

*"Serving all people by sharing God's Word
and Gift of Grace"*

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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U.S. Postage
Paid Permit No. 12
Erskine, MN

The Scroll

Grace Lutheran
Church

February 2023



Pastor's Corner

My husband, Kevin and I have been in the Erskine community for about 2 months. It's been good to be back on the prairie after many years away. The endless sky is comforting to one who has grown up with a sky full of stars and is so flat you can see the earth curve away, or the dog who ran away 2 days ago as you say. There's nothing like coming in the coldest time of the year, though and getting reacquainted with the biting winds! I doubt you ever rejoice in them.

We have enjoyed the school concerts, dramas, and basketball games galore and getting to know the area and meeting new people. Life is good in the northland. I did preach in Edmonton, Alberta once and made the mistake of saying I was from the north. They laughed as I realized my blunder. Canada is decidedly further north.

But God has placed us here, our family and each of you. We don't know what lies ahead for any of us, but we'll find out each step of the way as we seek our Lord's guidance and follow together the path before us.

With so much going on in our world and in our lives, how do we walk in peace and hope when troubles come our way?

You never quite know until you're confronted for the first time. It sets the standard for how we can deal with calamity and just plain bad news.

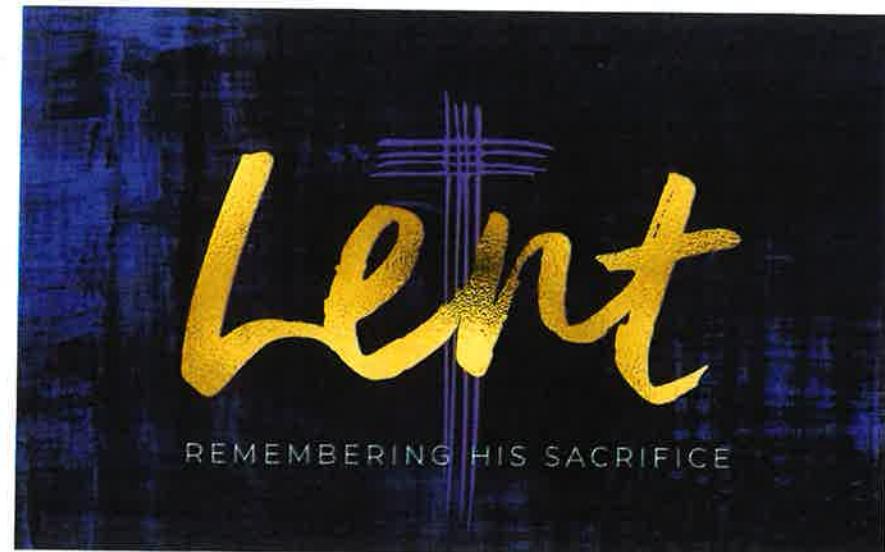
One of our Psalms appointed for February speak well to living in the midst of whatever comes our way. Psalm 112. I hope you will meditate on regularly this month.

As we go into Lent, we first remember that those who believe set their lives according to the ways of the Lord God. As we think and study this psalm we learn that walking with God is not a matter of grudgingly conforming to the commands of God, (but you may have to start somewhere). It's like following rules set in place to keep us safe. Wear that safety harness when climbing electric poles and whatnot. We've all seen the accidents that happen when somebody takes a shortcut.

