

 **Grace Lutheran Church**
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 **Grace Lutheran Church, ELCA**
 Fairmont, MN

WAYS OF GRACE

Our Mission: To boldly live out our faith in Jesus through worship, fellowship, and service to God and our neighbor, here and around the world.


February 2024 

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



Our Staff:

Rev. Dr. Allison Cobb - Senior Pastor cobb@gracelutheranchurch.org
Rev. Cheryl Indehar - Interim Associate Pastor indehar@gracelutheranchurch.org
Jane Reiman - Finance Director reiman@gracelutheranchurch.org
Nicole Kolbe - Office Administrator office@gracelutheranchurch.org
Brad Anderson- Maintenance Emergency contact number: 507- 236-1123
 Office: 507- 238- 4418

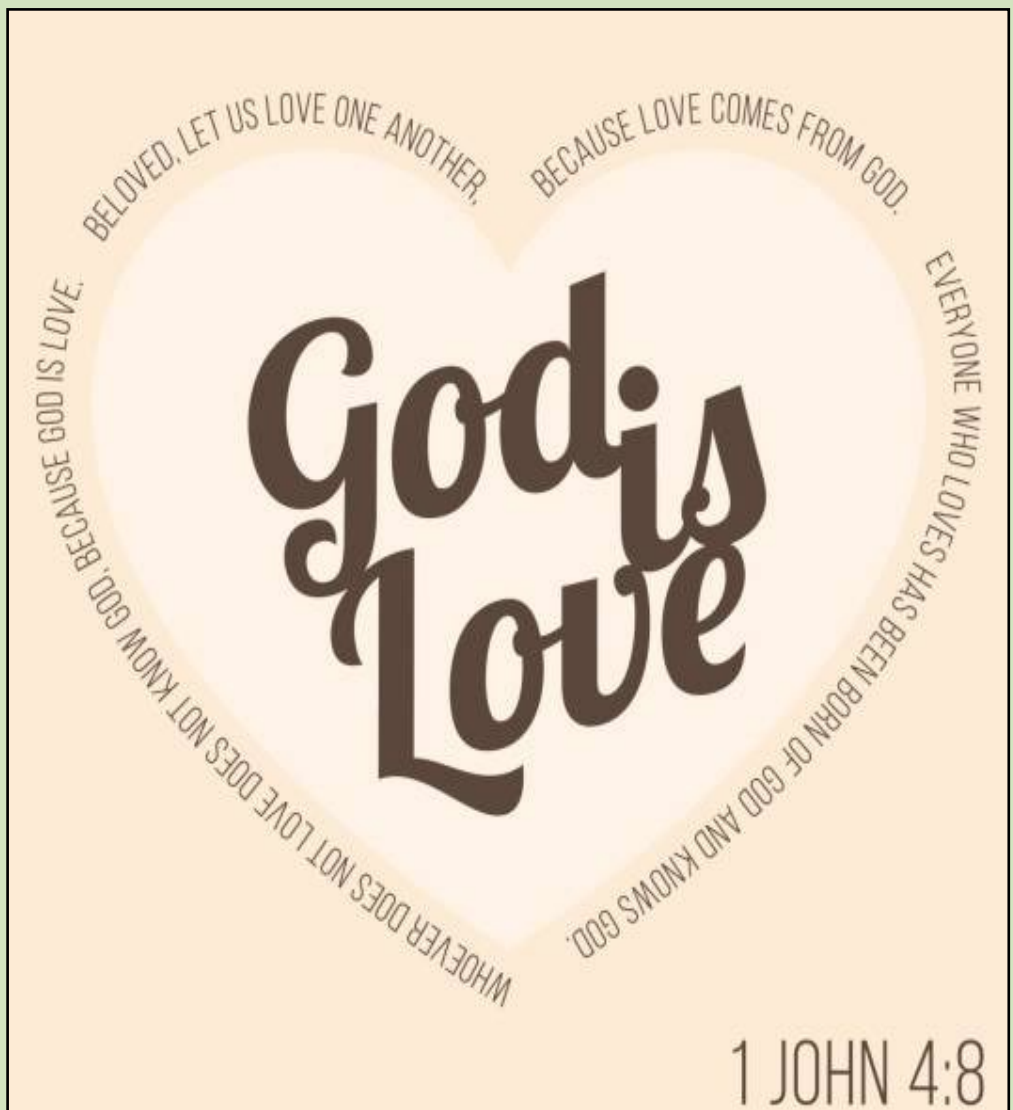



 Fairmont Grace Lutheran Church - www.gracelutheranchurch.org

MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE SHINE ON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU THE LORD TURN HIS FACE TOWARD YOU AND GIVE YOU PEACE
 NUMBERS 6:24-26



Looking for an easier way to give your offering?
 Please scan the QR code with your smartphone to support the ministry of your choice.

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 9 SERMON on the MOUNT <small>A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN</small>	

The Apostle Paul taught the early church that “there are varieties of gift but the same Spirit, 5 and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good....12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12: 4-7, 12)



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We are the body of Christ at Grace Lutheran Church! It is a joy to share in this ministry with you and I share my excitement on the ways the Holy Spirit is moving through you. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend our annual meeting and those who contributed the reports of the teams and their important work. A special acknowledgment and appreciation for Joice Forster and Pete Odgren who were the 2023 Co-Presidents of the congregation. Their leadership, guidance, and sincere listening helped to prepare Grace for this year’s ministries as guided by the Holy Spirit.

Grace has a very rich history of having strong lay leadership which is most clearly seen in the work of our Council and ministry teams. The Grace Lutheran constitution details the role of our church to be “a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.” To do this, Grace will:

- “worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments”
- “proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by Grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone”
- “carry out Christ’s Great Commission”
- “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs”
- “nurture its members in the Word of God”
- “manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action.”

To implement this mission of the church, a Council is elected each year to oversee the congregation and call special meetings of the congregation to conduct its business of personnel, budget, and property matters. Our constitution states “the congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation, and in particular, its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the



