



**GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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Grace for Today

FEBRUARY, 2016 • VOLUME 15, NO. 2

WAIT! WAIT! DON'T TELL ME!.....by Pastor Ken Gibson



Perhaps some of us, when we hear that phrase, think of a radio program on NPR that is recorded each week in Madison, WI. Still others might think; “Well I have said that before” while trying to recall a name or some other item that we know is locked into our memory banks and we believe we can recall if just given enough time. “Wait! Wait! Don’t tell me I know I will remember if you just give me a minute.” Sometimes we recall it and still other times we don’t. In my case, as I am only days away from 57 as I pen this, it happens more often than it used to, that I fail to recall the thing I am trying to recall. The scary part is I sometimes only minutes before had it on my mind. 😊

“OK, so what is this leading to PK?” Well, I am wondering if you have remembered your church in your will. Perhaps it is one of those things that you had often thought you would remember to get done but have not yet gotten accomplished. Or, perhaps it is your true intent and you have told someone such but yet it is not written down. In any case, I am hoping to remind us all now to remember your church in your estate plans. Don’t “Wait, Wait, till later” as that is not going to get it done.

The truth is, most of us always remember to give to our church every week and through that generosity much is accomplished for our mission and ministry and life together. But do you realize that potentially the largest gift you might be able to give could be our last gift. Perhaps you are a tither and as such you have faithfully given ten percent of your yearly income to the mission of your church. Wouldn’t it be appropriate to offer up ten percent of your estate as your regular pattern of giving has been? If you would like to see some appropriate language for such a gift in your estate plan, let me know and I will be happy to assist you in getting this important codicil in your plans. Please come and see me for a wonderful resource that Dr. Bill Larsen, (who is in Arizona in the winters but up here with us in the warmer months) and I put together some time ago already, called “Managing Your Estate In God’s Kingdom.” It is a good resource and it will assist you in many ways.

If you are wondering if this makes a difference, I ask you to consider what a difference our endowment makes each and every year. Those funds are made possible because some folks decided to leave a gift in their estate plans to this church. They did not wait. So please consider making Grace a part of your estate plans. I know I am not going to put it off anymore! No more: “Wait! Wait! Don’t tell me!” I am going to get it done and I hope you will too.

CONTINUING IN THE COVENANT OF BAPTISM—LENT MIDWEEK SERVICES— During the season of Lent, we will gather for midweek worship services and focus on how we continue in the covenant of baptism throughout our lives. Each week our worship service will focus on one part of the baptismal covenant in the worship setting of Evening Prayer, or Vespers. We invite you to look up the date of your baptism to add a note on a Grace baptismal calendar in the narthex, as a shared way of remembering our baptisms. If you are interested in being baptized, please talk with one of our pastors.

Wednesdays at Noon & 7 p.m.— (Soup lunches 12:30 p.m.; PrimeTime 5:15-6:30 p.m.)

February 10- Ash Wednesday, **February 17-** to live among God’s faithful people, **February 24-** to hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper, **March 2-** to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, **March 9-** to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, **March 16-** to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

We hope you will join us in worship each Wednesday as a part of your Lenten discipline and spiritual practices.

BREAD FOR THE DAY 2016—Bread for the day is a daily-use devotional resource filled with rich treasures; such as a brief scripture reading, a prayer and hymn for each day and more. The devotions began in **January**, but it is never too late to start . If you are interested in having a copy of the devotional book they are available for purchase in the office for \$8.00.

PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE—Preschool registration for the 2016/2017 school year is open to all. Come and visit our classrooms on **Feb. 6** from 10am-12pm, and meet our teachers. Registration packets are available.

THE SUNDAY BOOK CLUB—The Sunday Book Club has just begun a new selection "90 minutes in Heaven" by Don Piper. This is a true story of life and death written by an ordained minister, this life changing story may just change your daily life. Plan on joining us in **room 102** at the Education time between services. This book is available in our church library, so check it out. All are welcome, we hope to see you then!

