

GRACE NEWS

Pastor Vicki Fink

Grace Lutheran Church

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March, 2016

Pastor's Message

Create in me a clean heart, O God...

Psalm 51 offers a prayer many of us have felt compelled to raise to God. I remember singing this verse every week in worship growing up. There was heartfelt singing going on during that part of the service by not only me, but by many other people around me. If we are honest, and take some time to look back over our lives, or even over the last week - we will very likely be able to identify "issues" that need to be cleaned up. We have pangs of remorse for what we've thought, said, how we've acted and /or failed to act. These pangs of remorse are true gifts. It's good to recognize them, even welcome them. Our remorse is in a sense God's direction to us. It's meant to burn just enough to turn us in another direction and convince us of our need for God. These issues when recognized open up the possibility for God to reshape us and help us live as we are called to live.

For some of us, our lives seem proliferated with pangs of remorse! We criticize ourselves all the time. In Christ, we are to trust that our falling short is met with forgiveness and mercy every time. We are to be as generous with ourselves as God is with us. For others of us, our lives are rarely interrupted by a sense of sin or shame.

It can be challenging for some people to notice pangs of remorse. Not being aware that we need help doesn't necessarily mean we don't need it. Beware if you think you are perfect, you aren't!

One of the best parts of my job as pastor is to declare God's forgiveness. Each week in confession, after we have reflected on our sin, our sense of guilt, shame and remorse; God's forgiveness is announced. Our sin is forgiven and we are given a new start because of the cross and resurrection of Christ. We are given clean hearts, a generous gift. We are cleaned up again and again by our merciful God.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God" is a powerful prayer to add to our repertoire. We ask God for many things, but asking for forgiveness and the confidence to move on is among the most important. There is so much in the real, dailyness of living that trips us up. Lent and Easter, the cross of Jesus and his empty tomb, create a new beginning and hope in us. God is at work shaping us, drawing us more toward the new life that is ours in Christ. Alleluia. Amen.



**Holy Week
& Easter**

Pastor Vicki Fink



**East Central Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

Grace is a congregation of the ELCA. A church of more than 4 million members with the vision of being claimed by God's grace.

Thank You

Thank you members of Grace Lutheran Church for your donations of food, afghans, blankets, clothing, bikes, money, Christmas gifts and more. Your generosity humbles me. I have started to reach out to more homeless individuals and people who may not attend Loaves and Fishes. If you know anyone who needs help, please refer them to me. If I cannot provide assistance, I may be able to direct them to a local agency that can help. My cell is 920-277-4093. If not for you, I could not help those in need.

Shari Waldron, BSW



Usher Retirements:

After serving as an usher since the age of 12, when he started in his church in Tigerton, **Art Peterson**, is retiring. Thank you, Art, for your many years serving as an usher.

Thank you also to **Bob Meier**, who has served as an usher for several years and is now ready to retire.

Easter Flowers

The Altar Guild will be ordering Easter lilies to decorate the chancel area during the Easter season. You are invited to help with the cost of the flowers by giving a suggested gift of \$10.00 or any amount you choose. Please respond by filling in the form below and placing it in an envelope marked "Easter Flowers" with your gift by Sunday, March 20. Donors will be listed.

NAME _____ **AMOUNT** _____

This is in memory of (optional) _____

This is in honor of (optional) _____



Checks are payable to Grace Lutheran Church. Thank you.

March 2016

Ushering Openings to fill at the 8:30 a.m. service for the fall/winter and 9:00 a.m. service in the summer. Please see Ron Bailey or give him a call if you are able to help in any of these months Oct/April, Dec/June, Jan/July, or Aug.

Thrivent Choice Dollars® expires 3/31

The Thrivent Choice® program provides Thrivent members the opportunity to recommend where to distribute some of Thrivent's charitable outreach funds. Call [800-847-4836](tel:800-847-4836) to direct this money. **Grace received \$4,315 in 2015 .**

Before 2015 Choice Dollars expire on March 31, 2016, use either of the two easy options for directing Choice Dollars:

Online: www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice.

Phone: [800-847-4836](tel:800-847-4836) and say "Thrivent Choice" at the prompt.

