



**GRACE**  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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# Grace for Today

APRIL 2, 2014—APRIL 15, 2014 • VOLUME 13, NO. 7

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S) FROM SKELETON TO LIFE!** .....by Pastor Ken Gibson



As we all may recall, this past year we underwent a pretty intensive strategic planning process with Roy Oswald from the former Alban Institute. In that process, we collectively came to agreement on a set of strategic goals that will be our guide for our mission direction over the next four to five, maybe even six years. I say this, because the truth is, that every congregation, including us at Grace should undergo such a process every four to five years. But for now, we are in the phase of putting actual ministry to these mission goals/directions.

In the next many issues of *Grace for Today*, you will find an article discussing where we are with each of these strategic goals. This month please look for the article that outlines where we are in regards to the Strategic Goal to **Develop Intentional Small Group Ministries**. This article will be written by Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia as she is the council person assigned to that strategic goal. Every council member is actively working, on one strategic goal or more, and is in the phase of putting actual ministry to the goal.

The image that keeps coming to my mind, as I contemplate all of this, is the beautiful image in the 37th Chapter of Ezekiel; The Valley of the Dry Bones. *The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath\* to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath\* in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.'*

This is our task together in the next many months and even years to come. We are to trust in the breath of God, the Spirit of God, to assist us in putting flesh and life to the ministries to which God has called us to here at Grace Lutheran in Woodstock. And in so doing, we will in fact come to know more fully now, The Lord Jesus Christ! Even as we have been fully known! (Sorry I am switching lanes/Bible verses here without a turn signal, see Corinthians 13:12.)

I am excited with the direction God has placed upon our hearts and I look forward to the life that shall come forth as we work on these in our life together in mission. As a recap, the Strategic directions we have agreed upon are listed here in no particular order; *1. Implement a Capital Campaign; 2. Researching Data and Monitoring Past Members; 3. Shepherding New Members; 4. Micah's Back Pack program for Elementary School Children; 5. Greater Opportunities for Lay Leadership (Stephens Ministry Program model); 6. Sabbatical Leave for Grace Pastors and 7. Developing Intentional Small Group Ministries.*

Watch for continued updates and opportunities for your role in bringing life to these ministries of our Church!

**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.

## **WORSHIP TODAY**

**Sunday, April 6, 2014**  
**Fifth Sunday in Lent**

**INTRODUCTION:** In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome new sisters and brothers at the baptismal font, as we renew our baptismal promises.

**READINGS:** Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

**Sunday, April 13, 2014**  
**Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday**

**INTRODUCTION:** Today's liturgy begins with a palm procession, commemorating Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Quickly the tone of the service changes as we meditate upon Jesus' passion and death. Because this story is so central to our faith, we hear Matthew's account of the passion today and John's version on Good Friday. Though Jesus is obedient even unto death on the cross, he is exalted by God. We gather to remember his offering for the life of the world, and to be fed by his life-giving mercy. This holy week will culminate in the celebration of the Three Days of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection.

**READINGS:** Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14-27:66

**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](mailto: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, Wayne Bell, Lois Bloese, Deanna Bohn, Joan Bunch, Allison Clark (niece of Martha Fleck), Erin Clark (sister-in-law of Martha Fleck), Marge Dierksen, Betty Dusthimer (sister of Diane Thurow), George Erber, Mary Figard, Patrick Fraily (friend of August and Theo Hutchens), Russ Freeman, Gloria Holy, Patrice Hoover, August Hutchens, Theo Hutchens, Ruth Iwanicki, Fila Johnson (sister-in-law to Roberta Herzog), John Johnson (brother of Jerry Johnson), Vincent Lopez (father of Tom Lopez), Robin Lynd, Cheryl Marback, Tom McGuine, Sarah Meyer (daughter-in-law of Tom & Cathy Meyer), 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)

**Sorrow:** Mabel Harwood

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](mailto: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.

## **LOVE FOR THE JOURNEY**.....by Pastor Amanda Bergstrom

As I write this article, I am one week away from returning from maternity leave during the first week of April. It has been an incredible journey these past few weeks as we welcomed our daughter Johanna to the world and to our family. Jon and I give thanks for your thoughtful words and prayerful support. It has been a joy to see you in worship and to receive your kind blessings, thank you.



While I find it difficult to imagine leaving Johanna's side, I am glad that I will be back for Holy Week, one of my favorite times of the year, a most sacred time when we remember Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. (I am also glad to return just over a week before Holy Week as I imagine I have a few emails to read and a couple of sermons to prepare. :-)

Often when we speak of the Lenten season we use the language of a 'journey.' We journey through this season with intentional prayer, reflection, and attempts at spiritual disciplines. After a joyous Dixieland Jazz worship on Transfiguration and a few sweet treats on Fat Tuesday, we gathered on Ash Wednesday to be invited into this Lenten season and then journey on, marked with the sign of an ashy cross to remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return. We journey through spiritual practices- perhaps adding something to our daily lives, perhaps giving up something in our daily lives. We journey through the parables in Matthew's gospel during our midweek services, and we journey through a seemingly unending winter yearning for signs of spring.

