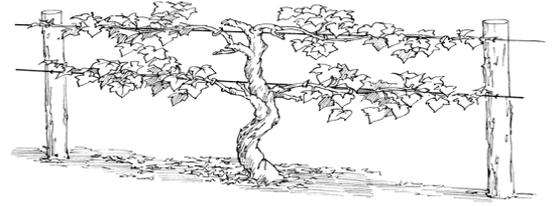


THE GRACE VINE

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

NOVEMBER 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

Lately it seems like a lot of conversations I have been having with people are about resources. Whether it's a discussion about taxes, climate change, utility bills, time management, or how to use leftovers, it's all about what we have and how to use it to its best advantage.

In the church we call that Stewardship.

All too often when people hear the word "stewardship" their brain goes straight to money. Some people even think stewardship means that they will be hit up for a check from the church.

That's a poor understanding of stewardship.

Stewardship takes its identity from a manager – a steward – of a household. The steward is the one who watches over the resources of the household and then distributes those resources as they are needed for the greater good of the household.

Stewardship is about the wise and just use of the resources that God has given us to serve God in the church, our personal lives, and in the created world. Being good stewards means looking at all the good gifts that God has given us - our selves, our time, and our possessions - and seeing how best to use them for the healthy benefit of ourselves and others.

Let me be very clear on this: **EVERYTHING YOU HAVE IS A GIFT FROM GOD AND IS GIVEN TO YOU TO USE WISELY FOR YOURSELF AND THE SAKE OF OTHERS.**

This includes your money and your stuff, but it also includes your time, your health, your family, any skills or abilities you have, and any positive attributes in your personality (like kindness, patience, self-control – and yes, I know: Those are actually GIFTS of the Spirit.)

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

So when we start to talk about STEWARDSHIP, the question is: “Since God has given me everything, how and what shall I give back to God in thanksgiving for everything that God has provided for me?”

In his new book, The Second Mountain, David Brooks calls us to consider all of life as stewardship. If I have a good balance in my life between work and family and healthy living, what can I teach others about what it takes to achieve that balance? If I have been blessed with knowledge or wisdom (and Biblically they are two different things), how can I share that wisdom or knowledge with others as a gift from God.

And what shall I do with the resources God has provided? Is it possible to be rich and still be generous? More importantly, is it possible to be poor and still be generous? If I have been blessed with riches, what about the skills and talents that led to those blessings? Can I teach them or share them with others? Have I learned something about managing resources that I can share?

The stewardship of TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE is a life-long pursuit and struggle. But as God has blessed us with ALL things, God will also teach us and help us learn to manage our riches of time and talent and help us be generous with our financial resources as well.

November is a time of Thanksgiving – thanksgiving for what we have received and for what we have. As you give thanks this month, remember that part of that thanksgiving is to consider how to share from the abundance of time, talent, and possessions that God has already given to you.

When you give thanks at the table this month, don’t stop at simply “thank you” for the blessings you have already received. Pray also for wisdom to use the time, talent, and treasure you have already been given for the good of others and for God’s greater glory.

CHURCH WORDS

We have a lot of “foreign” words in the church. The reason for that is that Christianity didn’t really come to England until about 600, and English as we know it didn’t come into being until the 1500’s or later (remember reading all those Arthurian legends and Beowulf in the original language in high school English Class? Or Shakespeare?)

The church was shaped by its Greek and Latin roots for centuries before it got to England, and the Mass was still in Latin even in England and Germany until well into the early and middle 1500’s (think Luther’s “Deutsche Messe” of 1526 and Cranmer’s Anglican Book of Common Prayer of 1549).

So it would be natural that a lot of the language of the church would carry these “foreign” words from its early (Latin) days.

One of the exceptions to the Latin rule is the word KYRIE (pronounced KEAR-ee- ay – PLEASE do not pronounce it “KIE-ree”), which is from the Greek and means “Lord”. The Kyrie is part of the opening rite (ritual) of the service and adds the verb “eleison (pronounced ee-LAY-ee-son), which means “have mercy”. The form is “three-fold” (or three parts): Kyrie eleison, Christe (Christ, pronounced KRIS-tay) eleison, Kyrie eleison.

In a full service, the Kyrie is followed by the Gloria, which is Latin and best comes to mind as “Gloria in excelsis Deo”, the Latin song of the Christmas angels: “Glory to God in the highest”. Deo (DAY-o) of course meaning God, and excelsis (egg-shell-cis) being the same root word from where we get words like excel, excellent (for the Bill and Ted fans) and excelsior (for all you Stan Lee fans out there). In some liturgies, we add a second (alternate) hymn of praise, “This Is the Feast”.

ASK THE PASTOR

Question: You said last year that we gave away over \$50,000. That seems like an awful lot of money. Shouldn't we keep that money here to help ourselves?

