

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



Ministry Announcements for the week of February 21, 2021

ALL YOUR PATHS, O LORD, ARE STEADFAST LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS
TO THOSE WHO KEEP YOUR COVENANT AND YOUR TESTIMONIES.
~Psalm 25:10

Stewardship is Grace: Part 1

Bob Haaf

Grace is a central concept of Lutheran faith. Grace is God's unmerited favor. We receive what we do not deserve because of God's love and generosity.

If I'm part of Grace then I'm part of something larger than me. And my stewardship reflects grace; it becomes ministry that expands around the world—ministry through Grace, ministry through the Northwestern Ohio Synod, and ministry through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



Part 1: Ministry through Grace Do you ever wonder what ministry takes place through Grace as the result of your stewardship?

- Weekly worship opportunities, of course—in the Sanctuary, in the parking lot and through the weekly newsletter.
- And much more. For example, during February alone a partial list of ministry through Grace includes: AA meetings, Youth Group Soup Sale, Personal Needs Ministry, Broomball, Safe Haven, Global Mission, Model A Club, Women at the Well, Scrap-booking, Weekly Food Collection....

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, He said: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself [Matthew 22:37-39]. Stewardship is love for neighbor and stewardship is grace.

Food for Toledo Update

For the week of February 2 – February 8, **232** pounds of food was donated to Grace's Food for Toledo program and delivered to Aldersgate United Methodist Church. Thank you to everyone who donated food for this program. Aldersgate was preparing for their bi-monthly food distribution to approximately 110 people the following day and our donation filled in some needed items for this. Pastor Katie of Aldersgate indicated that as always cereal, Minute Rice, and peanut butter are needed. A new item has been added to their need list – powdered drink mix that is low in sugar or sugar free, such as Crystal Light or a generic brand. Donations can be made either in tote outside of the church office or on Monday mornings from 9 a.m. – noon.

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

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ZOOM Bible Study: 2 Corinthians
What Did Paul Say about Clay Jars?

Starting on February 20 the Saturday ZOOM Bible Study will begin studying the book of 2 Corinthians—Saturdays 3:00-4:00pm.

If Saturday afternoon is not a good time for you, you can access a recording later online. The recording is available for five days after each Bible Study session.

If you want to take part in this Bible Study—or if you want to access the recordings—contact haaf.vgs@gmail.com



Which Church Council Made a Good Decision?

~Submitted by David Charvat

Church Council #1 faced with an issue that was likely to cause controversy in the life of the congregation made a difficult decision. As a result, a number of members reacted with anger; Council members who did not like the decision resigned; a group of longtime members transferred to new congregations; while others who were against the issue stopped attending, withholding their offerings hoping their absence from committees and a drop in financial resources would cause the Council to reconsider.

Church Council #2 faced with an issue that was likely to cause controversy in the life of the congregation made a difficult decision. As a result, the majority of members were energized, the church grew and new members filled the pews.

Did Church Council #1 make a good decision?

Did Church Council #2 make a good decision?

Looking at what happened above many of you likely said Council #2 made a good and wise decision while Council #1 made a grievously bad decision. A few hopefully see the decisions made by the two councils were not disclosed, only the results of the decision. A confession, if you have not guessed both Council #1 and Council #2 are the same. The decision and results are based on the same issue. Making a decision does not pre-ordain any result, ultimately outcomes are based on actions taken after the decision is made and involves things that no one making the decision can control. Many decisions have both positive and negative consequences. Church Councils have no power over how individuals within the congregation choose to react.

Over the years Grace's Council has made hundreds of decisions. The vast majority are maddingly routine. That is not to say that from time to time a proposal is raised that stirs up controversy within the Congregation. Some of the issues were seen by the opponents as forcing a pastor's or Council's "agenda" on the congregation. Is it safe to assume that when one talks about another's agenda, it normally means the speaker does not favor that agenda? The first such issue I ever experienced occurred when an opportunistic Council person rushed through a motion to ban smoking within Grace's building. That was made at a time before things like smoking and non-smoking sections were required or even common. The decision once made faced immediate pushback from Congregation members. Even a few Council members introduced a motion to overturn the decision at the next Council meeting. These days with differing social norms and changes in laws regarding smoking it would be hard to find many including those who do smoke disagreeing that Council made a good decision at that time.

In time the controversies fade, Grace members return their focus to Christ and Grace grows in faith. Only one Council decision made decades ago, a good decision to many, seems to haunt Grace to this day.

To be continued....

