

The Scroll

Grace Lutheran
Church

March 2020



The Grace Lutheran Church Council will meet in regular session on Wednesday March 11th at 8:00 PM. All meetings are open to members of Grace unless otherwise stated.

Hope Circle: March 26th,
2:00 PM at the church

Rebecca Circle: March 26th,
6:30 PM at the church

Mission Circle: March 27th,
2:00 PM at the church

Inside this issue:

NALCW Meeting	2
March Greeters	2
Prayer Chain News	2
Attendance & Offerings	2
'Men of Courage'	2
Financial News	3
Acolytes & Video Techs	4
In Our Prayers	4
'Women of Grace'	4
News from Cemetery Association	5
The Season of Lent	6
Season of Lent, continued	7
Season of Lent, continued	8
Season of Lent, continued	9
Youth Group News	9
March Calendar	10

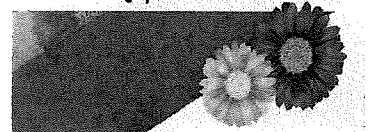


Mid-week Lenten services will be held Wednesday evenings through Lent, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Lee Hoas will be the speaker.



**The winter is past.
The flowers appear
on the earth;
the time of singing
has come.**

Song of Solomon 2:11-12



Prayer Chain



Prayer Chain Participants:

Two changes noted in bold print. Rita's phone number changed and Audrey is added to the prayer chain.

Updated copies are located on the bulletin board near Kim's office.

GRACE CHURCH

February 2nd:

Attendance~ 127

Offering~ \$2,873.70

February 9th:

Attendance~ 107

Offering~\$2,773.71

February 16th:

Attendance~ 74

Offering~ \$1,725.00

February 23rd:

Attendance~ 80

Offering~\$2,316.00

MARCH GREETERS

1st: Randy & Wendy Lee

8th: David & Becky Lindseth

15th: Earl & Lila Lucken

22nd: Jeff Lucken

29th: John Lucken



North American Lutheran Church Women of Grace

The Grace NALCW are on vacation until April. See you then.

The Grace 'Men of Courage' will meet on March 3rd and 17th at 5:30 PM, at Grace Church. All men are welcomed to join this group.



Giving Options

Not only can you give through your offering envelope on Sunday morning, but our church offers other options to receive your offering:

Automatic Giving – You can set up monthly or weekly automatic deductions from your bank account. Contact the church office (218-687-4035) for a form to complete.

Online Giving – There are several links throughout our website (www.gracechurcherskine.org) that will allow you to give a one-time or regular donation from your bank account, credit card, or debit card.

Mobile Giving – You can utilize your mobile device and scan the following code –



Benevolence Ideas

Our church has several special funds to meet needs that can't be met through our General Fund. Currently, these special funds are: Building Improvements, Grace Youth Group, Joy Ride Fund, Oil Candle, Sunday School Improvements/Supplies, Sunday School Outreach, Video Ministry, Vacation Bible School, Worship Hearing Aids, 'Men of Courage' Men's Group, and Shoebox Funds. In addition, our church houses the Grace Food Shelf and we ask for donations on their behalf as well as for the After School Backpack Program. Finally, our church is a part of the Grace Cemetery Association and we ask for donations on their behalf for the maintenance of the Synod, Pioneer, and Fairview Cemeteries in rural Erskine. Please contact Jim Ferden if you have any questions.

January 2020 Financial Summary

Congregational Offering to the General Fund - \$12,435.76

Expenses:

Administrative - \$6,940.55

Education - \$20.00

Mission Outreach - \$60.00

Pastoral - \$1,150.12

Worship - \$434.95

Total Expenses - \$8,605.62



MARCH 8th



MARCH ACOLYTES

- 1st: Presley Haugen and Calvin Hill
- 8th: Josie Johnson and Claire Juve
- 15th: Shayna Juve and Lily Pries
- 22nd: Carter Fortman and Charley Carlson
- 29th: Jayden Haugen and Jareth Walk

REMINDER – Please save your grocery receipts from Groceries Plus in Erskine and Jered’s Grocery in McIntosh. Both stores are donating 1 percent of the total purchases to the youth group. There is a container for the receipts at the church in the hallway by the coat racks.