FEBRUARY 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 TEC, Teens Encounter Christ 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:35am - 10:35am Adult Bible Study 10:45am Contemporary Worship	29 9:00am - 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS	30 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 6:30pm Celebration Choir Practice	31 9:00am - 12:00pm Women's Community Bible Study 4:45pm - 6:30pm Open Door Meal 5:15pm - 6:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 5:30pm - 6:25pm BLAST 6:30pm WOW- Worship on Wednesday 7:00pm - 8:00pm Confirmation	1 9:00am - 10:00am Sarah's Circle 9:00am WOTC	2 1:00pm Worship Service Aired	3
4 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:35am - 10:35am Adult Bible Study 10:45am Contemporary Worship 12:00pm - 3:00pm First Communion Class	5 7:00am Ranch Men's Breakfast 9:00am - 10:00am Staff Meeting 1:00pm Mary Circle 6:00pm Evening CBS	6 9:00am - 3:00pm Common Threads Sewing Bee - Community 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 6:30pm Celebration Choir Practice	7 9:00am - 12:00pm Women's Community Bible Study 4:45pm - 6:30pm Open Door Meal 5:15pm - 6:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 5:30pm - 6:25pm BLAST 6:30pm WOW- Worship on Wednesday 7:00pm - 8:00pm Confirmation	8 4:30pm - 6:00pm Aktion Club Theatre 6:00pm - 8:00pm Boy Scouts	9 1:00pm Worship Service Aired	10
11 8:30am Traditional Worship - 1st Communion Milestone 9:35am - 10:35am Adult Bible Study 10:45am Contemporary Worship - 1st Communion Milestone	12 9:00am Common Threads 9:00am - 10:00am Staff Meeting 10:00am Lakeview Senior Worship 5:30pm CYF Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS 6:30pm Shalom Circle	13 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 5:30pm Service Team Meeting 6:30pm Celebration Choir Practice 6:30pm Committee Meetings: Stewardship, Fellowship, & Outreach	14 9:00am - 12:00pm Women's Community Bible Study 10:00am Goldfinch Worship 12:00pm Community Ash Wednesday 4:45pm - 6:30pm Open Door Meal 5:15pm - 6:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 5:30pm - 6:25pm BLAST 6:30pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:00pm - 8:00pm Confirmation	15 Ways of Grace Submission Deadline	16 1:00pm Worship Service Aired	17 Council Retreat
18 Council Retreat 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:35am - 10:35am Adult Bible Study 10:45am Baptism - Atlas Mason Penkaty 10:45am Contemporary Worship 11:45am Church Council Meeting	19 9:00am - 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS	20 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 6:30pm Celebration Choir Practice	21 9:00am - 12:00pm Winter Break 4:45pm - 6:30pm Open Door Meal 5:15pm - 6:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 5:30pm - 6:25pm BLAST 6:30pm WOW- Worship on Wednesday 7:00pm - 8:00pm Confirmation	22 4:30pm - 6:00pm Aktion Club Theatre	23 1:00pm Worship Service Aired	24
25 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:35am - 10:35am Adult Bible Study 10:45am Contemporary Worship	26 9:00am - 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS	27 9:00am - 2:00pm American Red Cross Blood Drive 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 6:30pm Celebration Choir Practice	28 9:00am - 12:00pm Women's Community Bible Study 4:45pm - 6:30pm Open Door Meal 5:15pm - 6:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 5:30pm - 6:25pm BLAST 6:30pm WOW- Worship on Wednesday 7:00pm - 8:00pm Confirmation	29	1 1:00pm Worship Service Aired	2