Answer. I hear this question way too often, so I guess it's time to address the elephant in the room which is whether we think we're broke or whether we're just selfish, or whether we're worried about stewardship.

First of all, in the year that we gave away over \$50,000, about \$17,000 of that went to the DaGrava family to help with Amelia's medical expenses and another \$20,000 went to the West Virginia -Western Maryland Synod for Mission Support.

Beyond those two things we only gave away \$13,000. Of that \$13,000, over \$6,000 came from the Strawberry Festival and the Rummage sale, and over \$2,000 was special offering given to World Hunger during Lent. So that left about \$5,000 that was special offerings for things like Camp Luther, flood and hurricane relief, Campus Ministry, and other local (WV) causes.

You need to know that, under the terms of the Hartman bequest, Grace is required to give away 50% of what we receive from that fund. In 2019 that will come to almost \$14,000. Since our inception (and at Edgwood before) that money has been used to support Synodical benevolence, which is why it is so high in the budget. The balance of our giving to the larger work of the church through the Synod (missionaries, training pastors, developing resources, seminaries, camps, campus ministry, and a whole lot of other things), based on the 2019 budget is a little over three cents of every dollar you put in your offering envelope. So basically 97% of your envelope offering stays at Grace for our expenses.

One of the things we did at our consolidation was to take special benevolence donations out of the budget and make them optional. You will have noticed by now that about every six weeks (except during Lent) there is an envelope for a special offering. People are free to give to that program or place as they want, and all money from that special envelope is sent on to the agency, institution, or program for which the money was designated. This includes things like Camp Luther, Community Lutheran Partners, and WVU Campus Ministry. I am proud to say that our giving during Lent to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal makes us one of the highest West Virginia congregations in giving to that program (on average a little over \$2,500).

So when we give money to those kinds of programs and places, it is only what people have asked us to send based on the special envelope giving. No money from the loose offering, electronic giving, or weekly envelope is given away except for that three cents to mission. (In a rare exception to the rule, the mid-week Lenten loose offerings, which average less than \$100 total for all five weeks, are added to those envelopes.)

It's what is often referred to as "second mile giving", based on Jesus instruction that if Roman soldier commanded you to carry his pack for one mile (as could be required by law) you should carry it for two miles. Special benevolence offerings are extra budgetary, and therefore "second mile" gifts.

Another way to look at it is to think about the Old Testament guidelines for giving. The Bible speaks about tithes AND OFFERINGS. Tithes (10% of income) is what was required, and offerings were extra gifts of gratitude that went beyond the tithes. That's why in our bulletin it says that we receive our "tithes and offerings".

Speaking of which, most Christian churches in America (with a couple of rare exceptions like Seventh Day Adventists) don't talk much about tithing, and the truth is that Lutherans as a group give pretty poorly – only about 2.3% of income on average. Second mile or special benevolence giving is a way of making up for not giving more in our regular weekly offerings.

I haven't looked at what everyone is giving in terms of projecting that against a percentage (there are ways to do that without knowing what each person is giving but just to take the average per household and compare that to census data that gives average income per household). The Stewardship Committee in one of my former churches did that and discovered that the congregation was giving about 2.6% on average. Then they asked the question, "What would happen if every household in the congregation tithed, and our income increased by 300%? What more could we do?" Just something to think about.

Bottom line, most of the money that we give away is designated to be given away, and only about 3 cents on the offering or other income dollar is given away to support the mission work of the church, with the other 97% staying right here at Grace.

Thanks for giving me a chance to clear that up, and as always, thanks for asking!

Meanwhile, don't forget to think about your giving for next year. What would happen if every household in the congregation tithed? What more could we do? And would this question even be important?

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Grace's semi-annual Congregational Meeting will be held immediately after worship on Sunday, November 17, 2018. The purpose of this meeting is to elect new Congregation Council members and approve a budget for 2020. As described in our constitution, no other business can be conducted at this meeting. In accordance with our constitution, copies of the budget will be available through the Church Office beginning on November 7 and will be available for pick-up at worship on November 10.

Finance Committee and the Council have worked hard to continue to present a balanced budget, even with about a six percent decline in revenue due to deaths and people moving out of the area. However, the proposed budget retains all of the important features with very few reductions to program resources. Basically the Finance Committee and Council have found a way to do more with less.

Please plan to attend this important meeting.

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES

Plan now to attend mid-week services for Advent. Services will be held on December 4, 11, and 18. A light supper of soup, salad, and dessert will be served at 6:00 PM, followed by Holden Evening Prayer beginning at 7:00. You may come for dinner, worship, or both.

Volunteers will be needed to help provide soup and dessert each week and to help make salad and set up and clean up. Those who are not able to cook are asked to consider a small donation each week to help with the meal.

