



GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Grace for Today

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GETTING CAUGHT UP.....by Pastor Ken Gibson

I wish to use my article space this issue, to share a couple of things that are under-way, just so we are all on the same page. There are a couple of things for us to “catch up” on; so thus the title of my article. These are exciting items and I just want all of us to be aware.



First item is a **COLUMBARIUM** on Grace grounds. For some time now, I have been asked by many if we at Grace had ever thought about having such on our property. For those that are wondering what a columbarium might actually be, it is a permanent space to place urns filled with final remains of our loved ones. “Pastor, when are you going to get that columbarium built?” is indeed an actual question I have heard many times over the last five years. In fact, I believe we actually have members holding ashes of their loved ones waiting for us to get this in place here at Grace. Well, after a bunch of attempts, I finally found someone to get his project from being a dream to an actual project under design and thoughts put to paper. I asked our dear brother Howard Hoyt, who is an architect by profession, to work on this and, (thank you Howard), it is really taking shape. Several possible locations have been considered and taken to property committee and council and well, to be honest, I think it is really looking good. What I think we need soon, is an adult forum to have an open look at what all this would mean for us as a family here at Grace. Watch for an adult forum sometime this spring as we present this exciting opportunity for us at Grace.

Second item to get caught up on, is a **VINEYARD**. Ok, I will take credit or blame for dreaming up this idea. We at Wartburg Theological Seminary, for many years have had our own vineyard and we made our own communion wine. But the vineyard offers so much more to the life of the community than simply making wine, and I believe it can do so for us as well. Think about brides and grooms going out to have their wedding day pictures taken in the midst of our vineyard. Think of all our Grace children coming together in the fall for the stomping of the grapes. Yes, in their bare feet! It is wonderful. Think of us offering a bottle to Grace couples on their wedding day. The update on the vineyard is that I have another wonderful member, (thank you Steve DeBerg) who is getting this project underway and into action. A number of people have stepped forward to make sure that this project happens and they are committed to doing the annual labor and the up-front financing needed to make this vineyard happen. It will not come out of our annual budget and the laborers are also in line. We can make this happen and if you are interested in helping with the vineyard just let me know I will add you to the list! In the meantime watch for an adult forum to be presented yet this spring.

One last thing to be caught up on is, the excitement Jodi and I are experiencing while awaiting the birth of our first grandchild. Our little guy (yes we know he is a guy) is due right around Palm Sunday so keep watching for another birth announcement in Grace for Today and we will let you know how things are going. Of course, I will be with all of you as the event takes place, but I am pretty sure Jodi and Joy will be in Europe.

Finally, make plans to be in attendance at our mid-week Lenten services; “Probing the Parables of Matthew”. We have two options for such at Grace every Wednesday in Lent, noon with a soup lunch after; or 7pm preceded by a Primetime meal in Grace Center. See you there! Ok then, now we are all caught up, for now at least. Blessings to you all, PK.

WORSHIP TODAY

Sunday, March 23, 2014
Third Sunday in Lent

INTRODUCTION: In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

READINGS: Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

Sunday, March 30, 2014
Fourth Sunday in Lent

INTRODUCTION: Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. I was blind, but now I see, declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved sons and daughters. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

READINGS:

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalm 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

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 overseas

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

Health Concerns: Lori Acosta, Owen Baldwin, Wayne Bell, Lois Bloese, Deanna Bohn, Allison Clark (niece of Martha Fleck), Erin Clark (sister-in-law of Martha Fleck), Lori Cunz (sister of Lynn Nattress & daughter of Lois Wiecek) Caryl Dierksen, Marge Dierksen, Betty Dusthimer (sister of Diane Thurow), George Erber, Patrick Fraily (friend of August and Theo Hutchens), Gloria Holy, Patrice Hoover, August Hutchens, Theo Hutchens, Ruth Iwanicki, Fila Johnson (sister-in-law to Robert Herzog), John Johnson (brother of Jerry Johnson), Vincent Lopez (father of Tom Lopez), Cheryl Marback, Tom McGuine, Gail Mueller, Connie Myjak (friend of Shirley Berna), Jesse Myjak, June Noel (mother of Marylee Steinwehe), Herb Neubaum, Don Nusbaum, Gloria Ogle, Alice Pate, Charlotte Petersdorf (mother of Gladys Renner), June Pienschke, Hazel Powell, Shawn Rank (son of Bert & Carol Rank), Jeff Roberts, Joshua Rumschlog (great grandson of Eileen Weide), Ellen Schulz (daughter-in-law of Diane Schulz), Louise Smith, John Sorensen, Rita Specht-Hartwig, Margaret Stawicki (mother of Nan Goerlitz), Carol Thompson (daughter of Marge Dierksen), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Lena Wells (friend of Joe & Deborrah Evanoff)

Sorrow: Cassie Hoch

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.

LENTEN MID-WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES— Every Wednesday—“Probing the Parables- Hearing Their Questions for Us.” That is the title of this year’s Lenten series for our mid-week services. These parables (from Matthews Gospel) will ask us some very probing questions and we will take time to consider some important questions regarding our faith. Join us for worship at noon or 7:00 p.m.