WORDS FOR WORSHIP

Sunday, February 4 - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (*diakonia*). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

First Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 11- Last Sunday after Epiphany

The Sundays after Epiphany began with Jesus' baptism and end with three disciples' vision of his transfiguration. In Mark's story of Jesus' baptism, apparently only Jesus sees the Spirit descending and hears the words from heaven. But now Jesus' three closest friends hear the same words naming him God's Beloved. As believers, Paul writes, we are enabled to see the God-light in Jesus' face, because the same God who created light in the first place has shone in our hearts to give us that vision. The light of God's glory in Jesus has enlightened us through baptism and shines in us also for others to see.

First Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12
Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Gospel: Mark 9:2-9

Sunday, February 18 - First Sunday in Lent

On Ash Wednesday the church began its journey toward baptismal immersion in the death and resurrection of Christ. This year, the Sundays in Lent lead us to focus on five covenants God makes in the Hebrew Scriptures and to use them as lenses through which to view baptism. First Peter connects the way God saved Noah's family in the flood with the way God saves us through the water of baptism. The baptismal covenant is made

with us individually, but the new life we are given in baptism is for the sake of the whole world.

First Reading: Genesis 9:8-17
Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22
Gospel: Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, February 25 - Second Sunday in Lent

The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.

First Reading: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Second Reading: Romans 4:13-25
Gospel: Mark 8:31-38

Sunday, February 25 - Third Sunday in Lent

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

First Reading: Exodus 20:1-17
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Gospel: John 2:13-22

faith and practice of the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church of America." Monthly, the Council meets to discuss the financial picture of Grace and discuss the work of the ministry teams.

Our constitutional bylaws define the work of our ministry teams as such: "all organizations within the congregation shall exist to aid in the ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ." Grace has a wonderful tradition of having one or more Council members serving on ministry teams. They are part of the discussions and decisions made by the ministry teams and then share their team report each month at our Council meetings. By doing so, our Council is made aware of the wonderful and thoughtful work done by each ministry team and shares their feedback with them as well.

Our ministry teams welcome your feedback, suggestions, and questions. The chair of each ministry team and their email address is found in our yellow Grace brochures and can also be visited in person. They will share your input with the ministry team for consideration so that your voice is heard. We also welcome new ideas for ministry as we trust that the Holy Spirit inspires each of us with our different gifts, passions, and ideas.