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes—Lenten Services continue on Wednesdays and will include a service on Maundy Thursday . Worship at 11:30 a.m. followed by a soup lunch.

The C-O-N-N-E-C-T Dining Group will meet at Stone Toad, 1109 S. Oneida St., in Menasha, at **5:00 P.M. on Sunday, March 20. Sign up** on the sheet on the narthex desk by Sunday, March 13. On the menu is a 4-piece chicken dinner for \$7.49. They also serve a full menu. Watch for a Post Crescent coupon for the chicken dinner prior to the date, normally in the Thursday paper. Come, meet friends, enjoy food and fellowship.

Care Team



Grace hosts Lenten Services and lunch at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes.

Soup makers and cookie/bar makers are needed March 2 when Grace provides the meal at the 11:30 worship and lunch at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes. Please see or call Sharon Meier, 739-4291, if you have a question or can assist in this ministry to others.

Rummage Sale: Please remember Grace's annual sale as you begin spring cleaning. Children's items, outdoor items, housewares, plants, books, almost everything sells well but adult clothing. **Please save these items for the week of May 15.**

Sunday School

Children's Sunday School

is held Sunday mornings from 9:30—10:30 in the lower level of Grace. Children from the ages of 3 to 6th grade are *welcome to*



Adults

Friday Bible Study— Each Friday at 9:00 a.m. a group meets to study the lessons for Sunday Service.

Please consider joining the group if you share in the love of God and to study His word. You do not have to be a member of Grace to participate.

Sunday Morning—Join the group on Sunday mornings at 9:30am for a Lenten class, *Open My Life, Lord* (February 14-March 13). The class



Scripture Readings

March 6– Fourth Sunday of Lent

Josh.5:9-12 2 Cor. 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

March 13– Fifth Sunday of Lent

Isa. 43:16-21 Phil 2:5-11

John 12:1-8

March 20 Passion/Palm Sunday

Isa 50:4-9a Phil 2:5-11

Luke 23:1-49

March 24–Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, 5-10, 1-14

1 Cor -11:23-26 John 13:1-7,31b-35

March 25– Good Friday

Isa. 52:13-53:12 Heb. 10:16-25

John 18:1-19:42

March 27–Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43 1 Cor 15:19-26

Luke 24:1-12



Mission Statement

Mission Statement

By grace, through faith, we follow God's word, share gospel of Jesus Christ and bring hope to others through worship, education and outreach.



Worship Assistants

March

Ushers: Joe Wilharms, Dave Wiese
Lindsey Wilharms, Jon Seidl

Organist: Diane Bailey

Sound: Robbie Johnson

March 6–Fourth Sunday of Lent

Greeters Carol & Ralph Sievert, Mason
Roger Schmidt

Asst. Minister: Ron Williams

Lector: Laurie Lease

Communion: Dennis Pringnitz

March 13–Fifth Sunday of Lent

Greeters Karen & Gene Krull—Mason
Robbie/Skylar Johnson—East

Asst. Minister: Laury Grow

Lector: Robbie Johnson

Organist: Diane Bailey

Communion: Ron Bailey

March 20–Passion/Palm Sunday

Greeters: Art Peterson , Mason
Kathy Lanska , East

Asst. Minister: Deb Baumbach

Lector: Lois Hilger

Communion: Gene Krull

March 24, Maundy Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Asst. Minister Mandie Klauer

March 25, Good Friday—6:30 p.m.

Lector: Anita Golz

March 27–Easter Sunday

Greeters: Cory & Mike Keeney Family,
Mary & Ray Hubers, East

Asst. Minister: Mark Balkman

Lector: Larry Radloff

Communion: Marty Grow



Joys and Concerns

~Selma Torbeck
~Muriel Tiedt
~Adeline Elias
~Donny Kassube
~Earl Breitenfeldt
~Henry Schoenborn
~Rev. Jennie
Johnson-Wrege
~Marie Mueller
~Mark Catlin
~Rose Zinck
~Melissa Heins
~May Cook
~Ellen Holz
~Terry Bellile
~Judy Kurth
~Robyn Messenger

~Jim DeBraal
~Linda Knoll
~Joe Kunkel
~Jim
~Gary Weigt
~Winston Augustus
Smith

Prayer Team

Do you have a need?

