Dear Redeemed and Love Saints of Grace!
The other day, I came across a caption above an article about the mission of the church. The caption stated the mission of the church is to be missional, meaning that churches should be focused, or oriented to be sharing the good news of Jesus.
I thought about that. I mean Jesus does say to us, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations teaching and baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." But I gazed at the caption and just thought about it. The mission of the church is mission-focused, to be focused on the mission that Jesus gave. Going and making disciples.
I thought about this. Obviously, I think everyone in every single church in the world, desires that their church be focused on sharing the gospel with the world. Sharing the gospel with those who are in churches hearing what Jesus has done for them. They want their churches to grow. They want their pews to be filled. They want what every church desires; to go and make a difference in their communities for Jesus. Every church has a desire to share with the world the love of Jesus. But not every church knows how. Not every Christian knows how.
I thought about that. Why do churches struggle to follow the mission of Jesus? Because in the places where Jesus should be found, they struggle to emulate Jesus. The other week in church, we read from 1st Corinthians 8 and St. Paul reminding us not to become a stumbling block for other Christians. Making sure that we are not the cause of why others can't hear or participate in the good news of Jesus.
I thought about that. Why? Because we sometimes forget that church is the training ground. Every week we come to church we are in training. By the time you read this we will have gone through two keystone habits of Jesus. Reading scripture and being in the community, getting ready to learn more about prayer. Who are we learning from? Jesus the master teacher. We, the church, have forgotten that when we come to church, we are learning from Jesus. Ok, maybe we haven't forgotten. But when we come to church, we are learning from Jesus, learning how to show each other the gospel. Emulating how Jesus shows us the gospel and showing it to each other. Learning how to serve another just as Jesus serves us.
Jesus serves us? Absolutely! That is what coming to church is all about. Allowing Jesus to serve you. He serves you forgiveness, through the means of absolution, the proclaimed word (the sermon), and the receiving of his shed blood. He serves you his compassion, by taking on your needs through confession and prayer. He serves you his grace by taking away your sins. He serves you his peace, by blessing you. By again announcing to you that all your sins have been taken
(Continued on next page)

| Pastor Eric Obermann | Mark Sperry, DCE | Grace Lutheran Preschool | Grace Lutheran Camp |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 563-321-0032 | 563-321-0674 | PH: 563-659-9193 | 2675 242nd St, P.O. Box 156 |
| pastoreric@gracedewitt.org | msperry@gracedewitt.org | Preschool Teacher/Director | DeWitt, IA 52742-0156 |
| Kerry Good | Mark's Office Hours | Christine Greve | Camp Reservations |
| kgood@gracedewitt.org | M-Th -7:30 am to 1:00 pm | preschool@gracedewitt.org | camprentals@gracedewitt.org |
|  |  |  | 319-230-7718 |

away. The sacred time that God, our Heavenly Father, has carved out for us, is to a place that we come to learn from the Savior, Jesus.
Have you thought about that? We don't just come to worship to be forgiven by the savior. To be sure that is the most important part of worship. But we also come to worship to learn, to be taught by the master teacher. Following the example that He sets before us. Part of the reason we are doing the Being challenge is to set a target of being like Jesus. By learning and allowing ourselves to be taught by the Savior we are using this carved-out sacred time on Sundays or Wednesday evenings to practice what Jesus taught.
Through this sacred time practicing what Jesus taught. Practicing with each other. I will be honest it is pretty scary thinking of going up to strangers you don't know and trying to practice your faith on them. But when you are with other people who are like you, it is less scary. It is easier to show your faith, to practice those things that Jesus has taught.
Think for a moment of all the different ways that church, the sacred time, allows us to practice what Jesus teaches.