And in this Lenten journey, as in our whole life's journey, we experience joys and sorrows we could never imagine. As I reflect on newly entering the journey of 'parenthood,' I see the promise of Lent and Easter shining through. In the miracle of new life, through long days and nights of recovery and discovery, in questions and affirmations, God is surely with each of us as we journey.

I sure love where this Lenten journey is headed, always pointing to the cross of Christ. And isn't the cross at the heart of each journey? Whether it be a journey into parenthood, a journey through illness or grief, or the journey of a relationship- the cross of Christ is there and Jesus accompanies us through it all. I love to journey and be reminded along the way of God's incredible grace in the great promise of the resurrection, and I hope you too might love the journey, for I so look forward to seeing you in worship in the coming weeks, and especially during Holy Week.



### ***HOLY WEEK Worship Opportunities***

***Maundy Thursday, April 17—Noon & 7:00p.m.***

***Good Friday, April 18—Noon & 7:00p.m.***

***Easter Vigil, April 19 —7:00 p.m.***

***Easter Sunday, April 20—7:00, 8:30, 10:45 a.m.***

**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.



**ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT—** Girl Scout Troop 1306 invites all church children to join them on Sunday **April 20**, from 9:30—10:45 a.m. on the church grounds. Meet in Luther Hall for instructions. There is a small fee to help raise money for their summer trip. Come out and support the girls.



**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. April 2—Chicken Tortilla Soup and Black Bean & Turkey Chili Soup, April 9—Chicken Rice Soup, April 17—Creamy Ham & Broccoli Soup. We are still looking for cooks (for desserts) to fill out our schedule. Sign-up in the activity binder.

**MISTLETOE MAGIC CRAFT WORKSHOP**—Please join us for a Craft workshop on Tuesday, **April 7** from 1-4 p.m. in Grace Center. All materials are supplied. Contact Cathy Meyer for info.

**COME SING WITH US** for special events just ahead. Rehearsals are 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.



**EASTER DECORATIONS**—Order forms for plants to help decorate our worship area for Easter Sunday can be found at the Information Center or in your service folders. The deadline for the \$12.00 donation is **April 14**.

**COME PRAY WITH US**—The Spirituality Team would like to invite you to come pray with us during the Prayer Vigil, which will be held on Good Friday, **April 18**, from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. in the parlor at church. Look for the sign-up sheet to make sure all our time slots are covered, but there can be more than one person praying at one time. The congregation will have the opportunity to fill out the purple prayer request forms during worship services. They can be placed in the basket at the Information Center, or put in the offering plates during services. These requests will be made available for everyone to pray for during the vigil. There will also be art supplies available in the parlor for other expressions of prayer. The Prayer Vigil is open to all ages. This would be a wonderful way to end our Lenten season. Won't you please consider spending some time in prayer at Grace.



**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.



**SENIOR LUNCHEON** – Tuesday, **April 22** - Come to enjoy our healthy Springtime menu: Orange Gelatin with Pineapple, Tomato & Basil Baked Fish, Parmesan Baked Potatoes, Asparagus, Italian Bread and Triple Layer Pretzel Brownies for dessert. Then after lunch, stay awhile and play a game of “31”; a simple but fun card game. We will have some food item prizes to win. Cost is \$5.00 and bring a friend. Sign up in the Activity Binder by April 20. Questions? Shirley Busse 815-338-9063

**BBQ FEST**—This year to help raise money for the upcoming trips for both our Confirmation Youth trip to Sky Ranch, CO and our High School Youth trip to the Gathering in Detroit, MI 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 are now on sale..



**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.



**GRACE FOR TODAY CHALLENGE!** - Where do you read your *Grace for Today* newsletter? Submit a photo of you reading your newsletter to the church office, and we'll choose a winner from all entries received. We can't wait to see your fun photos!



**FLOWER MEMORIAL**—This Spring, watch for crocuses to blossom at the base of our wooden outdoor cross. The Cervantes' Family planted in memory of Ralph Cervantes.

**RUMMAGE SALE**— It's time to check closets, drawers and basements for unwanted items so they can be transformed into someone else's treasure! Bring your donations to Luther Hall on **May 12–May 14**, from 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Sale dates are: Thursday, **May 15**—3 p.m.—7 p.m., Friday, **May 16**—8 a.m.—



3 p.m. Saturday, **May 17**—8 a.m.—Noon. Clothing items should be in clean, wearable condition; household items need to be clean and in workable/useable condition. We do not accept computers, printers, monitors, keyboards, scanners, television sets, paint, hazardous material products, large furniture or child/infant car seats. Your willingness to help with this ministry is needed and would greatly be appreciated. A sign-up sheet is in the Activity Binder at the Information Center where you can indicate the day(s) and hours you are available to help. Join us in making this a successful event to benefit the Family Health Partnership Clinic and the Woodstock Area Community Ministry.