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Samaritan Lives Matter

Being called a "good Samaritan" is a complement but in Jesus's day it meant something very different. To the Jewish people Samaritans were illegitimate and unclean. When the Pharisees call Jesus a Samaritan and a devil in John 8:48 they mean it as an insult. In the Jewish culture Samaritans were considered to be beneath the Jews and were shunned and despised. Samaritans were different. This widely held belief by the Jews is an example of systemic racism – when one culture feels superior to another.

There are still instances of systemic racism today. But Jesus shows us that it is not acceptable in the eyes of God. To God we are all one people and no one is superior or inferior. Jesus shows us this when he speaks to the Samaritan woman at the well and shares the news of the Gospel. He also tells his disciples to take the Good News to Samaria and beyond. He even goes so far as to use a Samaritan as the hero in one of his parables. Paul echoes this in Galatians 3:28. A Christian is required to accept all people as his/her brother or sister regardless of race, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, etc.

Do we need to address systemic racism in our society and this congregation? If you think yes then let us get together to discuss this issue and improve as Christians. Let's take this opportunity to share our thoughts, not to judge or challenge anyone but so we can move forward with aligning Grace's vision with God's vision. Please contact Jeanne Harmon by email jkh401941@gmail.com or feel free to call me at 419-787-1653. Leave a message on voicemail and I will call you back. I would love to hear your thoughts on this matter.

Volunteer Opportunities Available

Grace has done during the pandemic what some other churches have not done, and that is give members and others options for worship. In order to do this and continue to do it post-pandemic, people are needed to help.

Volunteers are needed to help with the Wednesday Lenten services. Someone is needed to deliver bulletins to those people that are listening in the parking lot at both the noon and 7 p.m. services and people are needed to help at the back of the church.

Also, because we offer services in the parking lot, we do need people to be trained on how to set up the transmitter to do this. We do have some people trained, but we need others to know how to do this in case those that usually do it are not available for one reason or another. I understand it is quite easy and there are simple instructions available. David Charvat or Rick Sharp would be happy to show you how to do it. I want to compile a list of those people that are trained in the event someone is needed.

Lastly, Grace is hoping to live stream our church services very soon. That means we will need people to do this.

If you can help with any of the above, please call Mary Schneider at 419.262.0730.

Behind the scenes at Grace ...

1. Burr - that walk from the parking lot to the inside of church has been really chilly this week - ok it has been darn cold. A good thing is that we have had some gorgeous sunrises and it is actually getting lighter earlier.
2. We have placed our order for palms for Palm Sunday – hard to believe that Lent is starting next week.
3. Our menagerie has been vigilant about being at the office door for their morning treats especially with the cold.
4. We have a loss. Our Sunshine Family will not be able to join us at least for the time being due to Covid and the need to protect their family and workers. They have been a bright spot in our daily lives and will be sorely missed but understand their need to stay healthy. We wish them the best and hope to have them back in the future.

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5. What a challenge with this weather but Cathy and Joe have braved the freezing cold with frozen smiles and numb fingers to keep our sign on Monroe Street updated! They have developed unique ways to open the frozen covering and the frozen letters!
6. What great music on Sunday! We had a saxophone solo by Gary Haren. Combined with Jim Bischoff at the organ the music was up lifting and joyous on Valentine's day! And the sun was shining - what a wonderful mix!
7. Speaking of braving the elements - Mary Schneider has been braving the cold hallway while overseeing our food collection. Don't forget the nonperishable food when shopping - it is so needed. Thanks Mary!
8. **Remember: Grace is not the building but the people of Grace who work to carry out God's mission both inside and outside the building .**

Winter weather and you heart! (Submitted by the Parish Nurse)

Winter is not only a challenge walking in the snow and tolerating the cold but is hard on the heart. Cold weather, low air pressure and high winds are the perfect combination of risk factors for heart problems (Journal American Medical Association Cardiology). If you already have a heart problem or have had a heart attack it is even more dangerous.

In cold weather blood vessels constrict which means your heart has to pump harder to circulate blood in the body. This results in your blood pressure going up and the blood may thicken which can lead to blood clots. This can place an extra strain on your heart.

What can you do to protect your heart during this winter?