Just as Jesus serves us, we get to serve one another. Through the various boards in our congregation or through the simplicity of being here on Sunday morning. Such as being a greeter or usher, acolyte, or Sunday school teacher. These are just some of the more pronounced ways but think of the subtle ways we get to serve each other.
Think of your pew. Think of those who sit around you. Those who you talk to before and after church services begin. How do you ask them questions about their weeks or their family or how they are physically and spiritually doing? By these very simple questions, you are practicing your compassion and praying for them. Another simple way that we are practicing what Jesus teaches.
Probably the hardest one is forgiving. I think sometimes that is why our sacred time of gathering in worship is so forgiveness-focused. As we are constantly reminded of how Jesus forgives us, we can in turn learn to forgive each other. How? Well, a few years ago, I preached at my brother's installation service at Calvary Lutheran Church in a suburb of Pittsburg, PA. I told his congregation that my brother as their pastor, will most likely disappoint them. Just as I, as your pastor, will most likely disappoint you if I haven't already. And when we do, I told them, just as I am telling you, it is yours/their responsibility to show him/me Jesus. To show us the forgiveness of our Savior Jesus. As you can forgive me, we also get to practice forgiving each other.
So now bringing this back to the mission of the church, going, and making disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. By giving us the mission, Jesus also gave the guide by constantly showing us how to make disciples through how he serves us. So that we may practice how to serve each other. As we get more comfortable in serving each other here in the craved-out sacred time God has given us, it will become easier for us to share it with our community as well.
I am thankful that you all are taking up the challenge of being more like Jesus so that we can keep showing the enormous love of Jesus to those around us!

In the Service of Jesus, Pastor Eric


SERVING THIS MONTH:
$\begin{array}{rll}\text { The Elders: Sunday's } & \text { 8:00 AM } & \text { Paul Kirby } \\ \text { 10:30 AM } & \text { Scot Havener } \\ \text { Wednesday 11:00 AM } & \text { Scott Steffens } \\ \text { 7:00 PM } & \text { Clint Albrecht } \\ \text { Maundy Thursday 7:00 PM } & \text { Scott Steffens } \\ \text { Good Friday 7:00 PM } & \text { Clint Albrecht }\end{array}$
The Organist: Diana Baetke \& Tasha Becker

> The Acolytes

March 3rd
8:00 AM Porter Vopatek
10:30 AM Kinley Albrecht
March 6th 7:00 PM Zanyel Barys
March 10th
8:00 AM
10:30 AM
March 13th
7:00 PM
Kitt Converse
March 17th
8:00 AM Brayden Lawrence
10:30 AM Ava Johnson
March 20th
7:00 PM
March 24th
8:00 AM
10:30 AM
March 28th
7:00 PM
Ashlynn Appleby
March 29th
7:00 PM
Kyptin Barys
March 31st
8:00 AM Keaton Birt \& Grace Burzlaff 10:00 AM Ashdon Converse \& Klaire Gruntorad


The 2024 Altar Flower calendar is now available on the Welcome Center. Bouquets can be donated in honor of or in memory of persons or events. Each bouquet is $\$ 30$ and there are two bouquets available each week. Please sign up for your preferred dates and place your payment in the secretary's door. You may purchase one or both bouquets.

## Dates Available:

April 7th, 14th, 21st, \& 28th
May 5th, 12th, \& 26th
June 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, \& 30th
July 7th, 14th, 21st, \& 28th
August 4th, 11th, 18th, \& 25th
September 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, \& 29th
October 6th, 13th, \& 20th
November 3rd, 10th, 17th, \& 24th
December 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, \& 29th

The Endowment Committee for Grace Lutheran Church is accepting grant applications starting through March 15, 2024. Applications for projects which provide support to missions, education, youth, worship, and music and/or capital projects will be considered.

IMPORTANT - Deadline for submitting articles for the April newsletter is March 15th.

## Referral Center Donations

We will continue to collect monthly donations for the Referral Center as the need is great. The referral center is in need of:

## Kid Friendly Cereal Canned Tuna \& Chicken Canned Fruit Condiments Spaghetti Sauce Shampoo

All donations can be left in the shopping cart located in the foyer. Let's fill the cart to overflowing and support those in need in our community.