OPENING THE BOOK OF FAITH AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY—All are welcome to a drop in bible study. Pastor Ken will be leading the group in Lutheran insights for the bible. Classes meet weekly from 1pm-2pm. Check church calendar for upcoming dates.

SUNDAY MORNING SWEET TREATS—Sundays are available immediately! Info/sign-up on the Activity Board. To volunteer for coffee set-up contact the office.

PRAYERS—*Please lift up these petitions in your prayers—To become a praying member of the Friends in Prayer, please submit name and e-mail address to dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org.*

World: Bishop Eaton, Bishop Wollersheim; those serving in military conflicts, Arusha Town Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (our companion parish), Scott Bunch serving in the military, Tyler Stiemke serving in the military

Woodstock: Pastor Ken Gibson and his family; Pastor Amanda Bergstrom and her family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Bob Clemons (friend of Cathy Meyer), Cary Crisp (friend of Lynn Nattress), Jim Davis, Nancy Davis, Ken DeVogelaere, Marge Dierksen, Clark Drennen (cousin of Bill Fleck), Betty Dusthimer (sister of Diane Thurow), Amy Ferraro Heinzinger (friend of Paul Lockwood), Jerry Fiorina (father of John Fiorina), Sophie Frazier (great grand niece of Ila Randolph), Olga Grasser, Maroulla Hahne (friend of Bill & Martha Fleck), Judy Hansen (sister of June Pienschke), Patrice Hoover, Erika Hoppe (mother of Monica Hoefling), Mary Hurst (friend of Deborah Evanoff), Christina Jaggi (friend of Adele Petersen), Fila Johnson (sister-in-law to Roberta Herzog), John Johnson (brother of Jerry Johnson), Jonathan Koehn (son of Ron & Mary Koehn), Diane Knowles, Philip Kreznor, Vincent Lopez (father of Tom Lopez), Howard Mansfield (brother of Pat Cervantes), Gail Mueller, Jesse Myjak, Don Nusbaum, Carol O'Brien (sister of Bill Larsen), Gloria Ogle, Alice Pate, Ferd Raffel, Shawn Rank (son of Bert & Carol Rank), Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), Stanley Russell (father of Sheri Conover), Dick Schroeder, Ellen Schulz (daughter-in-law of Diane Schulz), Eleanor Setser, John Sorensen, Sharon Stahlecker, Suzanne Stumpff, Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahan), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Lauryn Trede (granddaughter of Pat Cervantes), Bob Unglaube, Eileen Weide, Karen Wells, Lois Wiecek, Jeannie Wilcox, Janet Worley, Robert Worley (cousins of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Ruth Zirves

Sorrows: Robert Foerster (husband of LaVerne Foerster), Tom Fox (husband of Janis Fox)

If you wish to add a prayer request for this newsletter, please call the church office at 815-338-0554. Your prayer concern will run for one week and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* e-mail and phone teams may also be submitted by telephone to the church office or by e-mail to Gracewoodstock.org. Due to confidentiality laws, hospitals no longer notify churches or pastors when a member is hospitalized. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or is admitted to the hospital, please call the church office at 815-338-0554.

WALK DUSTY.....by Pastor Amanda Bergstrom

“Old Lutheran” is an online gift shop for a random collection of Lutheran themed shirts, hats, mugs, gifts, etc. They make the awesome yellow t-shirts for our annual ELCA Day of Service, and they have partnered with Honey Baked Ham to sell boxed lunches for when we leave the ELCA Youth Gathering.



They also like to send a lot of emails, announcing “Lutheran Love” in anticipation of Valentine’s Day, promoting their wine, “Zin Boldly,” or declaring “Lutherans have baggage” to display their messenger bags, totes, and fanny packs.

Not too long ago, I received their email “Walk Dusty” to prepare us for Ash Wednesday (February 10 this year, worship at noon or 7 p.m.). Walk dusty, they say, “Just as we walk wet in recognition of our baptism and the promise that it holds we encourage you this year to Walk Dusty.” (They also have accompanying t-shirts and buttons with this saying . . . but I don’t think we need a button to remind us of this call.)