LENTEN SOUP LUNCHESES – Come to the noon worship service and then join us in Grace Center, following worship, for a soup luncheon. All are welcome. March 19— Fagioli soup, March 26— Turkey Noodle Soup, April 2—Chicken Tortilla Soup and Black Bean & Turkey Chili Soup. Still looking for cooks (for desserts) to fill out our schedule. Sign –up in the activity binder.

SENIOR LUNCHEON – Tuesday, **March 25** - Which of your five senses is the most valuable to you? I think many of us would say our eyes! Learning to take care of them is a lifelong commitment. Join us this month as Dr Attkinson comes to talk to us about our Eye Health, Macular Degeneration and Cataracts. Our menu features: Cottage Cheese & Peaches, Chili Meatloaf & Potato Casserole, Not the Classic Green Bean Casserole, Rolls, and Ice Cream & Cookies for dessert. Cost is \$5.00. Sign up in the Activity Binder by **March 23**. Questions, Shirley Busse 815-338-9063



GRACE WEEKENDERS—All are welcome to join us on **March 28** at The Starline Gallery, 306 W. Front St., Harvard. Doors open at 6:00 pm, and close at 9:00 pm. \$5.00 cover charge for entry, water and light appetizers. The Starline Gallery fulfills the wishes of every artist's dream for art exhibits. People's Choice voting, live music, light appetizers, bottled water and a cash bar. Join us for a night of fun! If you have any questions, call Dan Hess 815-219-5110. You don't need to sign up, just show up!

VISIT BY DR. STANLEY OLSON— The President of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dr. Olson, will be the guest Pastor on **April 5/6**. He will also lead the Adult Forum on **April 6** at 9:45 am in Luther Hall, speaking about Seminary Education.

COME SING WITH US for special events just ahead. Rehearsals are beginning Wednesdays 7:30-8:15 pm for Holy Week, Easter & Rogation (**April 13-27**) Fun & Meaningful. Opportunities for younger singers and all ages of ringers too. Check with any of our directors for more information.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS—We will be holding First Communion on Palm Sunday, **April 13th**, at the 8:30 a.m. service. In order to participate, parent and child must attend the preparation class-luncheon that will be held on Saturday, **April 12th**, from 11am to 1 p.m. In order to plan for the class, we need to know how many people will be attending. Please sign up in the black activity folder by Sunday, March 30th, if you and your child will be participating in First Communion. May God bless you in your deliberations regarding this matter. For more Information please contact Carrie Fiorina at cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org or call the church office (815) 338-0554.



PRESENCE LIGHT & BULLETIN SPONSORS FOR 2014— The sign-up sheets are at the Information Center.



The **GRACE WOMEN'S RETREAT** – The Real Scoop as told by a Day-Timer (A Day-Timer chooses not to stay overnight.) I have a 90 lb. Labradoodle that needed me. Besides, I did not have my Grace Lutheran coffee cup with me which you want to have if staying overnight!

Arriving at the Venue (Loyola Retreat Center) I was greeted by a feeling of serenity and I was in awe of the beauty God had provided. The snow on the trees was so beautiful! Some days, I believe we take God's gifts for granted. I know I do! Today was not one of those days.

As a Day-Timer all I needed was whatever personal items I couldn't live without for the day. Before entering the event room, I decided to leave behind all my cares, worries, troubles and anything negative that would keep me from being present in the moment and open to a wonderful experience. (I knew God would take care of those worries.) If my worries could talk, I am sure they would have said, "I thought she would never let us go!"

As I enter the room, several of my Church Sisters are already there and our knowledgeable speaker who was ready to give her all to make my experience special. O.K., she was there for everyone – not just me. There are goodies galore, coffee, water, juice, fruit, cookies, etc. Luckily, I had not left my appetite at home.

In this Vegas like atmosphere (what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas) activities abound. One such activity had us write just one quality we saw in each person at our table. Amazing what people see in you – maybe better than you thought or maybe reaffirming of something that you have been working on.

Our Speaker sings us songs, scoops out a funny story or two, and more importantly leads us in thoughtfulness and in a journey that brings us closer to God. I would elaborate more on this but it is just so individual and everyone can glean something different from what is being presented. Another fun filled activity as we all tell about one of the funniest things that has ever happened to us. We get to hear the funniest from each table. Ah, laughter – such good medicine! Mind you, we are learning more about each other as we hear our funny stories and, as we break into groups, the sharing moves you closer to your sisters. By the way, my story was chosen as the funniest and I would share my funny story with you, but cannot. Remember, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas.

Oh, the day flies by and time to leave and I remembered I had left all my cares, worries, etc. in the hall. As I picked them up, they seemed so much lighter. It is so, because God took care of my worries, removed many and others took a much needed vacation. Oh, by the way, I did sneak out at lunch time to go feed Snickers.

And that's my story. Adele Petersen

(The Women's Retreat speaker was author Jeanette Levellie. Her book Two Scoops of Grace with Chuckles on Top was the basis of the presentation. We hope more of our Grace sisters can join us next year for another fun event.)

