

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

MARCH 2020

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

So often in the church we are BI-ZY!!! We have activities and responsibilities. We have projects and programs. We have duties and obligations. The list could go on.

So now it's Lent. And we have to try to shift gears. Lent calls us to reflection and contemplation. It asks us to slow down and consider. The Season wants us to stop and think.

We don't do that very well in the church – or in life. It's easier to be busy, to have something to do. We are often project driven, where it's easy to show what we made, how much money we raised, how many kids we had. We are driven to do things that we can quantify to evaluate our success. How many people attended? How many whatevers did we serve? How many tables did we set up? How many services did we have?

Lent slaps us in the face with our quantifying and asks us to stop. Instead, we are asked to do the difficult – to stop doing and start praying. Lent asks us to count not how much we accomplished but how much time we spent in prayer; not how many we did but how long we spent in devotion and meditation.

As we go into the month of March – which is entirely in Lent this year – I ask you to intentionally set aside time to stop and slow down, to listen for the voice of God, and to be still in God's presence. Take the time to sit quietly in a chair and contemplate the mystery of God's love, and to consider, as the old hymn says, "what wondrous love is this".

Pick a short letter to read and read a few verses each day to get the full impact of the text. Don't make it a marathon to see how many letters you can read. Instead slow down and see how much you can get out of each short passage.

Take time to be quiet in prayer, maybe by adding some extra prayer time other than meals or in the morning or at bedtime. Consider Luther's statement, "When you wash your face remember your baptism!"

Slow down this Lenten season. There will be time to be busy again. But for now, remember the Psalmist's instruction: "Be still and know that I am God!"

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

NEW LITURGY TO BE INTRODUCED

On Sunday, March 1, we will begin to learn ELW Setting 3. This comes in response to the desire of some in our congregation to have a complete service in the book and to have additional variety in the service music. Settings 1-3 have the entire service, prayers included. As you will have noted, Settings 4-10 do NOT have the complete service, but require the user to flip back to one of the first three settings for the additional parts of the liturgy.

Each week the choir will introduce a new section of the music. By the end of the Lenten season, we will know the entire service and use the full service on the fifth Sunday in Lent.

The plan from the Worship and Music Committee is to have a total of three liturgies in use which will change with the liturgical seasons. Once we have learned Setting 3, the pattern will be as follows:

Advent and Lent - Setting 3

Pentecost Season not including Festivals and Commemorations – “Now the Feast and Celebration”

Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter Seasons and Festivals and Commemorations during Pentecost Season-
Setting 4

The ongoing effort by the Committee, with Council approval, is to continue to find ways to help worshippers make distinctions between the penitential, celebratory, and “ordinary” cycle of the liturgical season. We already do this by changing banners and paraments and using a different processional cross, by changing the way we do the Psalm of the Day and by changing the communion trays from wood to silver, and by changing the creed used and the opening rite (Kyrie, Hymn of Praise, or both)

The goal is to help worshippers connect more closely to the rhythm of the Church year and to help highlight the different aspects of the readings and the seasonal messages and themes.

In 2018, we added “Marty Haugen’s “Now the Feast and Celebration”, which was at first met with some slight resistance but is now the favorite liturgy of most of the congregation. We are confident that this new liturgy will be met with a sense of devotion and openness and promise that no parishioners will be harmed with the introduction of the new liturgy.

AND NOW FOR A LITTLE HUMOR

Huron, SD – Hundreds were hospitalized and scores more traumatized for life in the wake of a disastrous hymn roll-out this past Sunday.

Recklessly acting in a way contrary to all Lutheran sensibilities, Pastor Norman Schroeder inserted a previously unsung hymn, “Through Jesus’ Blood and Merit,” into the church service.

“I remember paging to hymn 372 and thinking that it looked unfamiliar,” said helpless victim Delores Hamilton from her hospital bed. “My heart started pounding in my chest! My vision narrowed! As we started singing my hands trembled uncontrollably. I felt lightheaded! I don’t even think I made it through the first stanza before I passed out.”

First responders were overwhelmed by the chaotic scene. Ambulances struggled to make their way through the terrified mob streaming through the church parking lot. Inside the sanctuary, hundreds were incapacitated, many still frozen with their hands clutched over their ears in a vain attempt to shut out the unfamiliar tune. The few conscious congregants were in such a weakened state they were unable to assist their more gravely injured Lutherans.

“We haven’t seen such a tragedy since the Reformed Church tried to introduce a contemporary version of the Song of Simeon,” lamented local Police Chief Richard Johnson. “Thank goodness there was no loss of life. If we hadn’t tasered the organist, the death toll would have been truly catastrophic.”

The investigation is only beginning, but already red warning lights are flashing in the eyes of any common-sense Lutheran. Why didn’t Pastor Schroeder run his plans through the worship committee? Why wasn’t the hymn tune introduced as postlude, prelude, and offertory? Why weren’t congregants warned the standard three months in advance that a new hymn was being introduced?

Only a fair, impartial investigation and the immediate excommunication of Pastor Schroeder can ensure such a tragedy never occurs again.