## LENTEN MEAL SCHEDULE <br> Wednesday's @ 5:30 p.m. Free Will Donation

March $6^{\text {th }}$ - Board of Elders \& Preschool—Spaghetti
March $13^{\text {th }}$ - Board of Discipleship/Choir - Maid-rites
March $\mathbf{2 0}^{\text {th }}$ - Board of Christian Ed - Meatball Subs



March 24, 2024
8:00 a.m. \& 10:30 a.m.
Procession of the Palms
Sunday School Children Sing


Palm Sunday
Pancake Breakfast
8:30 to 10:00 am

Maundy Thursday
March 28th
7:00 p.m. Worship/Communion

## Good Friday

 March 29th7:00 p.m. Worship

## Easter Sunday Worship March 31st

8:00 a.m. Worship/Communion
10:00 a.m. Worship/Communion

## Greeters and Ushers are Needed

Greeters are needed to help welcome members and guests before worship services.
Ushers are needed to assist the Elders during worship services.
Please, look at the sign-up sheet on the Welcome center and sign up for a date that works for you.


Reminder-There will be no Sunday School or Adult Bible Study on Easter Sunday, March 31st.

Pastor Eric wishes to keep you all in prayer. Please contact him when there is hospitalization, death in your family, you would like him to visit, or you have recently become homebound. Thank you!


## BEING Challenge



## STUDHNG SCRIITURE HELPS YOU DISCOVER WHO GOD IS AND WHO YOU ARE.

## TO TRULY DISCOVER AND FULFLL GOD'S PURPOSE FOR US. WE MUST SPFND REGULAR TMME WITH 6OD. <br> 



Our BEING Challenge is half-way complete at this point. How has it been going for you? Throughout this study, we are looking deeper into five keystone habits of Jesus to help us grow in our relationship with God. We have completed challenges around Commit to Community and Studying Scripture. During these upcoming weeks in March, we will be challenged to Prioritize Prayer, Seek Solitude and Choose Church. No matter how you have been doing with the challenges up to this pint, commit to completing this out. Don't underestimate how our God can start something big through a small habit.


Easter Cards are available for purchase in the church foyer. Please stop by and check out the variety of sympathy, thinking of you, get well, birthday cards, anniversary and more. Cards are $\$ 5$ per box. Confirmation cards will be coming soon..

We also have decorative napkins available for $\$ 3$ per package.


Baptized on February 17th - Emeri Jade Ralston, daughter of Jamie and Angelia Ralston was baptized on February 17th. Her baptismal sponsors are Randi Bahnsen and Curt Bahnsen. Welcome to God's Family!

# BLOOD DRIVE 

## BLOODCENTER.ORG

## Grace Lutheran Church

## Monday, March 18th

 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm Fellowship Hall - 415 10 ${ }^{\text {th }}$ Street, DeWitt Walk Ins Welcome!To schedule an appointment, please call Kerry Good at 563-659-9153 or scan the QR code.


Blood donors make a difference. Donate \& get your pick from great gifts. T-shirt OR Bonus Points OR a donation to National Forest Foundation.

Please eat before donating and bring Photo ID. Last Date to Donate Elsewhere: $1 / 18 / 2024$ Group Sponsor Code: 1134


OImpactLife


920

SMarch is here! This month we will celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday and St. Patrick's day. We continue to work on our numbers, letter recognition, writing our name and learning our letter sounds. As we welcome Spring in March we look forward to teaching a unit on Easter and Spring. Spring is here and our three year olds are loving this weather! To help us feel more like spring break is here our classroom themes this month are rainbows, beach and ocean! Our Bible stories this month are The Good Samaritan, Washing the Disciples' Feet and the Last Supper.

The Preschool children will be hosting a Donuts with Dad event on March 22nd for their Preschool Families.