As we begin with our new Council and welcome our newest leaders, I ask your prayers for Grace Lutheran Church, our church Council, ministry teams, and your pastors. Our goal is to pray and listen for God's guidance to lead the church of today, grateful for the foundation of the past, into the future God is calling us to. We are fortunate to see new faces in the pews, at Open Door Meal, and smiling kiddos at BLAST each week.

Through your invitation, warmth, and welcome, three new households chose to join Grace at our recent Pizza with the Pastors meeting for those new to Grace. Please check out their pictures and other new members on our Gathering Space bulletin board. We are so glad they chose Grace as their church home. I trust God will continue to draw people to Grace to hear the good news of Jesus. Your Council, ministry teams, pastors, and staff will continue to diligently work to provide ministries that are meaningful and full of the Good News!

Your sister in Christ,
Pastor Allison



Southeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 2023 Ministry Report



As another year has drawn to a close, we give thanks for what has been and look forward with anticipation and hope.

In 2023, the ministry of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod continued in earnest. Sixty-two congregations engaged in the call process even as some continue their call process into the new year. We were delighted to welcome 21 new rostered ministers into various settings within the synod.

For the first time in several years, we hosted a visit from a global companion synod. Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO) spent a week visiting our synod's leaders, members, and ministries. It was a joy to spend time with him and learn from IELCO's excellent diaconal ministry among the most vulnerable in Colombia.

Our 2023 Synod Assembly, held in May, welcomed Dr. Susan Brower as the keynote speaker. Dr. Brower helped us understand demographic trends across the state and our communities. In May of 2024, we will use this information as a springboard for the focus of our next Synod Assembly. We will welcome Dr. Matt Bloom to share as we consider how each of us can impact our congregations and communities.

As I consider the ministry of the synod in 2024, I am drawn to the phrase *every congregation connected*. In 2023, congregations took advantage of the connections we have with each other; this was especially evident in the continued increase of collaborations between individual congregations. Throughout the synod, congregations have strengthened ministry through partnering with neighboring congregations.

As we draw on the strength of our internal connections, we have an opportunity to engage afresh with the communities our congregations are already a part of. What opportunities are there to be the church for the community beyond our buildings? What is already happening that we can come alongside? What needs of our neighbors currently need to be met?

One of the gifts of being a congregation of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is that no congregation must go it alone. We are part of a network with congregations and connections that strengthen us and multiply the impact we have in the communities to which we are called.

May the Spirit open our hearts and minds to all the ways God continues to invite us to participate in God's good work in the world!

In Christ,

Bishop Regina Hassanally

semnsynod.org

Cherub and Alleluia Choirs sang at the January 21 8:30 service:



Pastor Allison leading the Children's Message



CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

Open Door Meal: 4:45PM - 6:30PM - All are invited to the Fellowship Hall for a meal.

BLAST, PreK - 6th Grade: 5:30PM - 6:30PM - This includes Cherub & Alleluia Choir, learning lessons, and fun!

Wednesday Worship: 6:30PM - 7:00PM

Confirmation, 7th-9th Grade: 7:00PM - 8:00PM



Youth Trip Coordinator Volunteer Needed!

CYF is looking for a lead volunteer to plan future youth trips for students! Some duties would include coordinating details of location and lodging, finding volunteer chaperones, assist with fundraising events for donations, and work with the CYF Team and Pastors on trip details and itinerary. Please contact the office if interested!



First Communion Class on February 4!



At Grace, we commune children at whatever age parents feel it is appropriate. Jesus welcomes all to the table so if you come from a tradition where even the littlest commune, you are welcome to do so at Grace. Likewise, if you prefer your children to have taken an introductory class to communion first, that is welcome as well. There is no "right" age to commune, and no one can ever fully understand the holy mystery of Christ being present at communion. Jesus simply welcomes all! The pastors offer a class once a year geared toward ages five through twelve which offers hands on learning as we hear the promises of Jesus brought to us in this holy sacrament. Please call or email the office if you would like to enroll your child in this year's class which will meet on Sunday, February 4, from noon to 3pm. **An adult must attend with each student.** We will start with a pizza lunch followed by lessons, a craft, tasting communion elements, and baking communion bread. Students will mark this special milestone of first communion in both worship services on Sunday, February 11.



Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love

"Making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph.4:3), as both individual members and the body of Christ, we pledge that we shall:

In Thought	
Accept conflict	1. Acknowledge together that conflict is a normal part of our life in the church. <i>Romans 14:1-8, 10-12, 17-19; 15:1-7</i>
Affirm hope	2. Affirm that as God walks with us in conflict, we can work through to growth. <i>Ephesians 4:15-16</i>
Commit to prayer	3. Admit our needs and commit ourselves to pray for a mutually satisfactory solution (no prayers for my success or the other to change but to find a joint way). <i>James 5:16</i>
In Action	
Go to the other...	4. Go directly to those with whom we disagree; avoid behind-the-back criticism.* <i>Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-20</i>
...in the spirit of humility	5. Go in gentleness, patience and humility. Place the problem between us at neither doorstep and own our part in the conflict instead of pointing out the others'. <i>Galatians 6:1-5</i>
Be quick to listen	6. Listen carefully, summarize and check out what is heard before responding. Seek as much to understand as to be understood. <i>James 1:19; Proverbs 18:13</i>
Be slow to judge	7. Suspend judgments, avoid labeling, end name calling, discard threats and act in a nondefensive, nonreactive way. <i>Romans 2:1-4; Galatians 5:22-26</i>
Be willing to negotiate	8. Work through the disagreements constructively. <i>Acts 15; Philippians 2:1-11</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify issues, interests, and needs of both (rather than take positions). Generate a variety of options for meeting both parties' needs (rather than defending one's own way). Evaluate options by how they meet the needs and satisfy the interests of all sides (not one side's values). Collaborate in working out a joint solution (so both sides gain, both grow and win). Cooperate with the emerging agreement (accept the possible, not demand your ideal). Reward each other for each step forward, toward agreement (celebrate mutuality).
In Life	
Be steadfast in love	9. Be firm in our commitment to seek a mutual solution; be stubborn in holding to our common foundation in Christ; be steadfast in love. <i>Colossians 3:12-15</i>
Be open to mediation	10. Be open to accept skilled help. If we cannot reach agreement among ourselves, we will use those with gifts and training in mediation in the larger church. <i>Philippians 4:1-3</i>
Trust the community	11. We will trust the community and if we cannot reach agreement or experience reconciliation, we will turn the decision over to others in the congregation or from the broader church. <i>Acts 15</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In one-to-one or small group disputes, this may mean allowing others to arbitrate. In congregational, conference district or denominational disputes, this may mean allowing others to arbitrate or implementing constitutional decision-making processes, insuring that they are done in the spirit of these guidelines, and abiding by whatever decision is made.
Be the body of Christ	12. Believe in and rely on the solidarity of the Body of Christ and its commitment to peace and justice, rather than resort to the courts of law. <i>1 Corinthians 6:1-6</i>

In 2023, the Church Council adopted a covenantal agreement called Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love. This document provides the necessary guidance for how to handle conflicts in a healthy way within the church. It is Biblically based and sets a standard of behavior and actions that we as Christians are to follow. Jesus commanded us to love one another at Grace. Others will know we are Jesus' disciples because of the love we show one another. As Christians, we are called to love one another even when we are in a disagreement. We are to work for a solution, figure it out together and then live together with the solution.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- Sundays:** 8:30AM Traditional
10:45AM Contemporary
- Tuesdays:** 2:00PM Fairmont Cable TV
Channel 12 (pre-recorded)
- Wednesdays:** 6:30PM WOW, Worship on
Wednesday!
- Fridays:** 1:00PM Fairmont Cable TV
Channel 12 (pre-recorded)



***Wednesday Service at Grace Wednesday Lenten Services**
Noon Service and 6:30 Lenten Holden Evening Prayer Service

***Communion** is offered each Sunday and Wednesday.

***Sunday services will be streamed on Facebook, YouTube, and our webpage.**

Goldfinch Senior Living Worship Service: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10AM on the Memory Care side with Communion at Goldfinch and every 2nd Monday of the month, 10AM, at Lakeview Methodist home, with communion. Please come and worship with our friends and members of Grace!