For when we gather on Ash Wednesday, we’ll do just that, we will walk dusty out the doors of the sanctuary. Our foreheads will be marked with an ashen sign of the cross: a mark that reminds us of our life in baptism, a dust that reminds us of our mortality.

In many ways, I long for these forty days, this long season of Lent as a time of remembering Jesus’ passover from death to life and a time for the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Lent not only gives us permission to reflect on life and death, but the ashes bid us to remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return.

And that is a promise to remember, that we walk dusty because the gritty, messy dust reminds us of our earthly nature and cruciform faith. God’s peace be with you on your Lenten journey this year.

ANNUAL MEETING—Be sure to save the date of **Feb 7** for the Annual Meeting following the 10:45 a.m. service at approx. 12:05. A Ministry Matters presentation will follow the Annual Meeting. Annual reports have been mailed and are also available at the Information Center.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING- FLINT WATER OFFERING— For the past 25 years, youth groups across the country have carried soup kettles to gather financial offerings on Super Bowl weekend to feed the hungry. Grace’s Youth Group will participate in this effort once again on **Feb 7**, and this year we will send funds to Salem Lutheran Church in Flint, MI. Pastor Monica Villarreal serves as pastor at this congregation and is a seminary friend and classmate of Pastor Amanda. Salem Lutheran Church is organizing to distribute water bottles/jugs to the community, distribute water filters that are NSF certified for lead removal, and replace church water pipes and get a filtration system so that Salem has safe water for the community to fill water jugs with safe water. We pray for the many people who are hungry, near and far, and pray that this offering supports our sisters and brothers in Flint.

LENTEN SOUP LUNCHESES – Beginning **Feb.10** after the noon Lenten services. Please consider cooking a large batch of your favorite soup for us to serve. For more information or to volunteer, see the Activity Binder, or call Shirley Busse at 338-9063.

SHORT TIME SINGING OPPORTUNITIES— Lenten hymn/anthem festival **March 13**; rehearsals start **Feb. 17**. Contact Ron Fredriksen for more info.

PREPARE THE WAY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN– Have you noticed the warmth in the building? We are happy to report that we replaced four furnaces in the last few months. The Capital Campaign Task Force is now turning their focus to the replacement of the fire alarm system, organ repairs, and parking lot lighting. These projects will be worked on as funds become available through the ongoing giving of the congregation. Have we received your commitment to the campaign? We still have two years left in the program and many projects to fund. Please feel free to contact the Church office so we can schedule a meeting with you.

DOWNTOWN OLD FIRE STATION DROP IN CENTER OPENS! - Through the efforts of some WACM folks and the City of Woodstock, a Daytime Drop in Center for the Homeless has opened in the Old Fire station behind City Hall. The Day Time center will be open for the homeless on Weds to coincide with the reality that Weds is the night for the McHenry County Homeless to find their way to Woodstock in order to be at the Weds night PADS site at Redeemer Lutheran Church. Grace is a large contributor to the Weds Night PADS program in financial gifts and in making a monthly meal. So then, "How might we be supportive of the new Weds Daytime Drop in Center?" Well as the center is in the beginning stages, it is in need of volunteers to be at the site and assist in the operation. If you are interested, and if you want to work a shift (7:45am-11:30am, 11:30a-3:00pm, 3:00pm-6:15pm you can contact Pastor Tom Rogers at 815.338.9370(w) 815.236.9411 (c) or show up in person on Wednesday and ask to help out!

SEWING CIRCLE LOOKING FOR DONATIONS—We are looking for some small baby food jars, please place them in the sewing circle donation box. Thank you.

