



**GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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Grace for Today

APRIL 16, 2014—APRIL 29, 2014 • VOLUME 13, NO. 8

NEW HOPE, NEW LIFE, SAME BLESSED PROMISE: EASTER!.....by Pastor Ken Gibson

I see shades of pale green beginning to fill in the brown that has been our landscape color most of this “spring”, if what we have had is really considered a spring. As we look out upon our world there are signs of new life all around. The “farmer wanna be” in me is chomping at the bit to find a tractor and turn some earth and smell again the aroma of freshly turned soil, for spring brings the promise of new hope and new life. Hope for new crops, and new life all around us, in so many ways it is EASTER; the promise of Hope and New Life, which comes to us as people of God through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Make time to experience the joy of Easter by being in the life of the community as we worship this Easter season. I will be so bold to profess that all Christians should try very hard to be in worship service to celebrate Easter. Blessings to the few who are homebound or hospitalized but for most of us; we are to be in the community of Saints. It is in the community; in our life together with all the Saints that the presence of Christ is made known to us; the joy of Easter is shared with fellow members of the body of Christ. See you in the pews!



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.

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. Sign-up for a time-slot on the Activity Board. 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.



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.

WORSHIP TODAY

Sunday, April 20, 2014

Resurrection of Our Lord: Easter Day

INTRODUCTION: On this day the Lord has acted! On the first day of the week God began creation, transforming darkness into light. On this, the "eighth day" of the week, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. We celebrate this new creation in the waters of baptism and in the feast of victory. With great joy we celebrate this day of days, even as we begin the great fifty days of Easter. Filled with hope, we go forth to share the news that Christ is risen!

READINGS: Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Colossians 3:1-4

Matthew 28:1-10

Sunday, April 27, 2014

Second Sunday of Easter

INTRODUCTION: In today's gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gathering around word and meal, and in our everyday lives. Throughout the coming Sundays of Easter the first two readings will be from the Acts of the Apostles and the first letter of Peter. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

READINGS: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

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, Lois Bloese, Deanna Bohn, Allison Clark (niece of Martha Fleck), Marge Dierksen, Betty Dusthimer (sister of Diane Thurow), George Erber, Mary Figard, Michael Figard, Patrick Fraily (friend of August and Theo Hutchens), 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, Sarah Meyer (daughter-in-law of Tom & Cathy Meyer), Gail Mueller, Jesse Myjak, June Noel (mother of Marylee Steinwehe), Herb Neubaum, Don Nusbaum, Gloria Ogle, Irene Onofrey (friend of Shirley Berna), Alice Pate, Hazel Powell, Shawn Rank (son of Bert & Carol Rank), Dave Ribbe (father of Rob Ribbe), Joshua Rumschlog (great grandson of Eileen Weide), Ellen Schulz (daughter-in-law of Diane Schulz), John Sorensen, Margaret Stawicki (mother of Nan Goerlitz), Carol Thompson (daughter of Marge Dierksen), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov)

Sorrows: Dorothy Krueger, Charlotte Petersdorf (mother of Gladys Renner)

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.

SUPPER, FEET, CROSS, AND EMPTY TOMB.....by Pastor Amanda Bergstrom



In these next few holy days, we gather for worship in a time where images and words fill our hearts and minds. On Maundy Thursday, we remember Jesus’ Last Supper and how he knelt down to wash his disciples’ feet. On Good Friday, our gaze turns to the old rugged cross as we imagine the piercing thorns and nails. On Saturday, we wait before drawing near to find the empty tomb. By the time we reach the Easter Vigil and Sunday morning, we are ready to see the cross as a sign of life instead of death, and our eyes will feast on the bright lilies and flowers that adorn the sanctuary.

This week has so much to behold, an incredible story to hear anew and remember. I know I may be biased as a pastor, but I think these images- supper, feet, cross and empty tomb tell a powerful part of the story worth hearing in the days before the lilies and butterflies. These images tell of a sacred meal, a humble act of service, a devastating loss, and a saving gift, which adds so much to the fullness of the story of new life and resurrection. For even though my 8-week old daughter has somehow already been gifted 3 different Easter bunnies, I can’t wait to share with her the story of the Last Supper, foot washing, death on a cross, and resurrection from an empty tomb.

I hope that these images and pieces of the story remain with you this week as we watch and pray. May the incredible good news that these images usher in remain at the heart of our Easter celebrations, for Christ is risen, Christ is risen indeed. Thanks be to God!



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

ADULT COACH BUS TRIP – Wednesday, **April 30** – Trip to White Fence Farm in Romeoville, IL. Start with a guided tour of the Graue Mill and Museum; and then have their famous Fried Chicken Dinner at White Fence Farm. Then sit back and relax with a performance of The Andrew Sisters, America’s Wartime Sweethearts. Cost is only \$65 so bring a friend. Deadline to sign up and pay is **April 22**. See the Activity Binder for more info./sign-up. Questions? Call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063.



ROGATION DAYS—In so many ways I am uplifted by the goodness of life experienced in the spring. We have so much to be thankful for with each new spring and perhaps that is why I get excited about our Rogation Weekend which this year falls during the first week of our EASTER season; April 26-27. This year our Sunday presenter will be Phillip Nelson who is the immediate past President of the Illinois Farm Bureau. Phil is a personal friend and he will present Sunday on; “Faith, Family and Farming.” Along with Phil another friend; Bill Christ a member of the Illinois Corn Marketing Board will be here to present an Adult forum on all that is happening with this crucial mid-west crop. I do hope you will all take time to be with us over that weekend as we continue in our Easter Season and give thanks for the new life that is to come through the blessing of the crops, the soil and the water, really from the Grace of God and the beauty and bounty of God’s good earth.

Saturday the 26th, following five o’clock worship, we will enjoy the wonderfully popular “Bar B Que Fest” (Formerly Rib Fest) The BBQ is sure to be great and the proceeds go to funding Grace youth trips both senior and junior high. Antique tractors, a petting zoo, a farmers market, TRACTOR RIDES, sipped up pulling lawn tractors and a concession stand highlight our Sunday activities. Again see you in the pews and around the property of this wonderful place we call GRACE! ~ Pastor Ken Gibson



WELCOME TO THE FATHER'S TABLE— On Sunday, April 13, the following 26 young people received their First Communion: Edgar Arana, Gavin Boal, Ian Boal, Karson Boal, Kylie Boal, Liam Brzezinski, Vincent Brzezinski, Emilee Devinger, Owen Fiorina, Sean Fiorina, Joseph Gerloff, Robert Gerloff, Giavanna Kozlow, Brian Kus, Trevor Mark, Evan Neuhart, Blake O'Leary, Davan O'Leary, Ella Orosz, Lauren Ribbe, Abigail Sarelas, Cohen Shutt, Abigail Steele, Sam Tafoya, Addison Walker, Ethan Wood.

SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY—May 3 from 8 a.m. to Noon. Come one come all! Help clean up the outside or do painting on the inside. There will be a sign-up sheet on the Activity Board in the narthex. Your help would be appreciated.



SPRING BLOOD DRIVE—May 11 in Luther Hall. During our winter blood drive members of Grace donated 39 units of blood! Let's see if we can top that during this drive. Sign-up between Sunday services in the narthex or call Gretchen at 815-341-5744.

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.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL UPDATE: Developing Intentional Small Group Ministries—Last month 18 people, including Pastor Ken and myself, completed the first unit of Connections: Faith and Life Study Resource, Living Faithfully. During this six week small group experience we met to discuss Luther's writings on the Ten Commandments and how they are relevant and meaningful in our lives today. In fact, it was a bit surprising how current some of Luther's observations about human behavior seemed. In addition to the study, we also took time to get to know each other a bit better and to share our lives and prayers.

The Connections small group study is one strategy that we are using to further develop our Small Group Ministries at Grace. Small Group Ministry can take many forms from the structured format of Connections to the informal gatherings of the Weekenders group. Ongoing groups such as our Women's Circles, the Men's Bible Study group and the Sunday by Sunday book group are other examples of Small Group Ministry. Small Group Ministry is focused on offering opportunities to strengthen our ties to each other to build community and deepening our faith, but it can look very different from group to group.

Pastor Ken and I are looking forward to starting the next unit of Connections, Living Confidently, in early June. This session will focus on Luther's writings about the Apostle's Creed and connecting that with our daily living. We will also continue building community through shared support and prayer. Perhaps you have an idea of a small group that you would like to see at Grace. Please come talk with Pastor Ken, Pastor Amanda or me to see what that Small Group Ministry might look like. ~ *Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia*

ROGATION WEEKEND— April 26 & 27

- Worship—Blessing of seed, soil & water
- BBQ Fest on Saturday—Serving starts at 6:00 p.m.! (ticket purchase deadline, Wednesday, April 16)
- Sunday Phillip Nelsen former President of the Illinois Farm Bureau will be giving the sermon on “*Faith, Farm, and Families*”
- Sunday’s Adult Forum-Phillip Nelsen will be joined by Bill Christ from the Corn Marketing Board to present in Luther Hall
- Special Farmers Market products available from Grace Members
- Tractor rides
- We have invited the McHenry County Antique Engine Club to bring out some of their tractors



Plan to come and join us in celebrating the planting season and the re-birth of nature which is Spring!



PIANO NEEDS A NEW HOME—We are looking for a new home for the baby grand piano that is currently in the choir room at church. It functions well for the average player, however it cannot stay in tune with the constant use that it receives at church. There is no charge for the piano, we just ask that you arrange to have it moved. Please contact Ron Fredriksen for details and to arrange for pick-up.

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.



HELP—WE NEED YOU!—Meals On Wheels needs 2 volunteers for Wednesday, once every 5 weeks, from 10:45 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Meals are delivered to those unable to do for themselves. If you can help with this ministry, please call Jeannine May at 815-943-4849.

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.

ELCA DAY OF SERVICE— Save the date of **Sept 7** to join with your Grace family and the entire ELCA family as we reach out into communities on this nationwide day of service.

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!



WE NEED YOUR STORIES— Were you moved by the Passion Reading on Palm Sunday or by the First Communion Sacrament shared? Not every church member can attend all services or events, and we want to hear about your experiences, so we would like you to share your stories here. 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/space permit, and may be edited.)

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE—All *Grace for Today* articles for the **April 30** issue should be sent to Lynn Nattress at lnattress@gracewoodstock.org or to the church office by noon on Tuesday, **April 22**.

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 19

8:00 AM Decoration Team
9:00 AM Band
6:00 PM Fair Trade Coffee
7:00 PM Easter Vigil Service

Sunday, April 20

7:00 AM Easter Sunrise Worship Service
8:30 AM Easter Traditional Worship Service
9:30 AM Fair Trade Coffee
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship Service

Monday, April 21

Church Office Closed—No Preschool
6:00 PM Woodstock Church Volleyball
6:30 PM BSA Troop 153
7:00 PM Faith Circle

Tuesday, April 22

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

Wednesday, April 23

9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s
9:00 AM MOPS
12:30 AM Staff Meeting
5:00 PM Messengers
5:15 PM PrimeTime—Pizza
5:30 PM Cherubs
6:00 PM Confirmation
6:00 PM Revelation Ringers
6:15 PM Joyful Sound
7:00 PM Chancel

Thursday, April 24

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

Friday, April 25

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

Saturday, April 26

9:00 AM Band
5:00 PM Worship - Rogation Weekend
6:00 PM BBQ Fest

Sunday, April 27

8:30 AM Traditional Worship
9:30 AM Sunday by Sunday Book Group
9:45 AM Education Hour
9:45 AM Adult Forum—Rogation Weekend
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship
12:30 PM Choose Respect
2:00 PM Patrol Leader Conference
5:15 PM Youthful Spirit
6:30 PM Graceful Ringers/Laudate

Monday, April 28

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

Tuesday, April 29

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

Wednesday, April 30

8:00 AM Adult Bus Trip—White Fence Farm
9:00 AM Preschool 2s, 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s
12:30 AM Staff Meeting
5:00 PM Messengers
5:15 PM PrimeTime—Sloppy Joe's
5:30 PM Cherubs
6:00 PM Confirmation/Revelation Ringers
6:15 PM Joyful Sound
7:30 PM Chancel

Thursday, May 1

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, May 2

8:00 AM Preschool Accreditation
9:00 AM Preschool 4s, 4-1/2s, 5s

Saturday, May 3

8:00 AM Grace Property Clean-Up Day
8:00 AM Preschool Accreditation
9:00 AM Band
5:00 PM Worship

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