Thank you to everyone who ordered cookie kits through our Sweetheart Bakery Fundraiser. With your help and generosity we were able to raise $\$ 837$.

Grace Lutheran Preschool
2024-2025 Class Schedule
Class Schedule 2023-2024
4s M-F 8:00-11:00 am (16 spots)
M-F 12:00-3:00 pm (16 spots)
Please note that there is NO 4s classes on Wednesday.
3s M W F 8:15-10:45 (4 spots) \$160 monthly
T\&TH 8:15-10:45 (5 spots) \$120 monthly
Please note that all 3 s must be potty trained.
The 3s Registration form is now available. on the Grace Lutheran Preschool page of the website (www.gracedewitt.org). The registration form along with the registration fee may be dropped off at the church office or mailed to PO Box 156, DeWitt, IA 52742.

Registration for the 4s Preschool Program is now open on the Central DeWitt Community School District Website.

## Important Information Regarding Day Camps

Summer is fast approaching and as have begun to plan the Day Camps this year we wanted to pass along a change in how we run our Day Camps. New in 2024 all of our Day Camps will be half day. Either 8:00 to 11:00 am or 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

A complete Day Camp schedule will be released as soon as we know when school will be out for the summer.

## GRACE LUTHERAN YOUTH'S FAMOUS LASAGNA DINNER

Our annual Youth Lasagna Dinner will be held on Sunday, March $3^{\text {rd }}$. Reservations will be taken through the morning of the $3^{\text {rd }}$. Call the church office or stop by the table in the foyer to make a reservation. There are two reservation times: 5:00 pm \& 6:15 pm.

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The annual Pancake Breakfast will be held on Palm Sunday, March $24^{\text {th }}$. Serving is from 8:30 am 10:00 am. Please join us for a delicious meal and a chance to fellowship with the other members here at Grace. Proceeds from the breakfast are used for future Youth Ministry events.


## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Join us for The Great Jungle Journey where we will learn the 7 Cs of the Bible: Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, Christ, Cross \& Consummation. The dates are June $23^{\text {rd }}-27^{\text {th }}$. VBS is for children 3 years old (fully pottytrained), through those entering $5^{\text {th }}$ grade for the 2024-2025 school year. Online registration will open in May. If you want to get involved, check out the volunteer registration board in the foyer, or contact DCE, Mark Sperry.

## ENDURE - 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering Update:

Now, but not yet The Christian existence as saint and sinner at the same time is a paradox. A related paradox has to do with the time in which we live. In the present, we are already recipients of God's full and life-giving grace. We have already been raised with Jesus and enjoy the beginning of eternal life by His Spirit. The end has already come. And because it is a good ending, we are filled with joy and gratitude, for all things are ours in Him (1 Cor. 3:22). And yet, we wait. We wait for Jesus to return and make all things new. This waiting is not easy. We wait and we long. We wait and we pray. We wait and we strain to see dimly as we look forward to seeing clearly (1 Cor. 13:12). We
 wait and we cry out with the saints, "How long, O Lord?" (see Rev. 6:10). We wait and we beg, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20). We wait, and we ENDURE!


Moms of ALL ages \& stages are encouraged to join us for
Coffee \& Connections
Friday, March 22nd
8:00 am to 10:30 am
(drop in for a few or stay and chat all morning)
Grace Hall
(use Main Entrance and head downstairs)
Have a little one? Feel free to bring them along.


Coordinators Needed for Summer Night Out - We have several people helping in the planning of this community event. We are in need of someone to help with the coordination of a petting zoo and someone to coordinate a Christian music playlist (for example, upbeat Christian music being played on KLove/Air1 radio or The Message on SXM). A sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board located in the church foyer or you can contact Kristy Engelkes at 563-210-2462. The next Summer Night Out Planning meeting is scheduled for March 18 at 6:00PM at the church.

Volunteers for the day of the event Be on the lookout in April/May for further volunteer opportunities for the day of the event.