Lent Begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14!

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 14, with Ash Wednesday. Lent is a season of repentance and self-examination where we see what is not life-giving, ask for God's forgiveness, and turn our lives back around to God. In the sanctuary, you will find a black box which is our Baggage Box. During this season, you are invited to write down any burden, sin, shame, or fear that is weighing you down and holding you back in your life and relationship with

God and one another. On Easter morning, we will burn this box as a symbol of the refining fire of the Holy Spirit, lighting the Christ Candle from these flames. On Ash Wednesday, we will be joining with our ecumenical partners for a community Noon service held at First Congregational United Church of Christ as well as worship at 6:30PM at Grace. Confirmation students and their mentors are asked to worship together on Wednesdays in Lent as we sing Holden Evening Prayer together with a time for discussion, ending at 7:30PM. We will also offer Holden Evening Prayer Wednesdays at noon in the chapel. We hope you will come for a time of mid-week reflection, to take a breath, and acknowledge the presence of Christ in our midst.

Please email the office with a cell phone picture and we will get it added. The hope is that we can learn one another's names and get to know one another! And for others interested in joining Grace or learning more about our community of faith, please see one of the pastors. You can join Grace at any time and we look forward to having a second Pizza with the Pastors in May. WELCOME!



Hospitality Training on March 3: On Sunday, March 3, between the worship services, all current hospitality teams are invited to the Chapel for training. If you are interested in learning more about being an usher or greeter, please plan to attend as well. Thank you in advance for being a part of this important ministry of welcome!

American Red Cross Blood Drive at Grace: Grace will be hosting a Blood Drive Tuesday, February 27 from 9AM -2PM in the Fellowship Hall. The Red Cross national blood supply has fallen by about 25% since early August. Right now, blood product distributions to hospitals are outpacing the number of blood donations coming in. We need your help!



Want to Fund a Buildings & Grounds Project???

(Project estimates are subject to change)

Bathroom light switches with auto shut off: \$1,050

For more project information, please contact the office or see our maintenance worker, Brad. Thank you!

Thank you to Chris Carstensen from Carstensen Cabinetry & Woodworking, for donating your time and services toward repairing the coffee cart!



Men's Breakfast on Monday: Men of all ages are invited to a monthly breakfast at The Ranch restaurant on the first Monday of the month at 7:00AM. Come for a devotion, fellowship, and good breakfast food. **When: Monday February 5 at 7:00AM Where: The Ranch Restaurant Why: Because Jesus says that when a few are gathered in his name, he's there too**



Adult BLAST on Wednesday February 7 @ 5:30PM:

You are invited to something new!!! As the kids learn in BLAST, we hope you will join us as we Belong | Learn | Apply | Serve | Tell. We have heard from you that the hour of BLAST time can be a great time to run errands or grocery shop. At the same time, many have shared a

deep desire to get to know more adults here at Grace. We welcome adults of all ages for a once-a-month time of faith formation and community building. We will have a different topic each month from the *Animate: Faith* series. This month we will discuss "Cross: Where God Is". Come and eat, enjoy study and fellowship from 5:30pm-6:30pm while kids are in their BLAST classes, and then stay for worship from 6:30pm-7pm. We will meet the 7th of February in the Lounge. The pastors will rotate facilitating this class and we hope to see you there!

