

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



**JUNE 2024
GRACE VINE
NEWSLETTER**



One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."

Mark 2:23-28

Letter from Pastor Smee

LOVE

“I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

– John 13:34-35

In May, Carry and I made a pilgrimage to Minnesota for our daughter’s college graduation. Most of our time was spent with her, enjoying her company at dinner, attending her commencement, and helping her purchase stuff for her apartment in Minneapolis. Sandwiched in there was a twenty-four-hour trip to Park Rapids and Nevis where we lived for five years. With that trip we had to go to three locations for particular reasons – Zorbaz for PETA pizza and nachos, Muskie Waters for ice cream, and Iron Horse for dinner with a group of friends we haven’t seen in three years. All three were must-do’s because when we lived there, they were regular weekly outings, and we always got the same thing.

Studies have shown that by the time we get to middle age, most of our friendships and our circles of acquaintances are set. It is rare for those over forty years of age to make a new friend. Notice I said “rare,” not impossible. By that age we know what we like. Many of us order the same foods and are content with the same restaurants. Those even older have a “usual” at Kristy’s or Lugo’s, because we have lived long enough to experience so much, and now we want the familiar. We get to the point of needing the comfort of things we know we like, people we know we love and who will love us, and we find ourselves desiring fewer and fewer surprises.

That is the struggle of the church today. The average churchgoer knows their preferences of what they want in a church. They have that circle of friends they want to see each Sunday, and very rarely do they ever expand the circle of friendships.

I wonder if the struggle is that we worry we won’t be loved back, or they might be annoying, or they might not fit into our plans for the rest of our life. Well, Christ calls us to love as He has loved us. How has Jesus loved you? Let’s start there. How has Christ poured out His blood for you? How has He given Himself to you? How has He suffered and died for you to bring you to Himself? That is the beginning and ending of this love. We don’t love others because it is convenient, or easy, or fashionable, or we can get something out of it. We love because we have been loved by the living God whom we would despise and kill if we got the chance.

Eighty-six percent of people remain at a church because of friends they have made there. Not because of the church as an institution, but because of one or two people they have made a connection with in their time attending. In other words, someone loved them in Jesus. Who might God be sending to you for you to love, or who needs your love.

In Christ,
Pastor Smee



Based on Psalm 136:1

Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices;
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices.
Who, from our mother's arms, has blessed us on our way,
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

Perhaps you know the story that led to the writing of this beloved hymn. German pastor, Martin Rinkart served in the walled town of Eilenburg during the horrors of the Thirty Years War of 1618-1648. Eilenburg became an overcrowded refuge for the surrounding area. The fugitives suffered from epidemic and famine. Rinkart, as the only surviving pastor, conducted 4,480 funerals in these years, including the funeral for his wife. In the face of overwhelming pressure, constant risk and horrendous conditions, Rinkart never stopped ministering to the people of his city. He gave away nearly everything he owned to the poor and needy, though he could barely clothe and feed his own children.

After nearly thirty years of ceaseless struggles, it began to look like peace was within grasp. Wanting to give his children a song to sing to God in thanks at the dinner table, Rinkart sat down and composed what would become one of the most well-known Thanksgiving hymns of all time: "Now Thank We All Our God." In fact, it's been said that, aside from Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress," no other song is sung more often in Lutheran churches today than Rinkart's simple tune.

Whether you are able to gather as a congregation in a sanctuary or you are still sheltering at home, I would encourage to you look at this hymn and be reminded under what conditions this song of praise and gratitude was written. In a few short months, the United States has confronted health challenges few Americans have seen before. The economy is only beginning to reveal the long-term devastation that is ahead. Our society has been locked down with no access to education, employment, shopping, travel...and worship. As for Pastor Rinkart 400 years ago, everything is in seeming chaos, yet Christians today are still able to proclaim, "Now thank we all our God...who wondrous things has done." Like Pastor Rinkart, in the coming weeks and months, we can praise God with good stewardship of our time and abilities to serve our families, our communities and our churches. Like Pastor Rinkart, we can be faithful in worship, prayer and study. And like Pastor Rinkart, we need to be faithful stewards of our treasures. Our local congregations and the NALC need everyone's financial tithes and offerings to maintain and expand ministry and provide assistance to the many in need due to loss of health and employment.