1. Stay warm. Dress in layers. Choose a base or closest to the body layer that will wick away moisture from your skin, a middle layer that is insulating and a top layer that is wind and water resistant. If you think of this like a sandwich – the bread soaks up the mustard, the lettuce is the insulating layer, and the meat / cheese are wind and water resistant? Don't forget something to cover your head (no matter how unflattering) as we lose a great deal of body from an uncovered head and ears can be frostbit without being covered. Gloves are also a requirement and mittens actually keep you hands warmer. Warm socks and shoes are also important. If you come inside and you have been sweating -change those wet clothes .
2. Stay active. Exercise has been shown to improve the immune system and help with the winter blues. Walking in the house or another inside location if it is cold or the weather is bad is great.
3. Shovel smart. The heart has to work hard to lift and move the snow. If you have heart issues it would be better to have someone else move that snow. If you are shoveling push the snow rather than lifting and bend your knees with your legs apart and keep your back straight.
4. Listen to your body. This is important any time of the year not just winter. If you heart is beating irregular, you feel lightheaded, nausea or you have swelling in the legs call your doctor. If you have chest pain -stop and call 911.
5. Heart healthy diet. Research is showing that a Mediterranean diet is good for heart and vascular health. This diet is high in plant -based foods (beans, vegetables) rich in monounsaturated fat from olive oil, low in saturated fats from meat and dairy products. Winter foods that are good for us include frozen or fresh berries (blueberries) and cruciferous vegetables like cauliflower, broccoli, red cabbage, and Brussel sprouts. Beets are also good. A hint the darker the vegetable and fruit typically have more nutrients (think blueberries, yams or sweet potatoes (without the marshmallow stuff)). Fiber is also good as it has been shown that a diet high in fiber helps lower total cholesterol and triglycerides and helps increase HDL -the high density or good cholesterol)-think oatmeal, beans .

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Heart facts:

The Blue Whale has the largest heart – 440# and 5 feet long from the top to the bottom - that is one whale of love.

The Fairy Fly an insect in Costa Rica has a heart that is .006 inches long and must be seen with a microscope. So, this is the tiniest bit of love.

What is Red and needed every few seconds in the US and more then 45 million people in the US would die without?

Yes -you guessed it -BLOOD!

January is National Blood Donor month, but we have moved it to April for Grace. According to the American Red Cross about 38% of the US population can donate blood but only 10% do. WOW!

There is a constant need for blood and blood products which has even increased with COVID.

Please consider donating on April 23 form 1-6 pm. First time as well as seasoned donors are welcome.

If you are unable to donate, please think of family members and friends-grandkids (need to be over the age of 16).

You may donate after having the Covid vaccine -just bring the name of the vaccine with you.

Contact Gretchen Hiatt -at 419-944-5166 to set up time.
Email gretchensue1205@gmail.com

Think of all the people you can help with a donation!

Answer to Quiz question # 3

Power Red is not the name of a Sports Drink. It is the collection of 2 units of red blood cells at one donation time. Red blood cells will be collected, and plasma and platelets will be returned to the donor in one sitting. So, this provides more bang for a donation. It does take longer to donate -approximately 1 ½ hours. You can be a Power Red Donator every 112 days or up to 3 x a year.

Blood Fact:

There is a gentleman in Australia who has set the Guinness book of records for donating blood. He developed an antibody in his blood after receiving blood as a child -so at the young age of 70 he has helped save the lives of over 1 million babies. He even scopes out the nearest blood donor center when traveling in his camper so that he can keep up with his regular donations! How dedicated!



Anna Helton
Suz Thanks for your support of our "Souper Bowl" Grace Luther League

Callie Moore
Katie
Brady
Katherine Wilt
Luke Arnold
Beth
Lauren Wilt
Mavis Stettin

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Easter will soon be here and time for lilies, daffodils, and tulips for Easter Sunday here at Grace. Christian Education Ministry Team will be sponsoring this sale. All plants will be priced at \$10.00 each and can be ordered and purchased by mail, email or through the church office. The deadline is February 28. Thank you for your purchase of plants to decorate the church and to support the Vacation Bible School program at Grace.

LILY & ACCENT PLANT SALE 2021
Sponsored by Vacation Bible School

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime/Cell Phone _____

Lily plants: Number: _____ @ \$10.00 each **Total enclosed \$** _____

In loving memory of _____

In honor of _____

Accent Plants: Number: _____ @ \$10.00 each **Total enclosed \$** _____

Daffodils _____ Tulips _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Please use my accent flowers to beautify Grace Flower beds _____

Deadline for orders is February 28, 2021

GRACE CHURCH COUNCIL

David Charvat
Cindy Wood
David O'Brien
Kim Kondalski
Fritz Gooch
Mary Schneider
Katie Sattler
Greg Schafer
Rick Sharp

Council President
Secretary
VP of Ministries



Words

It is only the giving of oneself to others that we truly live (Ethel Percy Andrus)

You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what difference you want to make (Jane Goodall)

Your happiness is intertwined with your outlook on life! (Author Unknown - actually was in a fortune cookie!)

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