ASK THE PASTOR

Question: On Transfiguration we did something called “Farewell to the Alleluia”. What was that all about?

Answer: Glad you asked!

This is an ancient part of the liturgy but one which has seen a revival in use in the last 40-50 years or so.

Traditionally most mainline churches stop using the word “Alleluia” (or variations like Hallelujah) during the Lenten season. The tradition is that the word returns at the first service on Easter Day and becomes the word for the Easter season.

As is mentioned elsewhere in this issue of the “Vine”, we change the way we do the liturgy along with the visual cues about the calendar from season to season. To help highlight the stark change from Epiphany on the one end and Easter on the other end with Lent in the middle, we do dramatic things.

One of those things is to say goodbye to the word alleluia from the beginning of Lent until Easter Day. (Just an aside, we would continue to use “Alleluia” until Shrove Tuesday, but because our last worship service was on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, we said “farewell” at that service.) The short rite (ritual) used at the end of the service is an ancient one. The text for the hymn, “Alleluia, Song of Gladness” dates from the 11th century (however, the tune we use is about 200 years old), and the hymn has appeared in every American Lutheran hymnal since the mid-1800’s.

The prayer used as the banner was rolled up was written by Ambrose of Milan in the mid-300’s. In some places the rite is called the “Burial of the Alleluia” and a (usually white, yellow, or gold) banner containing the word is actually rolled up or folded up and placed in a small coffin-like box. On Easter Day the box is opened, and the Alleluia banner revealed to take its place among the decorations for the Easter celebration.

So as you can see, this rite to help us transition from Epiphany to Lent has been used in some form for nearly 1700 years.

Hope this helps as you begin your Lenten journey until we say the word again with joy at the Easter Feast! And as always, thanks for asking.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to new members Jordan, Abigail, and Maverick Keller, received through the sacrament of Baptism, and to John and Amanda Keller. John comes to us from the Episcopal Church by Profession of Faith and Amanda is a cradle Lutheran from St. Andrew’s in Carnegie, PA. We welcome them into the part of God’s family that is Grace!

CHURCH WORDS

One word that we use a lot in worship settings is LITURGY. Liturgy comes from two Greek words “litur gia”. It literally means “the work (litur) of the people (gia)”, or “the peoples’ work”.

Liturgy refers to what we do when we come together in worship. It is the work of the people to bring an offering or prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God.

For a long time the focus of the church was on a kind of consumer culture in worship – “What do I get out of worship and what’s in it for me?” We come to church expecting to get what we want on our terms and forget that the first purpose of liturgy is to honor God and give God the praise and thanks that is due to our Creator and Savior.

Ideally, in the reading and preaching of the Word and in the Sacrament of the Table we will also receive and be strengthened for the next step in our faith journey (the week ahead), but that is secondary in the process of establishing a proper relationship with God. As Church Consultant Thom Rainer is fond of saying, “It’s not about you!”

It reminds me of the story of the little kindergarten boy that was given a quarter to put in the offering plate. Week after week he faithfully put his quarter in, but each time his family went up for communion the he was given a blessing instead of the bread. Finally he had had enough. As the plate came by, he refused to put in his quarter. His mother repeatedly instructed him to put in his offering several times, but he steadfastly refused. After several increasing frustrated exchanges with Mom and Dad he finally burst out, “If I can’t eat, I won’t pay!”

The work of the people of God is to recognize our creatureliness. It is to place ourselves in a position where we recognize that God is the Creator and Savior, and we are the created and saved, and to give thanks for what God has done and continues to do in, through, and around us. By placing ourselves in a position of giving back to God FIRST, we become more open to recognizing our dependency on God and receiving.

So I hope to see you Sunday – because we have work to do!

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

Grace’s semi-annual meeting to review activities and financial reports for the previous year will be held on Sunday, March 29, in the sanctuary immediately after worship. A pot-luck dinner in the Fellowship Hall will follow the meeting.

As required by our constitution, copies of the Annual Report will be available through the office ten days prior to the meeting and at worship on the Sunday preceding the meeting.

Committee chairs and organizational treasurers are reminded to submit their reports to the office by **Sunday, March 8** so that the office has time for them to be compiled and copied.

All members are encouraged to attend and celebrate the many, many positive things that occurred at Grace in 2019!!!

RUMMAGE SALE

Don't forget our annual charity Rummage Sale. This year's sale will be held on Saturday, March 28, beginning at 8:00 AM.

As we did last year, we will meet at 9:30 on March 21 to set up tables and move items from the storage room. Folks are needed to help with set up and pricing both during the day and evenings during the week before, and to work the day of the sale and clean-up after 12:00 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!

As has been the practice the past three years, proceeds from the Rummage Sale and Strawberry Festival will be combined and divided among four recipients: Helping Heroes, the Bethlehem Fire Department, Community Lutheran Partners, and Wheeling Health Right. Depending on the amount received, other recipients may be named.

Grace is privileged to be able to help so many people and organizations with the generosity of its members and friends and the joy of those bargain hunters and "foodies" who come out to support these efforts!