- * Samantha Lunsetter
- * Don Lundin
- * Gloria Staehnke
- * Don Barrow
- * Peggy Cook
- * Michael Jenson
- * Neva Schepersky
- * Grace Call Committee

MARCH VIDEO TECHS

- 1st: Josie Fortman
- 8th: Paige Breitbach
- 15th: Lillian Shimpa
- 22nd: Riley Kochman
- 29th: Cameron Svalen



The 'Women of Grace' young women's Bible Study will meet Tuesday February 11th and 25th at 7:00 PM. Contact person is Rhonda Breitbach at 218-368-8453. if you have questions.



GRACE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION NEWS

Hello from the Grace Cemetery Association (GCA) Board members. It is hard to believe the GCA is now over 15 years old. In an effort to provide information about the GCA, please review the summary below. Feel free to contact any of the board members with your questions and or commentary.

Historical Perspective

Historically Grace Lutheran Church (GLC) maintained and managed the Pioneer, Synod and Fairview cemeteries. For many years through the year 2000, Leon Trandem was the contact person for the GLC. From 2000 through early 2004 Ray Voxland took over from Leon Trandem and managed most of the issues regarding maintenance and interment at the cemeteries. In 2004 the GCA was created. It is a governing board made up of members from the Grace Lutheran Church and the United Methodist Church. Ray became a GCA board member in 2004 and remained on the board until recently. Ray remains an advisor to the GCA. Each year the respective churches elect members to the GCA Board.

Responsibilities and Duties

The GCA oversees and maintains three cemeteries; Pioneer, Synod and Fairview. Most of the interments occur at Fairview, our main cemetery. Occasionally, af-

ter careful consultation, there is an interment at the Synod Cemetery. No interments are allowed at the Pioneer Cemetery.

Generally the GCA board members are responsible for fixing things and clean-up. Mowing and trimming is our main concern. However, in 2018 damage to the Synod fence from a County snow plow and trees during the Spring/Summer wind storms, took a lot of time to deal with. In 2019 we experienced fence vandalism and more storm clean-up. Hopefully 2020 will be more routine.

The GCA provides perpetual care and does not sell real estate. There is a required fee for perpetual care. The fee for a current member of either church is \$100.00. The non-member fee is \$200.00. Because older cemetery records were not always complete, occasionally there is confusion over whether or not a fee was paid. Assumptions should not be made that sites (commonly referred to as a Plots) are reserved. We are thankful that many have confirmation. Please contact Patti Bacon about site confirmation.

Financial

Perpetual Care fees, financial donations, memorials and gifts make up the operational funding for the GCA. Board members are volunteers and are not compensated. Expenses are primarily for cemetery planning and maintenance.

Contact information for current GCA Board Members:

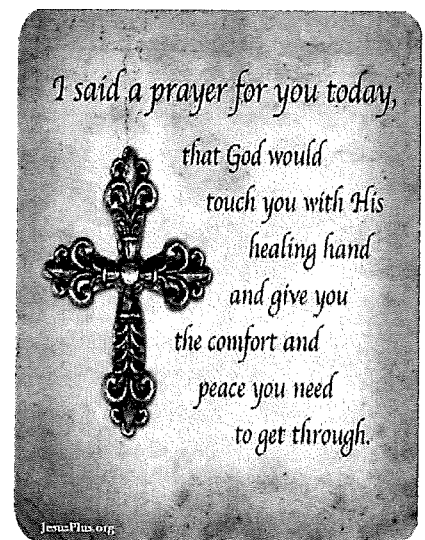
Al Jenson – President
22083 355th St SE, Erskine, MN
56535 218-687-5205

Russ Bacon – Vice-President
35926 215th Ave SE, Erskine,
MN 56535 218-687-2016

Patti Bacon – Cemetery Sexton
Duties
35926 215th Ave SE, Erskine,
MN 56535 218-687-2016