MILES OF DIMES - Grace Camp was purchased in 1988. The Miles of Dimes project was started in 1990 as an effort to help pay for the facilities which everyone enjoys. There is a "Miles of Dimes" collection jar located on the Welcome Center. Leave your "dimes" or any donation you may want to make and your donation will be used to benefit the camp facilities. Thank you for your continued support.

Donate your used glasses, including sunglasses and reading glasses, to the Lions Club. A collection box is located in the foyer coat area. These glasses are picked up by a member of the Lions and then sent to a facility who will refurbished for others who may not be able to afford glasses. (Please, re-member they can not accept glass cases.)



## March 21st Victory Center Service Event

Once again, thank you to everyone who contributed to the meal, helped serve and prayed for our February service event at the Victory Center in Clinton. Our next service event meal will be on March 21st. We are planning to serve up to 40 people and allow for seconds. If you haven't volunteered to help with some part of one of these meals, please prayerfully consider being involved in some way. Men are encouraged to join us in this mission, especially with serving the meal.

## Main Dish 3 Volunteers <br> Drinks <br> Drinks 2 Volunteers:

1 gallon of white milk

- 2 gallons of chocolate milk soup to serve 20 people. Please indicate what type of soup you are brining on sign-up sheet.

Desserts
3 Volunteers
Prepare a dessert that serves 15

## Salads <br> 3 Volunteers

Prepare a salad that serves 15 people.

## Deliver \& Serve 5 Volunteers

Needed to help deliver and serve the meal. We meet at Grace at 4 pm . Meal is served at 5 pm .

All food needs to be prepared and brought to the church
by 4:00 PM on Thursday, March 21st.
A sign up sheet is located on the Welcome Center. Please contact Kristy Engelkes at 563-210-2462 or the church office if you have any questions

Lilies for Easter are being ordered through the Church Office this year. If you would like a lily to be placed in the sanctuary, please complete the form and return with your payment by March 6th. Cost is $\$ 18$ each.

Name: $\qquad$

In Memory of: $\qquad$
In Honor of: $\qquad$


Mark your Calendar for the LWML Rally. Grace will be hosting the Lutheran Women Missionary League Rally on Saturday, April 6th. It will start with breakfast from 8:00 to $9: 00 \mathrm{am}$. We will have a Bible study, special guest speaker Michele Diercks, a short business meeting and singing. We could use help on Friday morning (April 5th to set up and on the 6th to help serve breakfast. Please call Sandy Anderson at 563-321-008 to volunteer to help or learn more about this event.

$1^{\text {st }} \quad$ Kevin Becker $2^{\text {nd }}$ Jered Birt Ronald Steward
$6{ }^{\text {th }}$ Randy Lange Gary Smith Marriah Diercks
Brody Proctor Hattie Rickertsen
$10^{\text {th }} \quad$ Kevin Marik Mark Paarmann
$12^{\text {th }}$ Eric Paarmann
$13^{\text {th }}$ Ezra Onken Laura Swanson
$15^{\text {th }}$ Kristy Buhl Jennifer Miller
$17^{\text {th }}$ Erin Suhr
$20^{\text {th }}$ Verda Scott Jasmine Carter
$21^{\text {st }} \quad$ Norma Jean Soenksen Austin Nolin
$22^{\text {nd }}$ Dale Greve Casey Walker
$23^{\text {rd }}$ Jake Williams
$24^{\text {th }}$ Mallory McMahon
$25^{\text {th }}$ Sandy Burken Sandra Kirby
$28^{\text {th }}$ Darin Suhr Josh Stearns
$29^{\text {th }}$ Rachael Vopatek Alice Jans Arwin Petersen

## Happy Anniwersarys

$3^{\text {rd }}$ David \& Kay Hall
$13^{\text {th }}$ Paul \& Kathi Lieving
$14^{\text {th }}$ Larry \& Tonia Oronzio
$22^{\text {nd }}$ Barry \& Patty Anderson
$23^{\text {rd }}$ Jon \& Val Betz

# The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod <br> LCMS Stewardship Ministry - Icms.org/stewardship Stewardship Thoughts - March 2024 

## March 3 - Lent 3

John 2:16 - "And he told those who sold the pigeons, 'Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." The Lord's house is not a place to sell, but a place to receive and a place to give. It's not a place for our schemes and plans. Instead, the church is a place for the Lord's gracious giving and our faithful sacrifices in response.