**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.

**VIEW FROM THE PEW** .....by Janette Hess

I attended the Congregational Resource Event (CRE) on March 8th. It was a full day of events, starting with a brief worship service; then keynote speaker Nathan Dungan filling us with knowledge regarding the impact money has on our lives. After that, we could choose two workshops from several categories ranging from spirituality, leadership, evangelism, social justice and youth/young adults/family ministry. I chose Storytelling and Prayer & Music of Adoration.

Storytelling presented ways for congregations to spread the word using visual aid to reach larger audiences. Prayer & Music of Adoration talked about how adoration can be enhanced with music. Hymns from our ELW were used as examples. Some scriptures were used as examples to distinguish between celebrative and contemplative adoration.

The day ended with follow-up comments from Nathan and exercises that might be used in congregations to spread his message. A full day of fellowship, learning and sharing was had by all. Quote from Nathan "The Choices we make with our money can change the World".

**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.



**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.

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**—All *Grace for Today* articles for the **April 16** issue should be sent to Lynn Nattress at [lnattress@gracewoodstock.org](mailto:lnattress@gracewoodstock.org) or to the church office by noon on Tuesday, **April 8**.

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, April 5

9:00 AM Band  
5:00 PM Worship

### Sunday, April 6

8:30 AM Traditional Worship  
9:30 AM Blood Pressure Checks  
9:30 AM Sunday by Sunday Book Group  
9:45 AM Adult Forum-Dr. Olson-Wartburg  
9:45 AM Education Hour  
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship  
5:15 PM Youthful Spirit  
6:30 PM Graceful Ringers/Laudate

### Monday, April 7

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s  
1:00 PM MMagic General Workshop  
6:00 PM Woodstock Church Volleyball  
6:30 PM BSA Troop 153  
7:00 PM WACM

### Tuesday, April 8

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 3s, 4-1/2s, 5s  
12:30 PM Preschool 3s

### Wednesday, April 9

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-Chicken Rice  
5:00 PM Messengers  
5:15 PM PrimeTime—Popeye's Chicken  
5:30 PM Cherubs  
6:00 PM Confirmation  
6:00 PM Revelation Ringers  
6:15 PM Joyful Sound  
7:00 PM Lenten Midweek Service  
7:30 PM Chancel

### Thursday, April 10

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 3s, 4-1/2s, 5s  
12:00 PM DAP  
12:30 PM Preschool 3s  
6:30 PM BSA Sycamore District  
7:00 PM Council  
7:00 PM Exultation!

### Friday, April 11

No Events Currently Scheduled

### Saturday, April 12

9:00 AM Band  
5:00 PM Worship

### Sunday, April 13

8:30 AM Traditional Worship  
9:30 AM Sunday by Sunday Book Group  
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL  
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship  
5:15 PM Youthful Spirit  
6:30 PM Graceful Ringers/Laudate

### Monday, April 14

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

### Tuesday, April 15

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 3s, 4-1/2s, 5s  
9:00 AM Sewing Circle  
12:30 PM Preschool 3s

### Wednesday, April 16

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s  
9:30 AM Staff Meeting  
5:00 PM Messengers  
5:15 PM PrimeTime—Spaghetti  
5:30 PM Cherubs  
6:00 PM Confirmation/Revelation Ringers  
6:15 PM Joyful Sound  
7:30 PM Chancel

### Thursday, April 17

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 3s, 4-1/2s, 5s  
12:00 PM DAP  
12:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service  
12:30 PM Lenten Soup Lunch-Ham & Broccoli  
12:30 PM Preschool 3s  
7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service

### Friday, April 18

12:00 PM Good Friday Service  
7:00 PM Good Friday Service

### Saturday, April 19

9:00 AM Band  
5:00 PM Easter Vigil Service  
6:00 PM Fair Trade Coffee

## GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

### Senior Pastor

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### Director of Communications

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### Director of Music Ministries

Ron Fredriksen  
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### Parish Musicians

Terry Aavang, Jan Burns, Dale Carlson,  
Tammy Baier, Carrie Filetti

### Director of Preschool Ministry

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### Preschool Staff

Tammy Baier, Amy Flores, Julie LaGue,  
Nancy Mojica, Kristy Nellesen

### Director of Educational Ministries

#### Office Assistant

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### Director of Senior Ministries

Shirley Busse

#### Secretary

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**Building Supervisor/Ken Zank**  
**Custodians/Chris & Kim Ethridge**

### Officers & Council

Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia;  
Claude Hutchens; Peter Paulson;  
Ken Hansing; Matt Simonton; Rob Ribbe;  
Cathy Buhrow; Joe Pienschke;  
Adele Petersen; Sue Olsen; Abigail Kreznor  
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Office Hours: 8:30 am–3:30 pm, M–Th  
8:30 am–12:00 pm, F