SALAD LUNCHEON

Mark your calendar NOW and save the date for this year's annual Salad Luncheon. As always, the luncheon will be held the first Saturday in May (May 2). The event will feature all the traditional parts you have come to know and love.

Tickets will be available only to the congregation during March from Ruth Grob, who will be at the Welcome Desk each Sunday morning. Tickets will go on sale to people outside the congregation beginning April 1, so be sure to get your tickets early to ensure that you will have a seat. Also, please respond generously if you are asked to help with preparations or with the event.

Watch the April edition of the *Vine* for further details.

LENT

Devotional services will begin on Wednesday, March 4 with a light supper of soup and salad at 6:00 PM. In keeping with the Lenten theme of self-denial (and to help us pay a little more attention to world hunger) traditionally we do not serve a dessert during the Lenten meals.

The meal will be followed by Evening Prayer with a short homily (a "mini-sermon") beginning at 7:00. Choir practice will be held after Evening Prayer.

You are welcome to come to the dinner, to Evening Prayer, or to both. As is Grace's practice, our Lenten "self-denial" offerings for the envelopes and our mid-week services go to the ELCA World hunger Appeal. Last year Grace members donated over \$2,000 to this important cause.

POWER *of* **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
Carrie Sacco
Bob McDonald**

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

**Betty Swartz
David Ausdenmoore
"Elizabeth"
Cindy Roshak
Linda Porter
Doris Schafer
Dorothy Miller
Zane Neuhardt
Peggy Frazier
Willow Hollingsworth
Minnie Taylor**

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

**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**

**Jim Gallaher
40 Suncrest Avenue
Wheeling, WV 26003**

**Dorothy Cox
Good Shepherd Nursing Home
Room 214
159 Edgington Lane
Wheeling, WV 26003**



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH



GRACE COUNCIL 2020

<i>Kayla Young</i>	<i>March 2nd</i>
<i>Steven Deem</i>	<i>March 4th</i>
<i>Phil Carl</i>	<i>March 5th</i>
<i>Elizabeth Schenkel</i>	<i>March 5th</i>
<i>Mike Maquire</i>	<i>March 11th</i>
<i>James Potts III</i>	<i>March 12th</i>
<i>Debbie Hawkins</i>	<i>March 14th</i>
<i>Ethan Moore</i>	<i>March 16th</i>
<i>Bill Stees</i>	<i>March 18th</i>
<i>Marianne McCausland</i>	<i>March 25th</i>
<i>Dane Birch</i>	<i>March 27th</i>
<i>Marissa Cook</i>	<i>March 27th</i>
<i>Mason Blaschak</i>	<i>March 30th</i>

<i>Nancy Weeks</i>
<i>Lutz Albrecht</i>
<i>Pat Franklin</i>
<i>Marjorie Wolf</i>
<i>Tami Tysk</i>
<i>Diane "Dee" Coughlan</i>
<i>Brian Crawford</i>
<i>Dennis Niess</i>
<i>Linda Dunnell</i>



Shawn & Vicki Pennybacker *March 2nd*

Bob & Cheryl McClure Jr *March 5th*



MARCH 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship 10:00 AM Birthdays/ Anniversaries 11:10 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM	2 Dance 5:00 PM	3 Baton Twirling 6:00 PM Stewardship Commit- tee Meeting 6:30 PM	4 Lent Dinner 6:00 PM Service 7:00 PM Vocal Choir 7:30 PM	5 Strands of Comfort 10:00 AM Bell Choir 6:30 PM	6	7
8 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM	9 Dance 5:00 PM	10 Baton Twirling 6:00 PM	11 Lent Dinner 6:00 PM Service 7:00 PM Vocal Choir 7:30 PM	12 Bell Choir 6:30 PM	13	14
15 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM	16 Dance 5:00 PM	17 Baton Twirling 6:00 PM	18 Lent Dinner 6:00 PM Service 7:00 PM Vocal Choir 7:30 PM	19 Strands of Com- fort 10:00 AM Worship and Music Committee Meeting 1:30 PM Bell Choir 6:30 PM	20	21 Set up for Rummage Sale 9:00 AM
22 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Rummage Sale Set Up	23 	24 	25 Lent Dinner 6:00 PM Service 7:00 PM Vocal Choir 7:30 PM Set up for Rummage Sale	26 Bell Choir 6:30 PM 4H Meeting 7:00 PM Set up for Rummage Sale	27 	28 RUMMAGE SALE FOR CHARITY 8:30 AM to Noon
29 Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship 11:10 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM	30 Dance 5:00 PM	31 Baton Twirling 6:00 PM	Daylight Saving Time Begins March 8th!			

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday, March 4th, Lent dinner 6 PM, Service 7PM.

Wednesday, March 11, Lent dinner 6 PM, Service 7 PM.

Wednesday, March 18, Lent dinner 6 PM, Service 7 PM.

Wednesday, March 25, Lent dinner 6 PM, Service 7 PM.

Saturday, March 28th, Rummage Sale 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM.

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 for February will be held on Thursday the 26th, between 11:00 AM and 2:00 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 meet on March 21st at 9:30 AM to help set up for the Rummage Sale.