When you need prayers said for you or a loved one, we have Prayer Chain Teams. If you have a prayer request, please call Mary Hubers, 731-1428 or Carol Sievert, 734-4473.

January Financial

Beginning Balance	\$ 32,271.55
Income	\$ 13,666.72
Expenses	\$ 10,890.87
Ending Balance	\$ 35,047.40
Mortgage:	\$111,530.92
Line of credit	\$ -0-
Thrivent Choice (YTS)	\$ 3,272.88
Benevolence (YTD)	\$ 1,200.00
Savings	\$ 168.00

WELCA Spring Event

DATE: Saturday April 9, 2016
TIME: 8:00 am – Lunch will be served
WHERE: Zion Lutheran Church, Oneida St, Appleton
COST: \$15.00
THEME: Luke 8:11b The seed is the Word of God— NRSV
Speaker: Theresa Poole

ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS FOR WOMEN

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED--WORLD DAY OF PRAYER DATE:

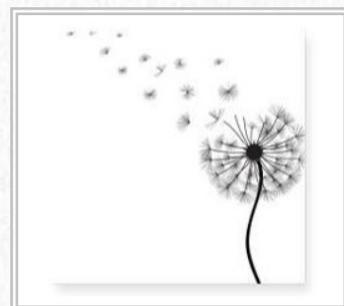
DATE: March 4, 2016 REG: 9:00 AM **PROGRAM :** 9:30
HOST CHURCH: St. Bernard Catholic Church 1617 W. Pine Street, Appleton
PARTICIPATING CHURCH: Immanuel United Church of Christ

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED--MAY FRIENDSHIP DAY DATE:

DATE: May 6, 2016 REG: 9:30 AM **PROGRAM:** 10:00 AM
BRUNCH: 11:00 AM
HOST CHURCH: First Congregational United Church of Christ
724 E. South River St. Appleton
PARTICIPATING CHURCH: Prince of Peace ELCA

WOMEN OF TRINITY SPRING EVENT

Saturday May 7, 2016



Council President

President's Report

As many of you may have already heard Trinity Church here in Appleton and Our Redeemer in Menasha have begun very informal discussions on how they may work together to complete God's Mission. Recently, Grace has been asked to consider joining in on the discussions.

At last Thursday's Council meeting it was unanimously decided that Grace would join into these talks. We agreed the timing was right to at least listen to all possibilities as we ourselves transition to a new pastor and work to determine how we as a congregation will accomplish what God is calling us to do in mission and ministry in the years ahead.

Let me make clear that no meetings have taken place and so far none are scheduled. As these meetings move forward the Congregation Council promises to keep you informed.

Once again we ask for your daily prayers for this congregation and that God's will be the focus of any meeting or planning that occurs.

Tom Jensen

Call Committee

Call Committee Update

The Call Committee continues to meet and complete the paper work that must be submitted to the synod office. Once it is approved by the Synod, they will look for pastor matches based on our information.

This is a time consuming project as the questions take discussion and, in some, cases additional information from the congregation.

As I stated in church 2 weeks ago the committee will keep the congregation updated as to our progress.

We appreciate your patience as we complete this information. We are committed to the council and will keep them informed as to where we are and, if necessary meet with them to discuss any questions.

As we go forward we will have further discussions with Pastor Jean DeVoll-Donaldson and get her input, experience and expertise.

Please feel free to come and discuss any questions you have regarding this process with me.

Mark Balkman

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes March Presentations

You are invited to Part Two of our Alzheimer's Presentations to be held on Monday, March 21 at 10:30 AM in the Linwood Commons at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes located at 425 N. Linwood, Appleton. Last month the representative from the Alzheimer's Association presented general information about the general category of "Dementia". This month's session will deal with "Basics of Alzheimer's Disease". If you would like to attend please call Fox Valley Lutheran Homes at 734-7225 to reserve your spot and to assure there are enough educational materials to take home.