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10:30am-BSF 1:55pm-RT Class 6pm-Conf. Class 7pm-Rebroadcast	2 3-7pm-Food Shelf is open	3	4 9am- Rebroadcast
5 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship w/Holy Comm.	6 9:30am-LBS 10am- Worship Re- broadcast 6pm-24/7 Prayer Group	7 8:00am-MBS 8pm-AA mtg.	8 10:30am-BSF 1:55pm-RT Class 6pm-Conf. Class 7pm-Rebroadcast 7pm-Council Meet- ing	9 3-7pm-Food Shelf is open	10	11 9am- Rebroadcast
12 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship w/Holy Comm.	13 9:30am -LBS 10am- Worship Re- broadcast 6pm-24/7 Prayer Group	14 8:00am-MBS 2:00pm-BSF 8pm-AA mtg.	15 1:55pm-RT Class 6pm-Conf. Class 7pm-Rebroadcast	16 10a-2pm-Food Shelf is open	17	18 9am- Rebroadcast
19 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship	20 9:30am-LBS 10am- Worship Re- broadcast 6pm-24/7 Prayer Group	21 8:00am-MBS 2:00pm-BSF 8pm-AA mtg.	22 Ash Wednesday 9am-Hope Circle 12pm-Lenten Service 1:55pm-RT Class 6pm-Conf. Class 7pm-Rebroadcast 7pm-Lenten Service	23 6:30pm-Rebecca Circle	24	25 9am- Rebroadcast
26 9am-ABS 9:15am-Sunday School 10:30am- Worship	27 9:30am-LBS 10am- Worship Re- broadcast 6pm-24/7 Prayer Group	28 8:00am-MBS 2:00pm-BSF 8pm-AA mtg.	28 Greeters: 5th: Gary & Angie Walker 12th: Gary & Maxine Walter	19th: Ron & Melis- sa Bergman 26th: Scott & Sandy Bixby		

CIRCLES
Hope at the church
Rebecca at the church

Ushers :
Scott Sandberg
Mark Nelson

Communion Assistants:
Dorothy Sandberg and Stacy Tadmnan

Altar Flowers:
Hope Circle

Altar Guild:
Maxine Walter

R= Reader
A=Acolyte

P=Power Point
FEBRUARY 5th:

R~ John Carlson
A~ Karl Jax and Brekken Gunderson
P~ Bella Senn and Malaina Jax

FEBRUARY 12th:

R~ Dorothy Sandberg
A~ Rian Bergh and Carter Fortman
P~ Logan Johnson and Carson
Fortman

FEBRUARY 19th:

R~ Jason Carlson
A~ Hayden Johnson and Owen Strom
P~ Jorgen Johnson and Scott
Omundson

FEBRUARY 26th:

R~ Jim Ferden
A~ Claire Juve and Lillian Shimpa
P~ George Juve and Jareth Walk



- * Marlene Ross
- * Maci Smeby
- * Allen Jensen
- * Steve & Linda Evenson
- * Steve Jacobson
- * Becki Haugen
- * Judy Boucher
- * David E. Hamre
- * Lyla Jean Gunderson
- * Jerry Jacobson
- * Jolene Bradley
- * Torrey Erickson
- * Mark LaPlante
- * Tim & Diane Jagol
- * Nursing Home members
- * Ukraine



The Grace WNALC will not meet during the winter months. They'll return to business in March of 2023.

Hope Circle: February 22nd at 9:00 AM at the church.

Rebecca Circle: February 23rd at 6:30 PM at the church.



REMINDER – Please save your grocery receipts from Groceries Plus in Erskine and Jered's Grocery in McIntosh. Both stores are donating 1percent 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.



The Grace Lutheran Church Council will meet in regular session on Wednesday February 8th at 7:00 PM. A reminder that all regular council meetings are open to all members of Grace Church.



- January 1st:**
Attendance~39
Offering~\$1,610.00
- January 8th:**
Attendance~67
Offering~\$3,098.00
- January 15th:**
Attendance~72
Offering~\$2,848.00
- January 22nd:**
Attendance~ 74
Offering~\$1,620.00
- January 29th:**
Attendance~ 108
Offering~\$2,005.00



the Easter Vigil

- Prayer, fasting, and service
- Confession of sin rooted in the promise of God that comes through the cross of Christ

As part of our Lenten journey, a prayer team will be praying for each member of the congregation by name daily. If you'd like to be part of the prayer team let Pastor Pam know.