ADULT BUS TRIP— Sunday, March 13, 2016— We will be venturing to the Artist's Ensemble Theater to see "Outside Mullingar", a delightful romantic comedy set in rural Ireland. We will leave Grace at 10:00am and head over to the Thunder Bay Grill for their wonderful Sunday Brunch. They have a Salad Bar, Omelet Station, various egg dishes, bacon, sausage, biscuits & gravy; plus a full array of dinner items and a dessert bar. You will have plenty of time to enjoy your meal and visit with friends before we head over to the theater. Cost is \$70. For more information or to sign up see the Activity Binder. Deadline to sign up and pay is **February 21**. Questions: call Shirley Busse @ 815-338-9063

SENIOR LUNCHEON - February 23— Our warm winter menu features a Chopped Salad with Dill Dressing, Tater Tot Chili (very mild, we'll have hot sauce available), Cornbread and Fruit Parfait for dessert. Our program "Getting Up One More Time, after being knocked down" will be given by Pastor Tom Tews. It takes real stamina to live longer! He will touch such topics as grief over losing friends, becoming more homebound, recovering from illnesses and depression. Cost is only \$5.00, so bring a friend. Please sign up in the Activity Binder by **February 21** Questions, call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION —All are welcome to join us from 9:45-10:30 in Luther Hall for our series Realizing The Social Truths In Our Community—**Feb.7**— JOURNEYCARE— giving those with terminal illness the opportunity to live their lives to the fullest, with dignity and without pain. **Feb. 14**— ALEXANDER LEIGH CENTER FOR AUTISM a place where children with autism reach their full individual potential, in a caring and safe environment. **Feb. 21**— MAINSTAY THERAPEUTIC FARM provides therapeutic riding, equine and animal assisted therapeutic activities for individuals with physical, developmental, emotional and social disabilities. **Feb. 28**— ELCA PLANNED GIVING creative ways to support your community and church. **March 6**— NORTHERN ILLINOIS SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION offers a wide range of recreation programs throughout the year, for all ability levels and ages, from early childhood through seniors.

PRESCHOOL WINTER WONDERLAND FUNDRAISER EVENT— Join us on **Feb 26** from 5-7:30 pm for this Inter-Generational Event...all ages are welcome! We start with a great mostaccoli dinner, followed by games & crafts for the kids, a fun photo booth (bring your cameras!), and a wide variety of adult and children friendly raffle items. Ticket prices: \$25 family, \$7 adult, \$5 child. All proceeds from the evening go to the Grace Lutheran Preschool Program and the Tuition Assistance Program. Tickets are now on sale. Raffle donations are also being accepted. Contact Preschool Director Chris Learman with any questions.

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE—The deadline for the March newsletter is Feb. 15. Send articles to Lynn Nattress at lnattress@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Office at 815-338-0554.
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FIRST COMMUNION CLASS—We will be holding First Communion on Palm Sunday, **March 20**, at the 8:30 a.m. service. In order to participate, parent and child must attend the preparation class-luncheon held on Saturday, **March 19**, from 11am to 1 p.m. Please sign up in the black activity binder at the Information Center by Sunday, **March 6**, For more information please contact Carrie Fiorina in the church office.

WHY CHRISTIAN? CONFERENCE—Nadia Bolz-Weber and Rachel Held Evans curated a conference, “Why Christian?,” in Minneapolis last fall, and they will be hosting another conference in 2016 in Chicago. The conference invites speakers to respond to the question, ‘why Christian?,’ and “it’s a gathering of storytellers, a community sinners and saints drawn together by the stubborn hope that God is in the business of making all things new.” If you are interested in attending as a group from Grace, please contact Pastor Amanda. You can register online at <http://www.whychristian.net/> beginning January 1st, and spots will likely fill up quickly (last year’s event had 1000 participants and over 300 people on the waiting list). Registration is \$138 for the conference at Fourth Presbyterian Church on Friday & Saturday, Sept. 30 & Oct. 1, 2016. Contact Pastor Amanda if you sign up to attend, if you have any questions, or for possible scholarship assistance for registration fees.

HELP US GROW! - Every year our preschool is very grateful for the donations we receive from our parents and Grace Church families. This year we are kicking off a Helping Hands: Help Us Grow campaign. Helping Hands will be posted around church that list items we are in need of. Some examples might include; batteries, mailing labels, copy paper, Walgreens gift cards for photo printing or laminating sheets. If you are able to donate an item, please take that hand with you and return your item to the office. Include your name with your donation, we want to be able to give you a big thank you.

