

Our Purpose?
Bless the World: be God's Grace!

Ministry Announcements for the week of January 10, 2021

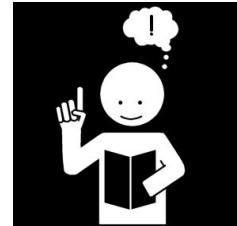


O LORD, GIVE STRENGTH TO YOUR PEOPLE;
GIVE THEM, O LORD, THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE.
Psalm 29:11

Christians and the Book of James

Part 1: Do and Love
Bob Haaf

The author of the book of James makes straightforward statements about living a life in Christ.



- "Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves." [James 1:22]
- "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?....So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." [James 2:14-17]
- "You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' " [James 2:8]

Look in the mirror and, as a Christian, ask yourself two questions:
Do I see a person who lives this life?
Do I see a person who helps others live this life?

January 13th is National Take the Stairs Day.

What a great way to start your resolutions by taking one set of stairs each day. If you have no stairs a good walk around the house, the yard (if no snow) or the block will work too. Start out slow if you have not been doing much walking.

From the Northwestern Ohio Synod
Please join us in 2021, as we read through the entire
New Testament in Chronological Order.

Not Mathew to Revelation, but James to Revelation. You may be surprised to know that many of the New Testament Letters were composed before the Gospels were written.

You can pick up a copy of the schedule of readings in the back of the church on Sundays or if you stop by the office any time during the week.

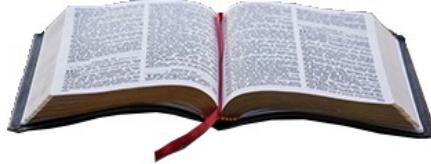
Grace Office hours are
9:00am to Noon - Monday through Friday

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**ZOOM Bible Study
Saturdays @3:00pm**

Beginning on Saturday January 9 we will begin the book of 1Corinthians.
For information send your request to haaf.vgs@gmail.com .



Grace Call process update for the start of 2021

Many have wondered where Grace stands in the process of calling our next pastor. In December 2020 we “transitioned” from the what is termed the time of congregational prayer and reflection led by the Transition Team to the work of the separate Call Committee. The first order for the Call Committee is finalization of and posting of Grace’s “Mission Site Profile.” Our Mission Site Profile will then be available for all ELCA Pastors nationwide for viewing. Think of it as a combination of a “Help Wanted ad” and a marketing brochure to help attract a Pastor to say they are interested in finding out more about serving that community called Grace in Toledo Ohio.

Additionally, the Mission Site Profile is used by the volunteer advocates working with congregations in the Call process within the Northwestern Ohio Synod to match congregations with Pastors seeking a church to serve within Northwestern Ohio. Grace ultimately has full power over who we call, and a Pastor will only be called to Grace after two thirds of our congregation approves of such. The role of Synod volunteers is simply as an intermediary helping match the skills of Pastoral candidates who are looking for a new position with congregations seeking a pastor with those skills.

A member was concerned about how many or how few candidates the Call Committee would interview before a candidate is selected. That is unknown, in Grace’s past Call Committees have interviewed as many as five or six candidates before a person was selected to become our Pastor. At other times the Holy Spirit came upon both Grace and a pastoral candidate blessing the call after the first candidate was interviewed. Again, I want to stress that Grace’s members through our Call Committee have full control on how many candidates will be interviewed. We need to be mindful of the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding us in our decision, the work of the Call Committee is to identify the person called by the Holy Spirit to Grace. Call Committees should not be looking to interview a group of individuals and then select the one from the group they like best. From a practical view there are currently over 25 Congregations in Northwestern Ohio seeking Pastors and the number of congregations seeking a Pastor greatly exceeds the supply of Pastors. That does not mean there are no Pastors available. One impact of the current Pandemic is an increase in the number of pastors who are seeking calls to new congregations.

Once the Call Committee has agreed upon a candidate to be recommended for Call the Congregational Council will act upon that recommendation and if they approve the candidate will be presented to the Congregation for a vote by you and the other members of Grace.

Between the time Call Committee agrees to recommend a candidate and the vote by the congregation it is customary for the candidate and the congregation to meet, typically in informal group meetings /cottage meetings. The candidate and his/her family may also attend a worship service at Grace, but they will not be asked to preach at Grace prior to a vote on a call and installation. The reason for that is there are so many aspects that go into the life of a congregation and the duties of a Pastor that is unfair to both the Candidate and the Congregation to base a call on a single sermon.

More information will be forthcoming. In the meantime, Grace needs your Prayers, your Patience, and your Persistence in working to define Grace by the ministries of the people in the pews and not the preacher in the pulpit.

David Charvat – Council President

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Photo by Bob Haaf

Please join us on Sundays at 9:30 in the parking lot if you feel safer there!
Tune into 90.7 FM!

Food for Toledo (formerly known as Feed Your Neighbor) Update

For the week of December 24 – December 31, 51 pounds of food was collected for the Food for Toledo program. So the grand total of food collected at Grace when we started collecting food during our weekly program is.....**2856 pounds!** Wow! To think of all of the people that have been helped through this program is mind boggling. **Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who has donated food or money to this program.**

With the beginning of the New Year, the program has a name change and a change in the day for food drop off. Since Feed Your Neighbor is a program through Lutheran Social Services and we have been delivering food collected at Grace to Aldersgate United Methodist Church, the name change is appropriate. Starting on Monday, January 11, food drop off at the entrance to Brenner Hall will change to Mondays.