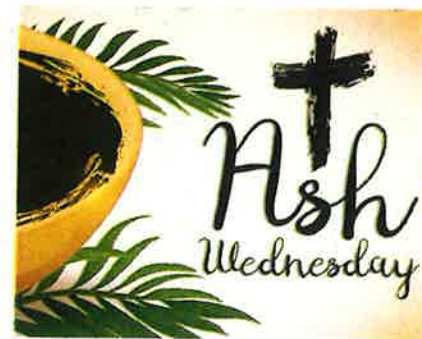
Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. We will have services with imposition of ashes at Noon and 7 PM.

Lent is a time of reflection and soul searching meant to reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus. It has been a time of preparation for Easter since the earliest days of the church and a preparation for Holy Baptism. Lent is observed as 40 days beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending on Saturday before Easter. In the Western Church, Sunday is a day of the Resurrection, therefore we skip Sundays in the calculation of the length of Lent. We use purple in worship suggesting somberness and solemnity.

The forty days of Lent recall the 40 day fast of Jesus in the wilderness after his baptism (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:1-2) and Moses' 40 day fast on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28). It is a time of simplicity and preparation.

Principal Themes of Lent

- Penitence
- Baptismal renewal
- Preparation for baptism at



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.



NEW LITURGY

We'll be introducing a new liturgical setting in Lent. This is from the Blue book that we have and is setting 5. We'll have some rehearsals a few Sundays before worship ahead of time for those who will come and learn it. There are a few good YouTube videos, too.



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 Maintenance/Improvements, Sunday School Outreach, Vacation Bible School, and Samaritan's Purse Shoeboxes. In addition, our church houses the Grace Community 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.



December 2022 Financial Summary

Congregational Offering to the General Fund - \$14,226.00

Expenses:

- Administrative - \$10,128.34
- Education - \$1,450.00
- Mission Outreach - \$5,105.58
- Pastoral - \$25,522.45
- Worship - \$1,994.10
- Total Expenses - \$44,200.47



GRACE LUTHERAN
CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING

January 11, 2023

7:00 P.M.

*'Serving all people by sharing
God's Word and Gift of Grace'*

Present: President Jason Carlson, Pastor Pam, Nick Walk, Hollie Stewart, Yvonne Halvorson, Gene Haugom, Lori Hole, Gary Walter, John Carlson, Wade Farrell, Dorothy Sandberg

Call to Order: President Jason called the meeting to order.

Approve Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda by Gary. Seconded by Wade. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report: John moved to approve minutes. Seconded by Gary. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary's Report: Dorothy reported.

Yvonne moved to approve. Seconded by Gene. Motion carried. (Report on file).

Treasurer's Report:

Cash Flow Report

- Undesignated funds available to be used for December's General Fund expenses totaled \$15,081.97. There were also funds received throughout the year that were used to cover the General Fund expenses for December totaling \$44,200.47.

- Congregational giving to

the General Fund was \$14,226.00. The monthly budget goal is \$19,160.69.

- Noteworthy Other Giving:
 - Miscellaneous – Primarily consists of an anonymous donation of \$500 to the Grace Cemetery Association, a donation of \$150 to Grace to Ukraine, a \$50 donation to the Grace Food Shelf, and a \$50 donation to the Grace Youth Group.

Some of the noteworthy expenses this month included:

Administration: Church & Parsonage Fuel – The propane tank was filled up three times during December (1,925 gallons).

Financial Secretary – Quarterly salary expense.

Education: Education Director – Paid out annual compensation.

Mission Outreach: Miscellaneous – Pass through donations to ICCC from Christmas offerings, to the Backpack Program from the Love Offering, to Grace to Ukraine Program, to Lutheran World Relief from the Oil Mission Fund, to the Grace Food Shelf, and passed along the mission dedicated funds given during the year.

Pastoral: Guest Preacher – Pastor Pam's first Sunday (11/27) with us. She and I decided to handle it this way. Miscellaneous – Pastor Pam's moving expenses. Interim Pastor's expenses – Paid Pastor Mike his normal monthly compensation and then a gift for his service to the church (one month's compensation).

Worship: Worship Technology Supervisor – Paid out annual compensation. Tuning & Repairs – Organ Fund balance was insufficient to cover all tuning expenses.

Budget Report

- We ended the month at approximately 23% or \$53,500 under budget.