Sign-up sheets will be available at the Welcome Desk in late November. Please help as you are able!

CELEBRATE ST. ANDREW

Saturday, November 30 is St. Andrew's Day. Traditionally celebrated especially by people of Scotland and Presbyterians (Andrew is the patron Saint of Scotland and strongly linked to the Scottish Presbyterian Church) it is sometimes referred to as the "Reformation Day of the Reformed Church.

More importantly, in the Gospel stories Andrew is linked to those from outside Judaism who wish to connect with Jesus. Andrew is described as one of the first to follow Jesus, having found Jesus at his baptism while being one of John's disciples, and then being invited by Jesus after the baptism to "come and see". In John 12:21, Andrew's request on behalf of some Greeks who want to meet Jesus is not met with an affirmation and invitation, but instead is met with a pronouncement by Jesus that, having been approached by those from the Gentile world, who recognize who he is, it is now time to go to Jerusalem and fulfill his destiny.

Andrew's ability to move between the two groups (Jews and Gentiles) is a sign of the missionary work that must be done for the church to grow.

Akin to Germans drinking German beer and singing German songs to celebrate Luther, St. Andrew's Day is a chance for Scots (and some Irish) to bring out the bagpipes and kilts and have "a wee bit o' fun". We will transfer St. Andrew's Day to December 1, which is also Advent 1, and combine the emphasis of waiting during Advent with the call to continued mission while we wait.

So bring out your best kilt or tartan and come to celebrate the work of waiting on December 1 as we combine St. Andrew and Advent.

STEWARDSHIP MINUTE

This month begins a new piece in "The Grace Vine" highlighting matters and information about stewardship and stewardship education. Some of these "minutes" will be information about Grace and our time, talent, and treasure, while others may be related to global mission and the work of the ELCA. This month is about Grace.

Amount it costs for Grace to sit empty for 1 hour, every hour, every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: \$4.39.

Total cost to operate the building and grounds with nothing going on: \$38,342.00 (based on 2020 proposed budget).

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER

Grace's annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2019. Dinner will be served at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. The meal is a joint event co-sponsored by the Fellowship Committee and Thrivent Financial members from Grace.

The meal is free and open to all. Donations are needed to help with the dinner and volunteers will be needed to cook, serve, and clean-up. If you can help with this important community outreach and fellowship event, please contact event chairperson Joe Kochy!

UPDATE ON ORGANIST SEARCH

Grace continues to search for a new organist. Over the past several months, the Search Committee has interviewed four candidates. Of the four, two did not meet the standards the Committee felt were required for the kind of music and the type of instrument we have. Of the other two, one could not agree with the salary we felt we could afford, and the other withdrew due to other commitments.

The Search Committee will continue to seek out and interview candidates as they become available. We continue to believe that the right person is "out there" for Grace, and that in time we will have a new organist.

BOOK SALE

The Learning Committee will again be hosting a Book Sale just in time for Christmas. Copies of recommended books will be displayed after church on November 24 and December 1. The selection includes books for children and youth, family books, and devotional and study books for adults.

All of the books will be great for personal use or will make great gifts. Books can be ordered on either the 24th or the 1st, and orders must be paid for at the time they are placed.

Books orders will be placed with the various suppliers during the week of December 1 and are expected to be delivered no later than December 20. If you are looking for a particular topic or type of book, please speak to Pastor and he will try to get an appropriate title added to those books already available.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION IS CHANGING

General Mills is changing the Boxtops for Education program. Benefits to the school will still be the same, but collection of the box ends on December 31 of this year.

Instead, each package will have a Boxtops seal in the same place where you would normally look for it. HOWEVER (and this is the big change!) instead of clipping the coupon and sending it in you will scan it with your cell phone using an app that you can download from the company. Boxtop credits will then be collected electronically, which means we will not have a place to collect the box tops and the school will get automatic credit instead of having to sort and cut up and count all those tiny pieces of paper.



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We are still gathering information as to how the program will ultimately work and will keep you informed. Our Partners in Education Committee and our IT staff will work out details to help you continue to support this program. Watch for more information in future newsletters.



FOLLOWING JESUS TO W.A.L.M.A.R.T: Community Lutheran Partners in partnership with St. Mark Lutheran Church and the Greater Wheeling Chapter of NAMI are offering an Adult Mental Health First Aid workshop on Saturday, Nov. 23 from 9-4PM (registration begins at 8:30AM) at St. Mark Lutheran Church (141 Kruger St., Wheeling). This workshop is free thanks to a grant from the ELCA Disabilities Ministry.