Daryl Halvorson – Cemetery
Sexton & Mowing Duties
20549 Pine Ridge Drive SE, Erskine,
MN 56535 218-687-5190

Karl Erickson – Secretary/
Treasurer
c/o GCA PO Box 102, Erskine,
MN 56535 218-289-1427



The Season of Lent

The season of Lent has not been well observed in much of evangelical Christianity, largely because it was associated with "high church" liturgical worship that some churches were eager to reject. However, much of the background of evangelical Christianity, for example the heritage of John Wesley, was very "high church." Many of the churches that had originally rejected more formal and deliberate liturgy are now recovering aspects of a larger Christian tradition as a means to refocus on spirituality in a culture that is increasingly secular.

Originating in the fourth century of the church, the season of **Lent** spans 40 weekdays beginning on Ash Wednesday and climaxing during Holy Week with Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday), Good Friday, and concluding Saturday before Easter. Originally, Lent was the time of preparation for those who were to be baptized, a time of concentrated study and prayer before their baptism at the Easter Vigil, the celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord early on Easter Sunday. But since these new members were to be received into a living community of Faith, the entire community was called to preparation. Also, this was the time when those who had been separated from the Church would prepare to rejoin the community.

Today, Lent is marked by a time of prayer and preparation to celebrate Easter. Since Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays that occur during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent, and are referred to as the **Sundays in Lent**. The number 40 is connected with many biblical events, but especially with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry by facing the temptations that could lead him to abandon his mission and calling. Christians today use this period of time for introspection, self examination, and repentance. This season of the year is equal only to the Season of Advent in importance in the Christian year, and is part of the second major grouping of Christian festivals and sacred time that includes Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost.

Lent has traditionally been marked by penitential prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Some churches today still observe a rigid schedule of fasting on certain days during Lent, especially the giving up of meat, alcohol, sweets, and other types of food. Other traditions do not place as great an emphasis on fasting, but focus on charitable deeds, especially helping those in physical need with food and clothing, or simply the giving of money to charities. Most Christian churches that observe Lent at all focus on it as a time of prayer, especially penance, repenting for failures and sin as a way to focus on the need for God's grace. It is really a

preparation to celebrate God's marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live, and hope for, as Christians.

Ash Wednesday, the seventh Wednesday before Easter Sunday, is the first day of the Season of Lent. Its name comes from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshippers' heads or foreheads as a sign of humility before God, a symbol of mourning and sorrow at the death that sin brings into the world. It not only prefigures the mourning at the death of Jesus, but also places the worshipper in a position to realize the consequences of sin. Ash Wednesday is a somber day of reflection on what needs to change in our lives if we are to be fully Christian.

In the early church, ashes were not offered to everyone but were only used to mark the forehead of worshippers who had made public confession of sin and sought to be restored to the fellowship of the community at the Easter celebration. However, over the years others began to show their humility and identification with the penitents by asking that they, too, be marked as sinners. Finally, the imposition of ashes was extended to the whole congregation in services similar to those that are now observed in many Christian churches on Ash Wednesday. Ashes became symbolic of that attitude of penitence reflected in the Lord's prayer: "forgive us

Continued on Page 7

THE SEASON OF LENT, con't. our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us" (Luke 11:4, NRSV).

Colors and Symbols of Lent

The color used in the sanctuary for most of Lent is purple, red violet, or dark violet. These colors symbolize both the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus as well as the suffering of humanity and the world under sin. But purple is also the color of royalty, and so anticipates through the suffering and death of Jesus the coming resurrection and hope of newness that will be celebrated in the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Some church traditions use grey for Ash Wednesday or for the entire season of Lent, or for special days of fasting and prayer. Gray is the color of ashes, and therefore a biblical symbol of mourning and repentance. The decorations for the sanctuary during Lent should reflect this mood of penitence and reflection. Some Anglican churches use unbleached muslin, which can range from white to beige, with accents in red or black for Lent to symbolize this same spirit of penitence. Some churches avoid the use of any flowers in the sanctuary during Lent, using various dried arrangements. This can be especially effective if a flowering cross is used for Easter. Other churches use arrangements of rocks or symbols associated with the Gospel readings for the six Sundays in Lent. In Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions, as well as some Protestant traditions, the fourth Sunday of