About The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with more than 3.7 members in more than 9,300 congregations across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of "God's work, Our hands," the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians and service in the world. The ELCA's roots are in the writings of the German church reformer, Martin Luther.

Synod Assembly

East Central Synod of Wisconsin Synod Assembly

May 20-21, 2016

We are church: Listening deeply to the voice of the other

We will experience listening to the voice of the other whether they be race, religion, economic, gender, or sexual orientation. Diversity on all levels will be experienced through devotion, prayer, speakers, breakouts, and ministry moments in the form of "Stories Speak".



FVLH—March News

Can you remember when you were a child, when a year seemed to be an eternity? Now the years fly by so fast that it's almost frightening. It's March and we're half way through Lent. Easter will be here before the month is over. In anticipation of March 27, I'll say "Happy Easter!"

I want to INVITE you to consider the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors for Fox Valley Lutheran Homes. Each year at our Annual Meeting (coming up on April 23) we elect new members to fill the positions vacated by those members whose terms have expired. Most of the board members have booklets entitled "Recruitment Package and Job Description" that they would be more than happy to share with anyone who is interested in finding out more about serving on the Board of Directors. A term is three years and a director is allowed to serve two terms. We have several openings, so please think prayerfully about serving.

One position in particular that we are seeking to fill is our Building Committee Chairperson, with someone who has have background in construction or housing. If you'd like more information or need one of the booklets, please call Fox Valley Lutheran Homes at 734-7225.

Congregation Boards

Executive Committee

Tom Jensen, President
Cheryl Muggenthaler, VP
Ron William, Secretary
Dennis Pringnitz, Treasurer

Boards

Jon Seidl, Representing Education
Dorothy Dallmann, Finance
David Lease, Property
Rev. Jen Johnson-Wrege,
Worship and Music
Sharon Meier, Care Team
Larry Baumbach, Tenant Advisor

Call Committee

Mark Balkman, Chair
Carey Mackesy, Vice-Chair
Susan Anderson
Marilyn Catlin
Robbie Johnson
Gene Krull

Did You Know

That the East Central Synod of Wisconsin (ECSW) ELCA Congregations are matched with Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa, Western Diocese (ELCSA-WD) The congregation Grace is matched with in South Africa is:



Maile Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 1335
0314 MOGWASE
Republic of South Africa.

Grace Outreach and Mission

Annual Meetings— February 13 I attended the Crossways Annual Meeting for the first time as the delegate from Grace. I was so impressed by the information provided and the wonderful young adults that are employed by or serving Crossways as Camp Directors, Camp Counselors, The Director and those serving on the board. Crossways is making major changes in their operations and improving and increasing camping opportunities for children who would not be able to attend camp due to financial issues. One thing I learned is that 80% of pastors and others dedicating their lives to church work have attended and/or worked at church camps. From some of the stories that were told, camp can help change lives.

In 2015 Grace members donated **\$1,061** to Crossways. In addition, as a member of the Appleton Conference of the ECSW and through the grants made from the dues that each congregation gives (\$1.30 per baptized member) another \$4,000 was donated to Crossways. Please consider being a delegate from Grace next year.

February 20 I attended the Appleton Conference Annual Meeting. Currently, I serve as conference treasurer. Annual dues from member congregation's amounts to approximately \$21,000. Congregations suggest organizations to receive grants. Grants approved in 2016 is \$20,500 to organizations such as Crossways, Fox Valley Lutheran Homes, The Gathering Place at the University of Oshkosh, Ruth's Pantry, Habitat for Humanity Build, Homeless Connection and others. One misconception I had was that homelessness in the Valley consisted mainly of individuals from out of our area. Jerome Martin, Executive Director dispelled that and said that 70% of homeless individuals come from the Valley and when they add in those from Brown County, it is 90%.

The Conference elected to provide \$5000 to the Habitat for Humanity Build. This will give each congregation the opportunity to have individuals work at the build as part of the conference. As we know more as to when and where the build will be we will keep Grace informed so those interested in working will be able to do so.

When grants are made to various organizations a letter goes with the check (wherever possible I personally deliver the checks) listing all the congregations of the conference.