KUBOTA—Grace has a Kubota Zero Turn tractor in good condition for sale. Kubota Zero Turn 2G327P-60 lawn mower. 60 inch deck and 27 hp. There are 1091 hours on the mower. We are asking \$4,500.00, offers considered. Inquiries and questions call the church office at 815-338-0554.

2016 BULLETIN & PRESENCE LIGHT SPONSOR DATES AVAILABLE— This is a great way to honor/memorialize a loved one or special occasion while helping to defray the cost of these items. Sponsor sheets are available at the Information Center. A month prior to your sponsoring, a form will be sent to you requesting information and a donation of \$20 for the Bulletins & \$10 for the Presence Light.

FUNERAL PLANNING— Do you have favorite scripture passages and/or hymns? Is there something you hope to have included in your funeral service? We have a simple worksheet where you can note your favorite scripture, hymns, and other details, and we invite everyone to fill one out to share with your family and bring to the church office so we can file it away, and at some point know how to best honor your wishes. Please stop by the church office to pick up a Funeral Planning Worksheet, or you can find a copy on Grace’s website under “Communication & Documents,” and then “Forms and Documents.” Thanks be to God, that even in the face of death, we proclaim the promise of the resurrection.



SIMPLY GIVING—Do you know about Simply Giving? Simply Giving is a confidential, no charge, automatic withdrawal program; and it is one option available for giving tithes and offerings. Simply Giving provides an option to give on a regular basis (weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly). Enrollment forms to sign up are available at the Information Desk, and on Grace’s website (under “Communication and Documents,” then “Forms & Documents”). As in our giving and our annual estimates of giving, if your situation changes, automatic giving through Simply Giving can be changed by contacting the church office. Automatic gift amounts can be changed, or put on hold with one week’s notice. Please contact the church office with any questions about Simply Giving.

CHURCH CLOSINGS AND EVENT CANCELLATIONS - When severe weather arrives, Grace Lutheran Church will follow D200 closing and cancellations. All weekday activities, including preschool, will be cancelled if D200 has cancelled classes. Please check the [Emergency Closing Center website](#) or any of the radio stations listed on the [D200 website](#) for any severe weather cancellations.

Here is your link to the Weekend Worship Participants:

Schedule:<http://www.gracewoodstock.org/WeeklyNews/Monthly%20Worship%20Participants.pdf>

**PREPARE THE WAY
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

Committed—\$483,456.06
Received—\$351,570.38
Goal—\$780,430.00

UPDATED PHONE AND ADDRESSES—

Please contact the church office if your contact information has changed, or you no longer have/use a landline phone. Thank you!

UPCOMING EDUCATION DATES:

Adult Education—Sundays at 9:45 am
Adult Bus Trip—March 13
First Communion Class—March 19
VBS—July 18-22

**2016 BULLETIN AND
PRESENCE LIGHT SPONSORS NEEDED**

Sign-up is available at the Information Center. A month prior to your sponsoring, a form will be sent to you requesting information and a donation of \$20 for the Bulletins & \$10 for the Presence Light.

Visit the Grace website for the most up-to-date information for all that is happening at Grace!

Lenten Service Schedule
Wednesdays at Noon & 7 p.m.
February 10- Ash Wednesday,
February 17- to live among God's faithful people,
February 24- to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
March 2- to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
March 9- to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
March 16- to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION—Grace hosts a New Member Orientation Breakfast on a quarterly basis. We have a light breakfast for those that would like to become members, and those wanting more information on what it means to be a member of the Grace family. Please contact the church office if you are interested in becoming a new member.



GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

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Ken Hansing, Claude Hutchens; Sue Olsen,

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Beth Miller; Daniel Nattress

council@gracewoodstock.org

Office Hours: 8:30 am–3:30 pm, M–Th

8:30 am–12:00 pm, F