- All of the major budgeted expense categories ended under budget for the month, with the exception of Mission Outreach due to previously discussed reasons.

Individual line items that ended up over budget this month: custodian compensation, admin miscellaneous, pastoral miscellaneous.

History of Regular Giving to the General Fund Report

- Giving is up nicely from last month.

- Year-to-date giving is significantly better than 2021.

- This is the fourth highest year-to-date giving since 2011 (when I started tracking donations).

Giving for December is generally in line with previous December's.

History of the General Fund Balance

- Due to significant expenses in December, the General Fund balance is the lowest it has been in 2022.

- However, it is similar to year-end 2021.

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A Culture of Hospitality

What experience does a visitor have when they come to our church the first time? Will they be warmly welcomed and made to feel valuable? Will they easily find a place to park? Will they figure out which door to go into? Will anyone help them find that door and show them where to go once inside? Our church is a beautiful place with wonderful people. We do welcome others, but as is true for most churches, we can do better to welcome and incorporate visitors into membership where they can share their unique giftings. It sure feels good when someone takes the time to welcome us, know us, and bring us into the fellowship. When we have guests to our homes, we are cordial and put out our best for them to make them feel valued. We want people to feel warm and comfortable. The Bible talks about the importance of hospitality as a hallmark of the life of God's people.

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God," Lev. 19:33-34.

Welcome others, we welcome Jesus. *"For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me," Matt. 25:34-36.*

Scripture is clear in showing that hospitality is a primary sign of a follower of Jesus.

While we do welcome, we can all improve our home and make it an even better home for others to come and experience the hope of Jesus Christ.

- Church hospitality is a culture of welcome
- Church hospitality is a team effort from all members
- Church hospitality is what establishes the community
- Hospitality is needed in all churches

- Commit to the ministry of welcome
 - Take the initiative to welcome the visitor
 - Help them navigate our worship and fellowship
- Invite the visitor to participate in the mission of the church
- We'll be taking inventory of our facility, our welcoming presence, and all aspects as we seek to look through the eyes of a visitor and potential new member.

These are exciting times.

Pastor Pam



Hello Ladies
Love the extra
day light we are
getting and the
birds that are at

our feeders every few hours. It's like they have a meal schedule too.

We have our day for making cards for Sunday's prayer list and shut-ins this month on February 9th at 2:00-3:00. I had to be gone last month but the group did a really nice job when they gathered. Come down and help for an hour or however long you can stay. We'll have coffee!

Our serving books are being printed so you can look for them soon. I'll hand out as many as I can the first Sunday they are out and mail the rest. Just a heads up- the first group to be called will be serving group #3 this year.

I'll be putting a box under the table at the mail boxes for Bible Donations to NALC Disaster Relief. If you have any to donate or find some at thrift shops or rummage sales, we'll send them with our delegates to the convocation.

I want to remind you that you can find news of happenings in our national group at <http://www.WNALC.org> to sign up for the newsletter. There are interesting things in it, especially with Lent starting at the end of February. Enjoy the rest of your winter. The trees have been beautiful!

GRACE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jason Carlson	President	563-2490
Nick Walk	Vice President	637-2219
Yvonne Halvorson	Secretary	687-5190
Dorothy Sandberg	Financial Secretary	687-3575
Jim Ferden	Treasurer	563-2377
Gary Walter	Deacon	687-3074
John Carlson	Deacon	
Gene Haugom	Trustee	563-3292
Paul Mahlen	Trustee	687-5343
Ray LaBrecque	Trustee	
Ann Brekken	Superintendent / Education	687-2205
Sarah Strom	Education	687-3488
Pam Walk	Education	637-2219
Shar Hill	Education	
Hollie Stewart	Pres. WNALC	687-3730
Lori Hole	Stewardship	687-3585
Tyler Brekken	Stewardship	687-2205
Becky Lindseth	Stewardship	

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR
FEBRUARY**Fifth Sunday After Epiphany**