Members of Grace and other member congregations have been blessed in so many ways and giving back to our communities and those who need help is done in a way of giving back to God.

Grilled Cheese

Thursday Grilled Cheese lunches continue for junior and senior students of West High. Depending on what is going on at West and, of course the weather, we serve anywhere from 75 to 150 students. Pastor Judy asked the students one week why they came and the number one answer was "because we feel safe here". What a wonderful outreach.

Help is always needed in the kitchen on Thursdays from about 10:30 to 1:00. If you can't stay for the full time that is just fine. You are welcome to help even if you are not a member of Grace. See Susan Pringnitz or call the church office.

Worship at Grace

Grace Lutheran Church

900 N. Mason, Appleton, WI 54914

Pastor Vicki Fink - 920/450-7796

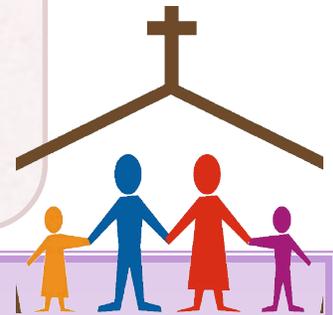
Office 920/733-9135
Email Grace54914@gmail.com
Web Site www.gracelutheranappleton.org

Worship Times

Sunday 8:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m.

Communion celebrated at both services

Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Lower Level
Adult Forum 9:30 a.m. February 14—March 13
Parish Activity Center



Lent at Grace

Holy Week and Easter Worship Services

Maundy Thursday, March 24th, 6:30 p.m.; Good Friday Community Service, March 25th, 12:15 p.m., at Zion Lutheran Church, Appleton; Good Friday, 6:30 p.m. Worship at Grace; Easter Sunday Worship, March 27th, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. with Easter Breakfast at 9:30 a.m. No Sunday School on Easter.

Open My Life, Lord

Sundays 9:30 a.m.

February 14- March 13

This year the focus for Lent will happen at the Learning Hour on Sundays instead of a mid-week evening worship service. Our eyes, hands, ears, hearts- our whole lives have been opened by God, but for most of us, more openness in all these areas would be welcomed! The lives of Paul and Lydia, Jesus' ministry and the church in Galatia will be used to help participants reflect on God's action in and among us. God has opened the way to eternity for us, what does that look this Lent? Youth and adults are welcome to make this hour their Lenten practice this year. Are you a person open to trying new things?

Community Events

The Music Man

An Enjoyable Evening

March 11th, 12th, 18th, 19th 7:00 p.m.

March 13th, and 10th 2:00 p.m.

St. Timothy Lutheran 473 Seventh St., Menasha

Doors open 1 hour before. -

Free Will Offering will be taken

"I have seen several of their productions and they are great fun. Wonderful singers from a number of congregations in the Menasha area".



Transylvania News and Opportunities

This is a special invitation to friends and members of your congregation who might be interested in a very special trip to Transylvania this year. Pastor Joel and Susan Schlachtenhaufen will be in Sibiu/Hermannstadt this year from mid-May to mid-June and will gladly help Pastor Kilian Doerr and others host individuals and small groups during that time-span (May 20 to June 10) for a few days, up to the entire three-week period.

Travelers are promised a very interesting stay with meaningful volunteer service opportunities along with learning and recreational activities.

Journey to the Cross

Join us for a special event, Lenten hymn sing "**Journey to the Cross**" based on the scriptural *Stations of the Cross* as written by Saint Pope John Paul II., on March 13, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. at

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Appleton, WI.

Matthew Walsh, Minister of Music at Zion, will lead the hymn sing with our new organ (facade and related pipes soon to be installed).

You are cordially invited to attend this afternoon of hymn singing as we contemplate through the Word and music the events that begin on Passion Sunday and move through Holy Week. A free will offering, with a matching gift, will be taken with all gifts designated to the Organ Fund. Light refreshments to follow.

Come, experience first-hand our anticipation of the season and our new organ being built by Russell & Company (Pipe Organ Builders), Chester, VT.



Summer Camp

Crossways Camping Ministries have 3 camps in our area with a variety of programs all summer long for children, youth and adults. Look for brochures in the Gathering Area on the desk.