ADULT COACH BUS TRIP – Weds., April 30 - Join us as we travel to White Fence Farm in Romeoville, IL for their famous fried chicken dinner. After dinner the Legacy Girls will entertain you with the songs that uplifted our nation during the WWII era: Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree and more. On our way, we will be stopping at the Graue Mill and Museum. The only operating waterwheel gristmill in IL, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and offers many artifacts and displays. We'll have a guided tour. Cost is \$65, bring a friend. For more information or to sign up, see the Activity Binder. Questions call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063.



ROGATION WEEKEND— Save the dates of **April 26 & 27**, and join us in celebrating the planting season, and the re-birth of nature which is Spring! Watch for more details.



BBQ FEST—This year to help raise money for the upcoming trips for both our Confirmation Youth trip to Sky Ranch in Colorado and our High School Youth trip to the Gathering in Detroit we will be hosting a BBQ Fest. On **April 26th** we will be serving up pulled pork and brisket along with sides of beans and coleslaw. Mark you calendars to attend. Tickets will be on sale soon.

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE—Dates have been set, so mark your calendars and start saving your treasures for our annual sale! The sale will be held on **May 15–May 17**. Set-up will be **May 12–May 14**. Watch for more information to come.

LOST AND FOUND— There are many items that have been left at Grace during the last year. These items can be found on the shelves above the coat racks in the Lower Level. Items not claimed by **May 15** will be donated to the Rummage Sale.

ADULT EDUCATION— The “Sunday by Sunday” Book Group meets at 9:30 a.m. in Room 102. All are welcome to attend. The Adult Education committee is in serious need of some assistance in making sure we can offer adult education opportunities at Grace. Please contact the Church office or talk to the Pastors if you are at all interested.



MARTIN LUTHER HERITAGE TOUR—Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church in Huntley invites you to consider joining them for a Luther Heritage Tour in Germany, **Sept. 12-21, 2014**. For more information see the informational brochure at the Information Center, or contact Sharon Little, skl55little@mac.com.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL—Save the dates of **July 14 –18**. This year we will be exploring the world of Weird Animals “Where Jesus love is one of a kind”. Contact Carrie Fiorina in the church office if you are interested in helping. It is a great way to show the children of Grace and beyond the love of a church community.

WE NEED YOUR STORIES— Not every church member can attend all events, and we want to hear about your experiences, so we would like you to share your follow-up stories here. Share a follow-up story with your Grace Family. You can also send a “View From The Pew”. You may submit your articles to Lynn Nattress at lnattress@gracewoodstock.org. (Follow-up stories will run as time and space permit, and may be edited.)

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE—All *Grace for Today* articles for the **April 2** issue should be sent to Lynn Nattress at lnattress@gracewoodstock.org or to the church office by noon on Tuesday, **March 25**.

Here is your link to the Weekend Worship Participants:

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

THE WEEKS AHEAD AT GRACE

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

Saturday, March 22

9:00 AM Band
5:00 PM Worship

Sunday, March 23

8:30 AM Traditional Worship
9:30 AM Sunday by Sunday Book Group
9:45 AM Education Hour
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship

Monday, March 24

6:00 PM Woodstock Church Volleyball
6:30 PM BSA Troop 153

Tuesday, March 25

12:00 PM Senior Luncheon

Wednesday, March 26

9:00 AM MOPS
9:30 AM Staff Meeting
12:00 PM Lenten Midweek Service
12:30 PM Lenten Soup Lunch-Ham & Bean
No Primetime, Choirs, or Confirmation
7:00 PM Lenten Midweek Service

Thursday, March 27

12:00 PM DAP
1:00 PM Naomi Circle
7:00 PM New Praise Singers

Friday, March 28

No Events Currently Scheduled

Saturday, March 29

9:00 AM Band
5:00 PM Worship

Sunday, March 30

8:30 AM Traditional Worship
9:30 AM Sunday by Sunday Book Group
9:45 AM Education Hour
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship
5:15 PM Youthful Spirit
6:30 PM Graceful Ringers/Laudate

Monday, March 31

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s
6:00 PM Woodstock Church Volleyball
6:30 PM BSA Troop 153

Tuesday, April 1

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 3s, 4-1/2s, 5s
9:00 AM Sewing Circle
12:30 PM Preschool 3s
5:00 PM Exultation!
6:45 PM All Committee Meeting Night

Wednesday, April 2

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s
9:30 AM Staff Meeting
12:00 PM Lenten Midweek Service
12:30 PM Lenten Soup Lunch-Chic Tortilla
5:00 PM Messengers
5:15 PM PrimeTime—Italian Beef
5:30 PM Cherubs
6:00 PM Confirmation/Revelation Ringers
6:15 PM Joyful Sound
7:00 PM Lenten Midweek Service
7:30 PM Chancel

Thursday, April 3

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 3s, 4-1/2s, 5s
12:00 PM DAP
12:30 PM Preschool 3s
7:00 PM New Praise Singers

Friday, April 4

9:00 AM Preschool 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s

Saturday, April 5

9:00 AM Band
5:00 PM Worship

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

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