February 5, 2023

First Reading - Isaiah 58:3-9a

Psalm - Psalm 112:1-9

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians
2:1-12, 13-16

Gospel - Matthew 5:13-20

Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

February 12, 2023

First Reading - Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalm - Psalm 119:1-8

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Gospel - Matthew 5:21-37

Transfiguration of Our Lord

February 19, 2023

First Reading - Exodus 24:8-18

Psalm - Psalm 2:6-12

Second Reading - 2 Peter 1:16-21

Gospel - Matthew 17:1-9

Ash Wednesday

February 22, 2023

First Reading - Joel 2:12-19

Psalm - Psalm 51:1-13, 14-19

Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Gospel - Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

First Sunday in Lent

February 26, 2023

First Reading - Genesis 3:1-21

Psalm - Psalm 32:1-7

Second Reading - Romans 5:12-19

Gospel - Matthew 4:1-11



FIRST COMMUNION

Holy Communion Study

- What is the meaning and purpose of the Sacrament?
- In what way do we receive God's grace?

Study begins for youth and adults who are preparing to receive Holy Communion.

Age of First Communion varies within our Lutheran tradition. In general, we do Communion recognition and awareness at about age 9 or 10 or 4th grade. Pastor Pam will lead a 5-week course to prepare to receive Holy Communion. Generally, we ask that children express an interest in receiving the sacrament and that they are able to sit through and participate in the worship service before receiving Communion for the first time. 1st Communion will take place in the spring.

Talk with Pastor Pam to discuss the possibility, best times to meet, and to sign up.

FROM THE PASTOR, con't.

God does know what's best for us. As we come to Christ through the power of the Spirit we grow in trusting that our Father does know best. We experience that love that loves us. We grow as we study the Word and design our life as one of integrity.

Following Jesus is worth it, far more than what's out there – and the rewards are great. We may or may not have lots of worldly goods, but spiritual blessings are even better. Things go much better with God as the center than if we go it alone. God bless us as we walk in a manner worthy of the Lord as the promise is that God will take care of us as the best of fathers ought.

How do we live in tough times? *For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. ⁷ He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. ⁸ His heart is steady; he will not be afraid...*

And we are not alone in our walk. We have a community around us, good people to support and love. As the body of Christ, we really are in the business of care for one another. In ministry together,
Pastor Pam

Psalm 112

Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who greatly delights in his commandments! ² His offspring will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. ³ Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever. ⁴ Light dawns in the darkness for the upright; he is gracious, merciful, and righteous. ⁵ It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice. ⁶ For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. ⁷ He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. ⁸ His heart is steady; he will not be afraid, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries. ⁹ He has distributed freely; he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever; his horn is exalted in honor. ¹⁰ The wicked man

GRACE COUNCIL, continued
The December balance includes the \$25,000 CD plus interest.

Account Balances Report

- Building Fund - Reflects regular donations made during the month (\$15.00). It also reflects expenses related to the separate elevator phone line (\$38.90) and painting expense for the parsonage (\$130.95).

- HS Scholarship Fund – Reflects a donation (\$25.00).

- Oil Fund – Bldg Upkeep reflects a portion of this month's oil/gas revenue.

- Oil Fund – Church Emergencies reflects a portion of this month's oil/gas revenue.

- Oil Fund - Missions reflects a portion of this month's oil/gas revenue and the payout of the year's funds to Lutheran World Relief.

- Organ Fund – Reflects a transfer from the general fund to cover the negative year-end balance (\$229.00).

- Shoebox Fund – Reflects a transfer from the SS Outreach Fund to cover the negative year-end balance (\$429.09).

SS Outreach Fund – Reflects December SS offerings (\$65.23). It also reflects the expense of the monthly gift of \$38 to Compassion International and a transfer to cover the negative year-end balance in the Shoebox Fund.

Brovold Investment Valuation Report

The balance is basically unchanged from last month.

Gunderson Investment Valuation Report

The balance is up slightly from last month.

Other Information

- Unfortunately, I am unable to be at tonight's meeting. However, please reach out to me if you have any questions.

- January 2023 is the beginning of my 16th year serving as your church treasurer. Where has the time gone?