On December 29, a total of 110 people were served that day at Aldersgate through their food program. So now their cupboards are bare! If you are able, let's help Aldersgate replenish their pantry. Grace is the only outside group that assists Aldersgate with their food program. Food needed includes canned vegetables and fruit, cereal, juice, canned meat, peanut butter, jelly, soup, rice, pasta, pasta sauce, beans, and condiments. If you have any questions, please call Mary Schneider at 419.262.0730.

....and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us.....

~Ephesians 4:32-5:1

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Behind the scenes at Grace....

1. We watched as the bulldozer came in on Tuesday and leveled Ansted Florist. A number of big bites and the building is gone. The area looks very bare but according to the plans is going to be developed into a nicely landscaped area.
2. Additional interesting info. Barb Schuster the owner of Ansted's called the office Monday. She said the building was 89 years old and she grew up in the house attached to the building!
3. Our Red Tail Hawk has been standing guard in the oak tree outside the office – and of course no squirrels or birds to be seen during his guard duty.
4. The Grace Prays Board is an opportunity for us all to add additional prayers for people, situations, etc. that we may not have on the prayer list or just to add to the prayers we listed on the Sunday list to remind others. The board will be in the back of the Sanctuary on Sunday and then to the chapel and back to the office on Monday. Check it out as you walk by and add to pray about or pray about something or someone you see on the board.
5. We are getting excited as Buckeye has been in to evaluate and is soon to update our system so that we can do more in connecting with people.
6. Website work is moving forward which is exciting!
7. The geraniums by the office finally succumbed to the cold - the area looks empty, but boy does it give us a great view of the squirrel antics!
8. **Remember: Grace is not the building structure but the people of Grace and how we hang together for this New Year!**

Mental Health! (submitted by the Parish Nurse)

For 2021 think about gratitude (starting with the New Year and making it through the crazy last year).

What are you thankful for?

Think about self-care – what can you do for yourself – i.e., Relax, read favorite books and the daily reading of the Bible - see the daily reading list outside the office or on the Synod web site.

Who is your support system? Who can you turn to when the going gets tough and also when it is time to celebrate? It is also OK to set boundaries – we can get more stressed by being everything to everyone and trying to do it all - it is OK to say "No".

A study done by a group at the University of California found that those of us who practice gratitude are more optimistic about our lives, we tend to do some kind of exercise and have good relationships and contacts with others.

The study found 3 things that can help with thinking about gratitude are:

1. Say "thank you" – it means a lot especially in the current times.
2. Write down what you appreciate most. Material things like a house and food are good but also God, church family, health, snowflakes (?), the birds and crazy antics of the squirrels.
3. Pay attention to your emotions and stay in tune with "how you feel". If stressed turn off the TV, sit and take a slow, deep breath and focus on breathing for even just a couple of minutes can be calming. Drink some tea, look out the window at nature (yes, the squirrels again, are often great for a good laugh), read the Bible, or another book, call a friend or family member (often they need the contact as much as you do). If you are feeling upbeat be thankful and share that with someone.

The eyes - Don't Let Glaucoma Steal Your Sight!?

January is Glaucoma Awareness month, but half of the people with glaucoma don't know they have it!

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damage the eyes' optic nerve which can result in vision loss and blindness.

The most common form is called open - angle and results in increased eye pressure. There are often no symptoms which is why 50% of people do not know they have.

Vision loss from glaucoma usually affects peripheral vision (side vision) and as it advances it affects what you see in front.

3 million Americans have glaucoma, and it is the 2nd leading cause of blindness in the world.

There is no cure (yet) but if found early you can often protect your eyes against serious vision loss.

Anyone can get glaucoma, but certain groups are at higher risk: all people over the age of 60, African Americans over the age of 40, people with a family history and people who have diabetes.

One of the most important things that you can do to help protect your eyes is to get a comprehensive dilated eye exam to detect glaucoma early and start treatment.

Have you scheduled your eye exam?

Glaucoma is treated with eye drops, oral medication and sometimes surgery or a combination of these. It is very important to take your medication as prescribed.

Maintaining a healthy weight, controlling blood pressure, keeping active, and avoiding smoking can help with decreasing vision loss.

Kindness/ and other Stuff...

"And be kind to one another, tender - hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you "(Ephesians 4:32 NASB)

To teach is to learn twice. (*Joseph Joubert*)

From there to here, and here to there, funny things are everywhere. (*Dr. Suess*)

Let what matters most, matter most! (*Unknown*)



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Two services on Sunday morning here at Grace!

Come join us!
9:30 In the sanctuary
11:30 In the chapel
Observing Covid precautions
Masks required - physical distancing
Music and song and praise!
We will continue to meet during the level red alert, following the safety guidelines.



GRACE CHURCH COUNCIL

David Charvat	Council President
Elise Lohmann	Treasurer
Cindy Wood	Secretary
Dan Holzscheiter	VP of Admin
David O'Brien	VP of Ministries
Kim Kondalski	
Fritz Gooch	
Mary Schneider	
Katie Sattler	
Greg Schafer	
Rick Sharp	

Please check out our Grace Website for the latest information and updates.

<http://www.gracelutherantoledo.org/>

If you would like something in the newsletter, please email to the office no later than Monday. It fills up fast and we have a limit to how many pages can be mailed (mailing is Tuesday morning). Thank you!

FOLKS TO CONTACT HERE AT GRACE

Council President	David Charvat
Grace Office	Cathy Holewinski
Custodian	Joe Zawierucha
Parish Nurse	Gretchen Hiatt
Worship	
Children's Choir Director	Nancy Stepleton
Choir	Peter Kramp
Organist	Debby Reeb
Praise Team Leader	Dale Walberg
Youth Ministry Advisors	Debbie Fallon, Wendy McCall
Pastor	Pr. Howard Abts

THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE
LET US REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT!
PSALM 118:24