The Gift of Final Wishes: Thank you to everyone who attended this discussion on planning your funeral worship service. For those unable to attend, funeral guides can be found on our Care Table in the gathering space as well as under the Resources tab on our webpage. Over time, as you hear a song or scripture in worship that is meaningful to you, jot it down and share with your family your wishes. When you are finished, please bring a copy of your planning sheet to the office and we will keep it on file for you. For more information, please see Pastor Allison.



Pizza with the Pastors: At our January Pizza with the Pastors gathering for those new to Grace, we welcomed six new members! You will find their names and photos in our Gathering Space on our New Member bulletin board. If you joined Grace in 2023, we would like to add your photo as well.

BUSINESS OF GRACE

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes November 19th, 2023

Present: Pete Odgren, Joice Forster, Ilene Reiter, Joshua Ensrud, Carolyn Bird, Ardell Prescott, Kris Boerner, Jane Reiman, Pastor Allison Cobb, Pastor Cheryl Indehar

Not Present: Troy Nemmers

Call to Order: Pete Odgren called the meeting to order at 10:45 am.

The Devotional was given today by Pete Odgren. It was on putting others first for the betterment of God's work.

Financial Report: Jane Reiman gave the Oct. 2023 Financial Report. She reported the budget is down 4% from last month. We also discussed the proposed 2024 budget and will present it to the congregation at the yearly congregation budget meeting in January.

A motion to approve the October 2023 Financial Report was made by Joice Forster and seconded by Joshua Ensrud. Motion carried.

Team Reports

CYF: The Christmas program has been planned for December 10, 2023 at the 10:45 service. Approximately 100 students will be part of the program. CYF would like to plan for 2024 fall registration for Confirmation, BLAST, and VBS this Spring.

Worship: Trying to find a "point person" to lead WOW this summer. Discussed creating a committee of 5 members to create a church service directory.

Outreach: The church's participation in the Glows Parade was a success, with over 30 participants.

Service: Discussion of personnel budget.

Fellowship: No new business was discussed.

Personnel: Discussion of personnel budget. Year end chats will be done with each employee to go over accolades, opportunities, and goals for 2024.

VII. Old Business

A. Stained-Glass Window dedication was on Sunday, Nov. 19th, 2023. The council is very thankful for all the donations, planning, and hard work that went in to preserving our windows for years to come.

We are looking for church council members for 2024. Current members are to seek out people who they think would be a great addition to the church council for 2024.

VIII. New Business

A. 2024 Budget: The 2024 budget was discussed. Carolyn made a motion to approve the budget for 2024. Seconded by Ilene. The budget was unanimously approved by the church council.

B. Retreat Planning: We discussed meeting at the parsonage next to the Martin County Pioneer Museum on Saturday, February 17th with Pastor Emily Carson from the synod leading. The retreat will finish at the church on Sunday, February 18th; with the February church council meeting commencing after worship.

C. Annual Meeting: A discussion took place concerning the annual meeting on Sunday, January 21st. It will be held between services in the fellowship hall. The Fellowship team will provide refreshments. A budget discussion will take place on Sunday, January 14th in the lounge. All team reports need to be into the office by December 15, 2023.

IX. Pastors made monthly reports to the Council.

X. Upcoming Important Dates

Monday, Dec. 4th at 5:30 p.m.
CFY / Worship Team Mtg.

Tues. Dec. 12th at 6:30 p.m.
Outreach /Fellowship/Stewardship

Tues. Dec. 12th at 5:30 p.m.
Service Team Mtg.

XI. Adjournment

The Council team adjourned with the Lord's prayer at 2:00 p.m.