Lent is known as Laetere Sunday (*lay-TAH-ray*, a Latin imperative meaning "rejoice!"). In the midst of the more somber tone of penitence during Lent, this Sunday anticipates the resurrection of Jesus, a day of hope in light of the coming Easter Sunday. As such, it parallels the third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday (*gow-DAY-tey*), with the theme of celebration for the immanent work of God in the world. In traditions that observe Laetere Sunday, Rose is used as a sanctuary color for that Sunday, a lightening of the purple of Advent with the white of celebration.

Some church traditions change the sanctuary colors to red for Maundy Thursday, a symbol of the disciples and through them the community of the church. Since Eucharist or communion is often observed on Maundy Thursday in the context of Passover, the emphasis is on the gathered community in the presence of Jesus the Christ.

Traditionally, the sanctuary colors of Good Friday and Holy Saturday are black, the only days of the Church Year that black is used. It symbolizes the darkness brought into the world by sin. It also symbolizes death, not only the death of Jesus but the death of the whole world under the burden of sin. In this sense, it also represents the hopelessness and the endings that come as human beings try to make their own way in

the world without God. Black is always replaced by white before sunrise of Easter Sunday.

The Journey of Lent

There are many ways for a congregation to mark the journey of Lent. Of course, beginning with a service of worship for Ash Wednesday is always appropriate. During Lent, one of the most effective visual reminders of the season that can be expanded in many variations is to use a rough wooden cross as a focal point in the sanctuary. The type of cross and how it is constructed will depend on exactly how it will be used. The cross is usually erected in the Sanctuary on Ash Wednesday as a visible symbol of the beginning of Lent. It is usually draped in black on Good Friday. The same cross can also become a part of the congregation's Easter celebration as it is then draped in white or gold, or covered with flowers. Responsive readings associated with various symbols of Lent placed on the cross each Sunday in Lent can provide a structure for penitential prayers during this season.

Another effective way to make use of the cross is to use it as a Prayer Cross during Lent. A hammer, square nails, and small pieces of paper are made available near the cross. At a designated time of prayer during the Sundays in Lent, or beginning with Ash Wednesday, people are invited to write their prayer requests on the paper, and then nail them to the cross. The quiet time of

Continued on Page 8

THE SEASON OF LENT, con't. prayer with only the sounds of the hammer striking the nails can be a moving time for reflection on the meaning of Lent, and a powerful call to prayer. The prayer requests can be removed and burned as part of a Tenebrae or Stations of the Cross service during Holy Week to symbolize releasing the needs to God.

Some churches have a special time of prayer or meditation one night of each week during Lent. Often Catholic and high church traditions pray the Stations of the Cross. Some Protestant churches have a special series of weekly Bible studies followed by a time of meditation and prayer. Often, in both Catholic and Protestant traditions, the prayer time is followed by a simple meal of soup and bread to symbolize the penitence of the Season.

Reflections on Lent

We enjoy celebrating Palm Sunday. The children get to make paper palm branches and for many it is one of the few times they get to take an active role in "big church." We wave the palm branches and celebrate. And we all love Easter Sunday! It is a happy time, with flowers, new clothes, and the expectation of Spring in the air.

Yet there is something significant missing if we only concentrate on celebration for these two Sundays. It is too easy and promotes much too cheap a grace to focus only on the high points of Palm

Sunday and Easter without walking with Jesus through the gathering shadows of Maundy Thursday and the darkness of Good Friday. For us, that journey begins on Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. Lent is a way to recall a larger story than just celebration. It is a way to face the reality of the consequences of sin and the terrible toll it takes on the world. Lent calls us to examine our own lives with the prayer, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me (Psa 139:23-24).

The journey through Lent is a way to place ourselves before God humbled, bringing in our hands no price whereby we can ourselves purchase our salvation. It is a way to confess our total inadequacy before God, to strip ourselves bare of all pretenses to righteousness, to come before God in dust and ashes. It is a way to empty ourselves of our false pride, of our rationalizations that prevent us from seeing ourselves as needy creatures, of our external piety that blinds us to the beam in our own eyes.

Through prayer that gives up self, we seek to open ourselves up before God, and to hear anew the call "Come unto me!" We seek to recognize and respond afresh to God's presence in our lives and in our world. We seek to place our needs, our fears, our failures, our hopes, our very lives in God's hands, again. And we seek by abandoning ourselves in Jesus'

death to recognize again who God is, to allow His transforming grace to work in us once more, and to come to worship Him on Easter Sunday with a fresh victory and hope that goes beyond the new clothes, the Spring flowers, the happy music.

Yet, that celebration begins in ashes. And it journeys through darkness. It is a spiritual pilgrimage that I am convinced we must all make, one way or the other, for genuine spiritual renewal to come.

I have heard the passage in 2 Chronicles 7:14 quoted a lot: ". . . if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." This usually is quoted in the context of wanting revival or renewal in the church. The prayer is usually interpreted as intercessory prayer for others, since we too easily assume that any problem lies with someone else. Yet a careful reading of the passage will reveal that the prayer that is called for here is not intercessory prayer for *others*; it is penitential prayer for the faith community, for **us**. It is not to call for others to repent; it is a call for **us**, God's people, to repent. It is **our** land that needs healed, it is **our** wicked ways from which we need to turn, **we** are the ones who need to seek God's face.

Continued on Page 9



March 2020 Youth Group News

Our Saviors Lutheran in McIntosh hosted a 5th quarter on Friday, January 10th. This was the last 5th quarter for the school year. On Saturday, January 25th, Jim took 6 youth skiing/tubing at Detroit Mountain in Detroit Lakes. Two youth (and a friend) were from Grace and three were from Vernes. A mom from Vernes helped with the driving and chaperone duties.

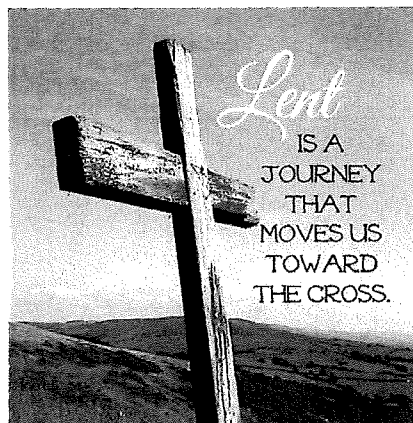
A youth group meeting was held on February 5, 2020. Jim and Hollie were in attendance along with Tina Farrell, Tanya Hamre (Our Saviors), and Josie and Lori Fortman. There was a lot of discussion regarding the Feed My Starving Children project coming up on April 17 – 19. Early registration is on March 12, so Jim will be contacting parents and youth soon regarding their interest in helping with this project. Three youth from Our Saviors and one from Vernes have already indicated interest. Sometime in March, the youth group will be asking the congregation for a “loose change” offering to help cover the cost of ingredients for this project. The

Also discussion was had with regard to serving supper prior to worship during the upcoming Lenten season. Jim contacted parents and youth since the meeting as to their willingness to do this. There is no interest this year from parents or youth, so the youth group will not be serving supper.

Tanya noted an upcoming activity that will be held on Saturday, February 22 at her parents’ home near McIntosh (Gordie & Cindy Ostenaar). They are planning to do hayrides, a bonfire, and have indoor swimming available for those interested in that activity. Jim also discussed possibly going bowling in Bagley in March.

Tina updated the group with regard to the calendar sales.

A date for our next meeting was not discussed and will be determined at a later time.



THE SEASON OF LENT, con't.