WHY THE CHURCH: As we seek to love others as Christ first loved us, this course will help us to reach out through our congregations and begin the process of eliminating the stigma that surrounds mental illness. Through the initiative, “**Following Jesus to W.A.L.M.A.R.T**”, we will encourage and equip congregations to take the next step in reaching out to those who are suffering. Wellness is our goal; Awareness is where it begins; Love is the balm; Ministry is our response; Acceptance saves lives; Resources will be made available to the entire community; Training is where the educational process and real change begins.

This is a 7-hour training course that teaches you how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The course is led by Amy Gamble. Amy is a speaker, author of "Bipolar Disorder, My Biggest Competitor," an Olympian, Mental Health Advocate and a person who lives with bipolar disorder.

To register, please contact Pastor Sherri Schafer by texting (304)312-4222 or emailing clp-wwwmd@gmail.com. The workshop is limited to the first 30 registrants.

THINGS TO REMEMBER/ONGOING ACTIVITIES

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.

Grace Guys

The Grace Guys will not meet in November.

POWER **PRAYER**



PRAYER LIST

Ryan Deegan
Henri Fontaine
George Myers
Stephanie Moore-Vetanze
Andrew Lemasters
Barbara Knollinger
Jodi Ennis (Hunt)
Dona'e Albert
Nick Riggle
Jim Gallaher & Family

Hines Rotriga
Amelia DaGrava
Thelma Moore
Addison Lucas
Bill Scholley
Keith McMannis
Susan Falbo
Carolyn Polverini
Jay Wallace
Richard Chrisfield

Betty Swartz
David Ausdenmoore
Melody Holiday
Cindy Roshak
Linda Porter
Doris Schafer
Dorothy Miller
Zane Neuhardt
Peggy Frazier
Willow Hollingsworth

ON MILITARY DUTY

Brian Coughlan

Casey Young

Parker Euri

HOMEBOUND

Mabel Winesburg
218 Elm Crest Drive
Wheeling, WV 26003

Becky 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

Chris Roshak
c/o Grace Lutheran Church
16 Ridgecrest Road
Wheeling, WV 26003

Kitty Hagedorn
18 Willow Avenue
Wheeling, WV 26003

Eileen Hempelmann
207 Boggs Hill Road
Wheeling, WV 26003

Howard & Betty Shackelford
333 Dement Road
Triadelphia, WV 26059

Peggy Blatt
3 Hunter Avenue
Wheeling, WV 26003

Jim Gallaher
40 Suncrest Avenue
Wheeling, WV 26003

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Shawn Gilmore 11/01
Kathrina Smith 11/04
Jordan Blaschak 11/7
Marcus Weeks 11/7
Tami Gallaher 11/7
Ellen Kitts 11/9
Margaret Frazier 11/15
Deborah Sgroi 11/17
Shari Drahos 11/18
Pat Franklin 11/18



Bertha Loth 11/19
Kevin Maguire 11/20
Adriana Wolf 11/20
Olivia Albrecht 11/22
Eric Castilow 11/23
Pat Coughlan 11/24
Charla Roshak 11/25
Patricia Showalter 11/28

GRACE COUNCIL 2019

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



NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Drew & Rebecca Beckett 11/02
Kevin & Cassandra Blaschak 11/19
Donald & Minnie Taylor 11/26
Mike & Elisha Carl 11/28



NOVEMBER 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Fellowship Hall Re-served for birthday party
3 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday Sch 11:30 AM	4 Dance 5:00 PM Vocal Choir 6:30 PM	5 Baton Twirling 6 PM	6	7 Stitches with Love 10:00 AM Strands of Comfort 10:00 AM Worship Com. 3:30 PM Bell Choir 6:30 PM	8 Heritage Dance 6 PM	9
10 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday Sch 11:30 AM	11 Dance 5:00 PM Vocal Choir 6:30 PM	12 Baton Twirling 6 PM	13	14 Stitches with Love 10:00 AM Community Thanksgiving Dinner 6 PM	15 Heritage Dance 6 PM	16
17 Worship 10:00 AM Congregational meeting 11:10 AM Children's Choir 11:30 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM	18 Dance 5:00 PM Council 6:30 PM	19 Red Cross Class 5:30 to 8:00 PM Baton Twirling 6 PM	20 Vocal Choir 6:30 PM	Stitches w/ Love 10 AM Strands of Comfort 10:00 AM Game Day 11:00 AM Bell Choir 6:30 PM 4H Mtg 7:00 PM	22 Heritage Dance 6 PM	23
24 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday Sch 11:30 AM	25 Food Pantry 10 AM Dance 5:00 PM Vocal Choir 6:30 PM	26 Baton Twirling 6 PM Community Thanksgiving Service	27	28 OFFICE CLOSED	29 OFFICE CLOSED	30
						

**GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
16 RIDGECREST ROAD
BETHLEHEM
WHEELING WV 26003**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SAVE THE DATE!

Community Thanksgiving Dinner, Thursday November 14th
Congregational Meeting Sunday. November 17th.

