/10
Judith Myers 02/11
Jim Gallaher 02/17
Philip Van Dam 02/20
Maryann Carl 02/27

Doris Albrecht 02/04
Marty McNabb 02/09
Shari Sedilko 02/10
Evelyn Birch 02/15
Robin Bennett 02/20
Alyssa Williams 02/20
Edna McClure 02/27

Lindsay Carl 02/04
Charles Koehler 02/10
Kevin Blaschak 02/11
Mark Danehart 02/17
Howard Shackelford 02/20
Sandra Smith 02/26
Elaine Strauch 02/28

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Tom & Linda Porter February 20th
Donald & Joyce Britt February 26, 1979, Happy 40th!

GRACE COUNCIL 2019

Nancy Weeks
Lutz Albrecht
Casey Young
Marjorie Wolf
Diane "Dee" Coughlan
Tami Gallaher
Kathy Sheller
Dennis Niess
Linda Dunnell

February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 Worship 10am Fellowship 11:10am Sunday School 11:30am	4 Vocal Choir 6:30pm Dance 5pm	5 Baton Twirling 6pm	6 Stitchers with Love 10am	7 Strands of Comfort 10am Bell Choir 6:30pm 4 H Leaders 7pm	8 Heritage Dance 6pm	9 Grace Guys 8:30am
10 Worship 10am Fellowship 11:10am Sunday School 11:30am	11 Vocal Choir 6:30pm Dance 5pm	12 Baton Twirling 6pm	13 Stitchers with Love 10am Worship Committee Meeting 6PM	14 Bell Choir 6:30pm	15 Heritage Dance 6pm	16 CPR Class 8:30am
17 Worship 10am Fellowship 11:10am Sunday School 11:30am	18 Dance 5pm Vocal Choir 6pm Council Meeting 6:30pm	19 Baton Twirling 6pm	20 Stitchers with Love 10am WELCA Bible Study 10am	21 Strands of Comfort 10am Bell Choir 6:30pm	22 Heritage Dance 6pm	23
24 Worship 10am Fellowship 11:10am Sunday School 11:30am	25 Vocal Choir 6:30pm Dance 5pm	26 CPR Class 8:30am Baton Twirling 6pm	27 Stitchers with Love 10am	28 Bell Choir 6:30pm Game Day 11am 4 H Group 7pm		

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
16 RIDGECREST ROAD
BETHLEHEM
WHEELING WV 26003

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Save the Date



SHROVE TUESDAY

***Shrove Tuesday, March 5, 2019
Pancake Supper 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.***

***Ash Wednesday March 6, 2019
Service at 7:00 pm.***

***Maundy Thursday, April 18, 2019
Service at 6:00 pm.***

***Good Friday, April 19, 2019
Service at 7:00 pm.***