Perhaps during the Lenten season we should stop praying for others as if we were virtuous enough to do so. Perhaps we should take off our righteous robes just long enough during these 40 days to put ashes on our own heads, to come before God with a new humility that is willing to confess, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Maybe we should be willing to prostrate ourselves before God and plead, "Lord, in my hand no price I bring; simply to the cross I cling." That might put us in a position to hear God in ways that we have not heard Him in a long time. And it may be the beginning of that healing for which we have so longed.

O Lord, begin with me.
Here. Now.

-Dennis Bratcher

Dear Lord, As we enter this Solemn and Holy Season, we pray that you would send your Holy Spirit upon us that we might prepare ourselves for these coming 40 days of Lent. Even though we may no longer wear sackcloth and ashes, we do seek to humble ourselves so that we can understand the magnificence of Your Love for us as You humbled Yourself and gave Your Life on the Cross that we might receive the gift of Eternal Glory with You. AMEN

MARCH 2020

Grace Lutheran Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship w/Holy Comm.	2 7:30am-MBS 9:30am-LBS 10am-Worship Re- broadcast	3 5:30pm- 'Men of Courage' 8pm-AA mtg.	4 1:55pm-Jr. High RT 6:30pm-Choir 6:30pm-Rebroadcast 7:30pm-Lenten Wor- ship	5	6	7 9:30am- Rebroadcast
8 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship w/Holy Commu- ion	9 7:30am-MBS 9:30am-LBS 10am-Worship Re- broadcast	10 7pm- 'Women of Grace' Bible Study 8pm-AA mtg.	11 1:55pm-RT Class 6:30pm-Choir 6:30pm-Rebroadcast 7:30pm-Lenten Wor- ship 7:30pm Committees 8pm-Council mtg.	12	13	14 9:30am- Rebroadcast
15 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship	16 7:30am-MBS 9:30am-LBS 10am-Worship Re- broadcast	17 5:30pm- 'Men of Courage' 8pm-AA mtg.	18 1:55pm-Jr. High RT 6:30pm-Choir 6:30pm-Rebroadcast 7:30pm-Lenten Wor- ship	19	20	21 9:30am- Rebroadcast
22 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship	23 7:30am-MBS 9:30am-LBS 10am-Worship Re- broadcast	24 7pm- 'Women of Grace' Bible Study 8pm-AA mtg.	25 1:55pm-RT Class 6:30pm-Choir 6:30pm-Rebroadcast 7:30pm-Lenten Wor- ship	26 2pm-Hope Circle 6:30pm-Rebecca Circle at Dorothy Sandberg's	27	28 9:30am-Rebroadcast
29 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship	30 7:30am-MBS 9:30am-LBS 10am-Worship Re- broadcast	31 8pm-AA mtg.	Greeters: 1st: Randy & Wendy Lee 8th: David & Becky Lindseth	15th: Earl & Lila Lucken 22nd: Jeff Lucken	29th: John Lucken	

CIRCLES

Hope at the church
Rebecca at the church
Mission at the church

Ushers :

Dave Salvesson Dean Salvesson
Gary Walker Lonnie Morberg
Wade Farrell Brad Stewart
Jeff Normes family

Communion Assistants:

Jason & Nicki Carlson

Altar Flowers:

Mission Circle

Altar Guild:

Mary Bratrud

R= Reader

V=Video

A=Acolyte

MARCH 1st:

R~ Tyler Brekken

V~ Josie Fortman

A~ Presley Haugen and Calvin Hill

MARCH 8th:

R~ Liz Jensen

V~ Paige Breibach

A~ Josie Johnson and Claire Juve

MARCH 15th:

R~ Mary Bratrud

V~ Lillian Shimpa

A~ Shayna Juve and Lily Pries

MARCH 22nd:

R~ Kris Normes

V~ Riley Kochman

A~ Carter Fortman and Charley
Carlson

MARCH 29th:

R~ Dorothy Sandberg

V~ Cameron Svalen

A~ Jayden Haugen and Jareth Walk