- This will be Wade's last Council meeting (for now). I just wanted to recognize his significant work as a Trustee. I have truly appreciated working with him during the past 3 years.

- During December, I prepared and provided the information necessary for the annual workers comp insurance audit.

- With the year-end, I will also have to complete the quarterly withholding tax return as well as the W2s and 1099s for church staff.

- Besides completing the regular reports for the council meeting in January, I have also been busy completing all of the financial reports for the Annual Report/Annual Meeting.

During January, I will also be working with Hahn Financial Group, Inc. to begin making payments to Pastor Pam's retirement account.

Hollie made a motion to approve. Nick seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: No formal report.

Confirmation started tonight and all went well. There are 18 students to date.

First Communion classes are still on hold. Pastor hasn't received more than one request.

Gary asked about New Members classes. We had talked about this previously waiting until we had a full-time pastor. Pastor Pam will be happy to meet and contact people. Please let her know if there are people you know about.

Gary moved to approve. Gene seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Stewardship: Lori reported. No new information. Lori had reached out to the committee.

Education: No report. Confirmation started. Pastor is hoping that SS can be a compliment to Confirmation. 4th grade released time teacher will be Nicki Carlson. Thank you Nicki!

Youth Group: No report. Pastor need more information on who the youth are at this point. We could check with the Released Time groups and Sunday School to get some type of list. We can recheck back with Jim. We might want to look into a data base for all members and information.

WNALC: Hollie reported. Met Tuesday and made up the book for the NALCW. The book will be sent soon.

Continued on Page 7

GRACE COUNCIL, continued

Holly is going to meet tomorrow with the NALCW to make and send cards for the people who are on the Sunday prayer list.

Trustees: Wade reported.

Pastor came home to a cold house. Gene and Wade both worked on it. Ryan came over and there was a plugged line. Wade has asked for information about a new furnace from Ryan. He received a quote that came in at \$4510. If we want a WIFI thermostat it would be another \$100. Furnace would be available as soon as next week.

We also need to look into duct work cleaning. Ryan does not do that so they will look into a company that does. Thermostat for the classrooms is set too low and it was very cold on the Food Shelf floor. Sump pump cover is fixed.

Deacons: Gary reported. Discussed what the word Deacon means. They are trying to put together a definition and perhaps changing the title for a Deacon since the position's responsibilities have changed over the years. The Deacons actually provide outreach and service to our neighbors that covers everything from visits, communion, snow shoveling (etc). Pastor Pam is going to pull some information together and we will try to formulate a better definition.

Video Tech: Nick reported. Things have been going well and our ministry is growing and serving many.

Food Shelf: Gene reported. (Report prepared by Mavis H) Busy month: Served 29 households (8 households who were new patrons). 1 age 0-17, 25 ages 18-64, 18 over 65. The total pounds distributed 1,446.5. The WEM Honor Society helped by donating 987# of food. That was pretty good considering that they had two snow days during this time. Way to Go!

Correction, Mike Senger is a new volunteer, not Mark. Jeff Nornes is continuing his training this month. We could not do this without our volunteers!!! THANK YOU!

Call Committee: John reported. Pastor installation will be Sat. Jan 21. Reception needs to be planned that will follow the service. Hollie will check into things. There will be communion for the installation and we will also have communion the 4th Sunday.

Welcome Committee: No report.

Old Business:

We continue to need a Deacon. Please prayerfully consider saying "Yes" to this opportunity.

New Business:

PMCC payment to budget: No action taken

Mission Budget: Pastor Pam moved that we move the \$1000 for Save the Children to the Misc. under Missions Budget. Gary seconded. Motion carried.

Announcements

Pastor Pam's Installation at Grace. Saturday, January 21 at 3:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Grace Annual Meeting: January 22, 2023 following church services.

Next month's meeting date is February 8 at 7:00

Thank you note from the Back Pac Program from Leslie Tradewell.

2023 Calendars the same. Will be for sale Sunday Morning and in Kim's Office and Groc. Plus.

Adjourn

The Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne Salvo