XII. Approval of Secretary's Report

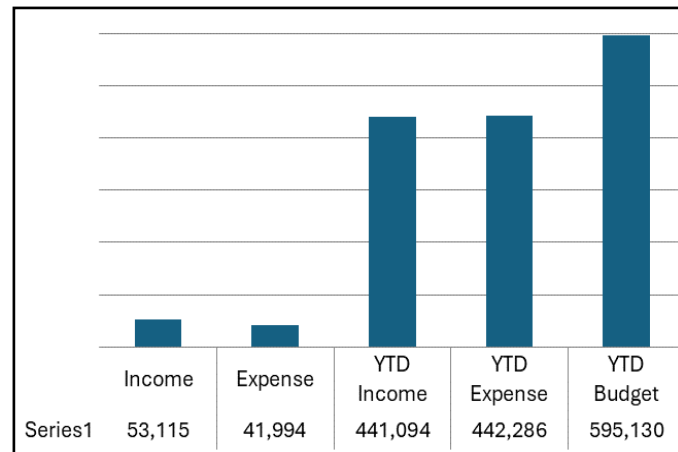
Motion by Kris. Seconded by Ilene. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Josh Ensrud



FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT FOR DECEMBER



Memorials:

Brad Gerhardt Memorial

Harry & Chery Stained Glass windows
Brumbaugh

Enos & Charlotte Stained Glass windows
Breitbarth

Dennis & Karen Trushenski Building

Chris & Carol Nasby Building

Rod & Diane Palmquist Building

Bonnie & Ramie Vetter Music

Pat Jones Missions

Randy Cress Memorial

Carol Cress Missions

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ANNOUNCEMENT REMINDERS:**
- ✚ **Chancel Choir:** Practice Wednesdays at 5:15PM, Sing at 8:30AM worship services.
 - ✚ **Celebration Choir:** Practice Mondays at 6:30PM, Sing at 10:45AM worship services.
 - ✚ **Care Callers:** Call and visit with a homebound member! Contact office for more information.
 - ✚ **Service Team:** Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 5:30PM monthly to discuss budgets, assets, and more!
 - ✚ **Stewardship/ Fellowship/Outreach Teams:** Meet the 2nd Tuesday at 6:30PM monthly to oversee year round stewardship of time, talents, and measures; Grace pantry, fellowship hour, and special events.
 - ✚ **CFY Team:** Meets the 2nd Monday at 5:30PM monthly to discuss youth ministry & events.
 - ✚ **Common Threads:** 9AM on the first & third Tuesday of each month in Laurel Lounge.
 - ✚ **Meal Ministry Team:** Deliver a meal to someone struggling or in need! Contact Nancy Backer at nurse_nancyb@hotmail.com

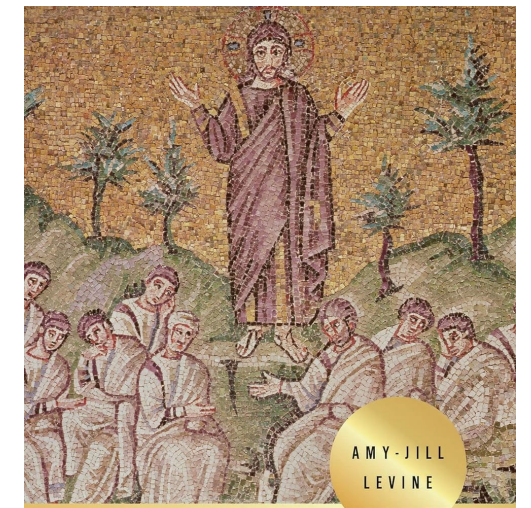
**February
Open Door Meal
Menu**

Join us in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evenings from 4:45 - 6:30 PM

Feb 7: Hotdish
Feb 14: Soup/Chili
Feb 21: Tacos
Feb 28: Creamed Chicken & Biscuit

Adult Bible Study!

Invite a friend, grab your coffee and donut holes, and come to adult Sunday School between the worship services. We meet at 9:35am for a variety of topics throughout the program year. Each week will include a brief video lesson from a Bible scholar or preacher and discussion with one another. Come for light-hearted conversation and faith education. On February 18, we will begin our six-week Lenten study by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine entitled *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*. Come and study together the beatitudes as well as many other teachings of Jesus that he shared with the crowd and his disciples. Hope to see you there!



SERMON *on*
the MOUNT

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN