

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

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April & May 2019

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Psalm 119:105 ESV)

Dear Friends in Christ:

Since the days of Martin Luther some 500 years ago, the Word of God has had a central and essential place in the Lutheran Church. We recall that momentous occasion when Luther stood before the Holy Roman Emperor and Church and declared, at the risk of death, his allegiance to God’s Word: “Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen.” Luther’s bold stand on the authority of God’s Word continues to inspire us. As members of the Lutheran Church today, we stand with Luther and joyfully confess the truth of God’s Word that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, for the sake of Christ alone, as is revealed to us in Scripture alone.

Luther treasured God’s Word. His most important achievement was to translate the Bible into German. He wanted his people to read and hear God’s Word in their own language. Like St. Paul, Luther was not ashamed of the Gospel, the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ, “for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). That’s why Luther taught, preached, and fought so strongly to uphold the authority of God’s Word. He understood that people cannot believe in Jesus except by hearing the Word of God. As Scripture says, “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17).

By God’s grace, the Word of God has remained central to our life as a Lutheran congregation. As we celebrate our 100th anniversary this year, I would like us to build on that strong foundation by increasing the number of people in Bible study and increasing the number of Bible study opportunities offered at Grace. Our Sunday morning adult class will soon begin an in-depth study of the Book of Revelation. Please join us as we explore the rich meaning of this intriguing book of the Bible. In addition, I would like to offer additional Bible studies during the week. If you have any suggestions for topics, days/times, or meeting locations, please let me know.

I would also like to encourage you in your own personal study of God’s Word. There are a variety of ways to spend time in the Bible. Many people enjoy reading *Portals of Prayer*. You can pick up a copy here at church. Other methods include reading a few chapters of Scripture daily. You can start at Genesis and work your way through the Bible in a few years (that’s what I am doing). Another popular resource is a subscription to *Today’s Light* magazine from Concordia Publishing House. By reading 15 minutes a day, you can read the whole Bible in two years. For more information about *Today’s Light*, visit <https://books.cph.org/todays-light> or call Concordia Publishing House at (800) 325-3040 (option 2). I encourage you to explore these and other methods for reading the Bible and find one you enjoy. The most important thing is to read and study God’s Word regularly. Just as we need food for our bodies, we need the nourishment of God’s Word for our souls.

“The Word of the Lord Endures Forever” was the motto of the Lutheran Reformation. Five hundred years later, as we read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest God’s Word, we have God’s promise that we will endure forever, too. By His Word, the Holy Spirit creates and sustains saving faith in our hearts so that we may believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin, death, and Satan. Yes, God’s Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. His Word will strengthen you individually, and it will strengthen us collectively as a congregation. Like Martin Luther, we can stand boldly on the truth and authority of God’s Word, trusting in its power to forgive our sins, to build Christ’s Church, and to light our way to Him in heaven.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Brian Crane

FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS

The Lord's blessings to all from the Board of Elders, as we grow in this new year and celebrate the 100th year of our church and now look to the future of our church.

Just this past February, we celebrated the dedication of the new elevator and the addition of a new Paschal candle.

With the growth of our congregation, you will see physical changes within the church. Moved closer to the altar are the baptismal font and the credence (distribution) table. In the nave, some pews will be removed to improve accessibility for those with mobility challenges and to create more space for caskets at funerals.

Also, for those that cannot make it to the altar rail for Communion, the pastor and elder will commune them in their pew after the conclusion of the distribution. Please let Pastor Crane or an usher know if you wish to receive Holy Communion this way.

The Elders are excited to hold the Grace Town Hall meeting on Sunday, March 31st, at 10:30 am. This is a great opportunity for you to meet your elder and ask questions of the elders and pastor. We hope to see many of you on this day.

The theme verse chosen for this year is 1 Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's grace." In this new year, let us all use, enjoy, and give thanks for the many gifts of God's grace to us: the elevator, this congregation, and the Word of God.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jim Day

FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

"Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out" (Deut 28:3–6).

This is God's promise to the Israelites as they stood beyond the Jordan outside of the Promised Land. He promises blessing to His people. He will make them prosper, whether they are in the city or the field. He will make their fruit of their work to prosper, whether from the ground or their wombs, their flocks or their herds. He will make them to prosper in all things, whether upon their coming in or their going out.

But there's a catch. He would do this for Israel only "if you obey the voice of the Lord your God" (Deut 28:2b). If they did that, He would cause that "all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you" (Deut 28:2a).

If they didn't obey the voice of the Lord, if they didn't keep the commandments of the Lord and walk in His ways (Deut 28:9), they would be met with curse and woe. The blessings would be replaced with curses. Everything that the Lord promised to prosper and bless would be cursed and fail.

Thanks be to God that our Lord Jesus Christ has come into our flesh, fulfilled the law for us – in our place and for our benefit; died for us – in our place and for our benefit; and is risen from the dead for us – in our place and for our benefit.

By this we have justification before God. We are forgiven, clean, holy, and righteous. The blessing of God is promised to us in Christ Jesus. It depends upon His work and not ours.

All this is ours in Holy Baptism. For in Holy Baptism, God claims us as His own, makes us His children, His heirs, His holy people. And so it is that the work of our hands and its fruit is holy because we are holy in Christ. It is pressed into His service, and thereby it becomes a blessing to us and to our neighbor.

For this great gift, our reception of the blessings of God because of Christ Jesus our Lord, it is our duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is not in order to receive blessings but because in Christ we already have.

It is with this in mind that we sit down on the first day of the week and set aside as He has prospered us to give to His church for His work of blessing in our midst (1 Cor. 16:2).

FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF YOUTH

Youth Group Schedule:

April 7 th (Sunday)	Meeting	11:30 AM – 2:00 PM
April 18 th (Thursday)	Easter Breakfast Set-up	5:30 PM – 6:30 PM
April 21 st (Sunday)	Easter Breakfast	7:00 AM – 8:30 AM
May 3 rd (Friday)	Meeting	6:00 PM – 8:30 PM
May 12 th (Sunday)	Meeting	11:30 AM – 2:00 PM

The Sunday School and Youth Bible Study students will be singing in church on **Sunday, May 12th**. Please be in the downstairs chapel at **8:30 AM** to practice our song.

The congregation is invited to attend the annual Easter Breakfast on **Sunday, April 21st**. Breakfast will be served **from 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM**. The menu will be pancakes, sausage, fruit, coffee, juice, milk, and various pastries. Freewill donations are encouraged. If you plan to attend or are willing to help with the breakfast, please sign up on the Office Equipment Room door. Please plan to attend and enjoy fellowship with your family and friends!

SAVE THE DATE! On **Sunday, June 30th** following the Bible Study hour, we will have a church Open House! More details will follow in bulletins and the June/July newsletter. Please plan to attend and bring your family and friends.

The dates of **SONRISE NATIONAL PARK Vacation Bible School** are **Monday, August 5th – Friday, August 9th**. The time will be **9:00 AM – 12:00 PM**. Watch for more information in upcoming bulletins and newsletters.

LENTEN WORSHIP

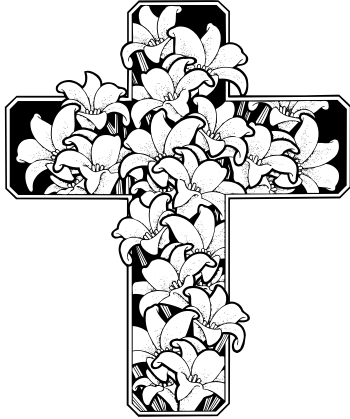
2019 MIDWEEK LENTEN SERIES: “Behold the Man” – Wednesdays at 6:30 PM

April 3rd – *A God with a Mother*
(Revelation 12:1–6; John 19:25–27)
April 10th – *A God Who Thirsts*
(Psalm 22:12–18; John 19:28–30)

LENTEN SUPPERS – The Board of Parish Fellowship is serving Lenten Suppers. Doors open by 5:00 PM and suppers begin at 5:15 PM. Everyone is encouraged to bring a side dish, dessert, etc., to accompany the meal. Monetary donations are gladly accepted. Come enjoy the fellowship and food!

Wednesday, April 3rd – Fried Chicken
Wednesday, April 10th – Sloppy Joes

EASTER FLOWERS



This year, we are again asking for a cash donation to help purchase Easter lilies for our Easter celebration. If you would like to make a donation in memory of a loved one(s), please fill out the form below and put it with your cash or check payable to:

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

For each \$15 donation, if you wish, you may take one Easter Lily after the 9:00 AM worship service on Easter Sunday. All other spring flowers such as TULIPS, HYACINTHS, DAFFODILS, and HYDRANGEAS will remain in the chancel and may be planted outside here at church to beautify the church grounds. When taking your Easter Lily from the chancel, please be respectful of the altar, as it symbolizes the presence of our Risen Lord.

PLEASE DO NOT place orders or envelopes in the offering plates on Sunday as this has caused considerable confusion in previous years. Instead, please place your order in Dorothy's mailbox at the Communication Center.

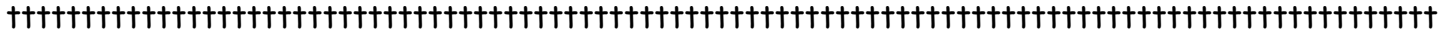
DEADLINE for returning your donation and form is **Monday, April 15th**. If you have any questions, please call Dorothy at the church office at 633-4831.

(Please print clearly)

Enclosed is \$ _____ toward Easter flowers.

GIVEN BY _____

IN MEMORY OF _____



Holy Week



PALM SUNDAY – APRIL 14TH

9:00 AM - Divine Service with Holy Communion

MAUNDY THURSDAY – APRIL 18TH

6:30 PM - Divine Service with Holy Communion



GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 19TH

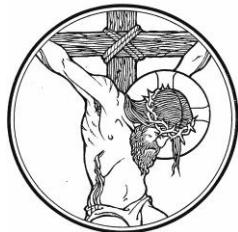
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM -

Tre-Ore Service

at Racine Lutheran High School

6:30 PM - Tenebrae Vespers Service at

Grace Lutheran Church

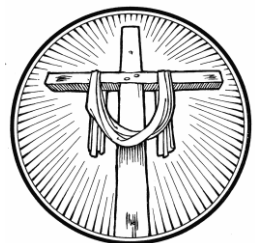


EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 21ST

7:00 AM - 8:30 AM Easter Breakfast

9:00 AM Divine Service

with Holy Communion



ELEVATOR FUND: As of Sunday, March 17th, we have raised **\$31,046.25** for the Elevator Fund. Thanks be to God! To make additional donations, you may use the specially marked white envelopes in the pew racks.

PORTALS OF PRAYER: Quarterly daily devotional books for April through June are available in the narthex. Please help yourself! If you wish to donate to cover the \$5.00 cost per year, please place your gift in the appropriate slot in the narthex. Thanks!

2019 FLOWER CHART is available for sign up in the narthex. The cost is **\$27.00** for two bouquets. Please make your checks payable to “Grace Lutheran Church” and place in the secretary’s box in the Communication Center. To reserve a Sunday, please sign your name and the occasion. Thank you!

DIRECT THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS® by **March 31:** Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars® from 2018 have until **March 31, 2019**, to direct them. Don’t miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial for Lutherans provide funding to Grace Lutheran Church. Call 800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” after the prompt. Or go to thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more.

GRACE TOWN HALL: Please join us on **Sunday, March 31st**, for a Grace Town Hall meeting at **10:30 AM**. This meeting is an opportunity for the entire congregation to give their insight and input about the future of Grace and how we can grow as we move ahead to the start of our next century as a church. We hope to see you there!

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY: We have discontinued our bulk mailing of the newsletters. We can still mail newsletters via regular postage. However, if you would prefer picking up your newsletter at church, having it emailed to you, or reading it online, please let the church office know. Thank you for your assistance as we attempt to save on mailing and printing costs.

2019 CHURCH DIRECTORIES and 2018 ANNUAL REPORTS are in the narthex. We attempted to make the church directory as accurate as possible. However, if you find any errors or omissions, please notify the church office. Thanks! – Pastor Crane

COMMUNION WINE OPTION: For those with alcohol sensitivities, wine greatly diluted with water is available in purple-tinted cups in the center of each Communion tray. This change will assist with Communion preparation and distribution.

THE GROWING STRONG WITH GRACE group will continue with our monthly meetings on **Wednesday, April 24th**, at **11:00 AM** and **Wednesday, May 15th**, at **11:00 AM**. Please bring a dish to pass. Hope you all can make it!

PARKING LOT: Along with the completion of the elevator project, we have a **new traffic pattern** for the parking lot. (Please see the other side of this page for a diagram.) All vehicles that are using the parking lot/elevator entrance **MUST** come in the parking lot from **Monroe Street** and exit the parking lot on **West Lawn Avenue**. Also, because the number of parking spaces had to be reduced, we ask that only those vehicles with handicap permits and those with special needs park in the spaces available. The entire parking lot will be resurfaced and marked appropriately as soon as weather allows this spring. We are very proud of this beautiful addition to our church and thank you all for your patience and support of this project. The Lord has blessed this congregation. In His Grace – The Elevator Committee

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS: Across from the Office Equipment Room, we have set up a box for comments. Thank you for taking the time to put your comments in writing. We request that all comments be placed in a sealed envelope using a label for the Board to which you would like your comments directed. If you are not sure which Board or Committee is most responsible, or if more than one Board might be involved in your suggestion, please choose a “Secretary” label. If you have comments on SEVERAL topics, please submit each on a SEPARATE page (again, in a separate envelope for each involved Board or Committee, etc.).

KWIK TRIP & SPEEDWAY GAS CARDS are for sale in the Office Equipment Room. Grace gets 5% back on all cards sold. Many thanks!

OFFERING STATEMENTS AND ENVELOPES: Your **2018** offering statements and your **2019** offering envelopes are in your mail slots. If you were not issued envelopes and would like some, please contact the church office.