## March 10 - Lent 4

Ephesians 2:10 - "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." Even the good we do in this world is a gift from God, prepared beforehand for us to do. And this too is a gift! For isn't doing good also a good thing for the one who does it? So from first to last, from the Lord's free salvation given to us to the good works He's prepared for us, everything is a gift of God's grace.

## March 17 - Lent 5

Mark 10:45 - "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Jesus gives everything He has: He gives Himself. That self-giving is the model for our giving in all aspects of our lives. In our family, in our church, and in the world at large, Jesus calls us to follow His example of self-giving. We can only do this if we are connected to His self-giving in faith.

## March 24 - Palm Sunday

Zechariah 9:9 - "Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." No king ever rode to war like this. But no king had ever come to wage battle by dying. In His Passion, our Lord Jesus gives everything He has and is; He does this to bring us from death to life, to make us His own people, and show us an example of self-giving love that we should follow.

## March 31 - Easter

John 20:1 - "Now on the first day of the week ..." All is made new by the resurrection of Jesus! Even the day of worship has transitioned from the Old Testament's Sabbath (Saturday) to the Lord's Day of the New Testament (Sunday). For the Lord has made all things new: In rising from the dead as the new Adam, He has begun a new week for a new creation. We are also made new in Him - a new heart, a new life, new desires, a new outlook toward God. All this comes from our risen Lord's grace. Especially after the sort of year we've had since last Easter, it sure is good news to hear that the Lord makes all things start afresh!

| Kıley Suuds 7wм7 meoo：6 9 |  <br>  |  |  | 乙 |  |  <br>  y $\exists 158$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $0 \varepsilon$ |  |  | ب！ <br>  <br>  | 92 |  |  <br>  <br>  <br>  |
|  |  <br>  <br>  100y 5 s．ld－pea प！！M sininuog $Z Z$ |  | d！̣sıом иәұиәา wdoo：L <br>  รәч？м <br> －pues qns－ןeәw иәみuәך wdoc：s <br>  d！чs．iom иәұиәт шеоо：$L ᄂ$ <br>  <br>  |  <br>  <br>  samilid looy 61 | su！pəow preog ч＿no人 udoo：＜ <br>  <br>  <br>  |  <br>  <br>  |
| 91 |  yeag suudds－looyssoud on <br>  |  <br>  <br>  ธu！$\ddagger$ วəW Sdo $\perp$ سe00：6 yeə．g ouluds－j004วsə1d ON $\qquad$ | d！чsıом иәəиәา mdoo：$L$ <br>  <br>  <br>  yearg suluds－1004） $\varepsilon 1$ |  | Sulpzow lopunos udoo：9 <br>  <br>  yeadg suuds－ 1004 כsadd on |  <br>  <br>  <br>  |
| 6 |  |  | d！чч．ıм иәұиәך wdoo：L <br>  <br>  <br>  sa！pe7 su！маs шe00：6 |  <br>  |  |  <br>  <br>  <br>  Kepuns ．＂sə！${ }^{\text {W．}}$ |
| 乙 |  <br>  |  | d！чs．ıмм иәәиәา wdoo： म！04 punog 人．019 wdoe：9 seg <br>  ио！ңешичиоว udoع：s <br>  <br>  <br>  |  <br>  <br>  | $\square$ |  |
| Kepınıes | Kep！de | Kepsanyı | KepsəupəM | Kepsen 1 | Kepuow | Kepuns |