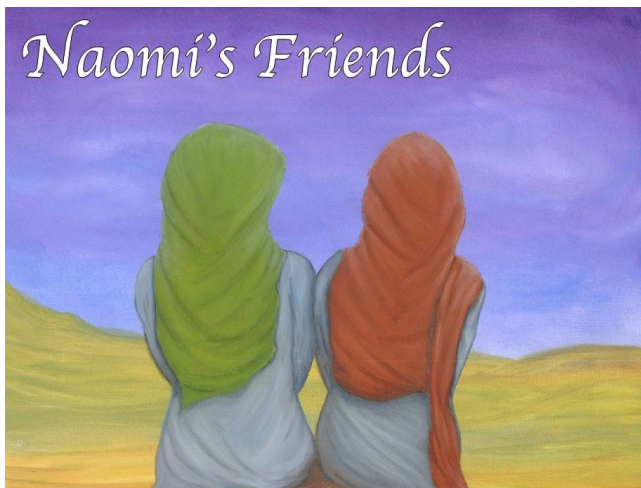
Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in his grace, and guide us when perplexed;
And free us from all harm in this world and the next.

Written by Pr. Ronald Voss. Pr. Voss is a member of the NALC's Living and Giving Stewardship Team.

CHURCH DOCTOR MINISTRIES

Sunday, June 2nd at 11:15 there will be lunch and then from 1 to 4 pm the Church Doctors will be in Ridgcrest to give a presentation to the whole congregation on their findings from the Congregational Survey as well as the interviews and other gathered information. From that gathered information they will also present recommended action steps for us to take to help us move forward into a healthy future.

Naomi's Friends meet the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month at Ale's Crab House @ 11 am.



(Older Wiser Lutherans)
Meets for games, fun, and entertainment in the Fellowship Hall the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH INVITES YOU TO **FAMILY FUN NIGHT** TAKE A BREAK THIS SUMMER

FRIDAY, JUNE 14TH 6PM-8PM
HAMBURGERS, HOT DOGS, BINGO AND PRIZES
INVITE FRIENDS AND FAMILY
ENJOY FELLOWSHIP AND FUN



Come Join the Fun and Maybe Win a Prize Supplied by Our Family Fun Night Sponsors!

- pony espresso
- Tj. Frisbee BICYCLES
- Serving Toddlers to Champions Since 1972
- LEDESMA Chiropractic
- MADISON AVENUE SALON & DAY SPA
- Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert
- Historic U.S.O. Building Gift Shop
- Body & Bath boutique
- Forefront Chiropractic
- Saigon Flavor
- PIZZA FACTORY
- Ridgcrest Cinemas
- Casey's

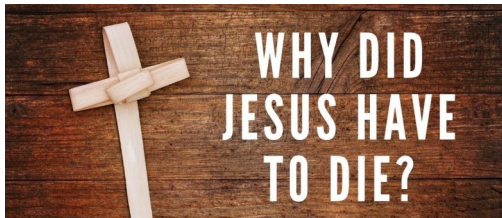
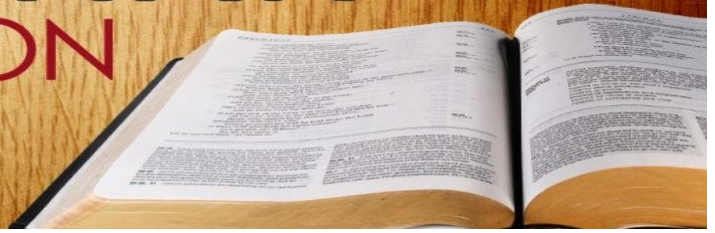


Grace Care Center
Grace fulfills an important need in our community for assistance with non-perishable foods and hygiene items. (SOCKS are always needed). They need cereal, canned chili, and pork and beans, and donations of cat and dog food for their people and pets program. Bring contributions to the church office or the care center during their regular hours.



Church Council meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm in the Conference Room. If a regularly scheduled council meeting needs to be rescheduled, the congregation will be notified through the weekly MailChimp mass emailer as well as the bulletin.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



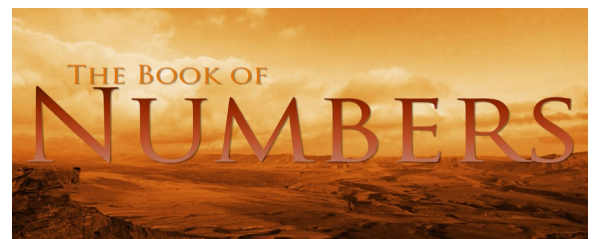
Peace Bible Study meets the third Wednesday of the month at 9 am in the CR. The study is called *Why Did Jesus Have to Die?*. All are welcome.



LIMBO Young Adult Life group meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at the Smee's home.



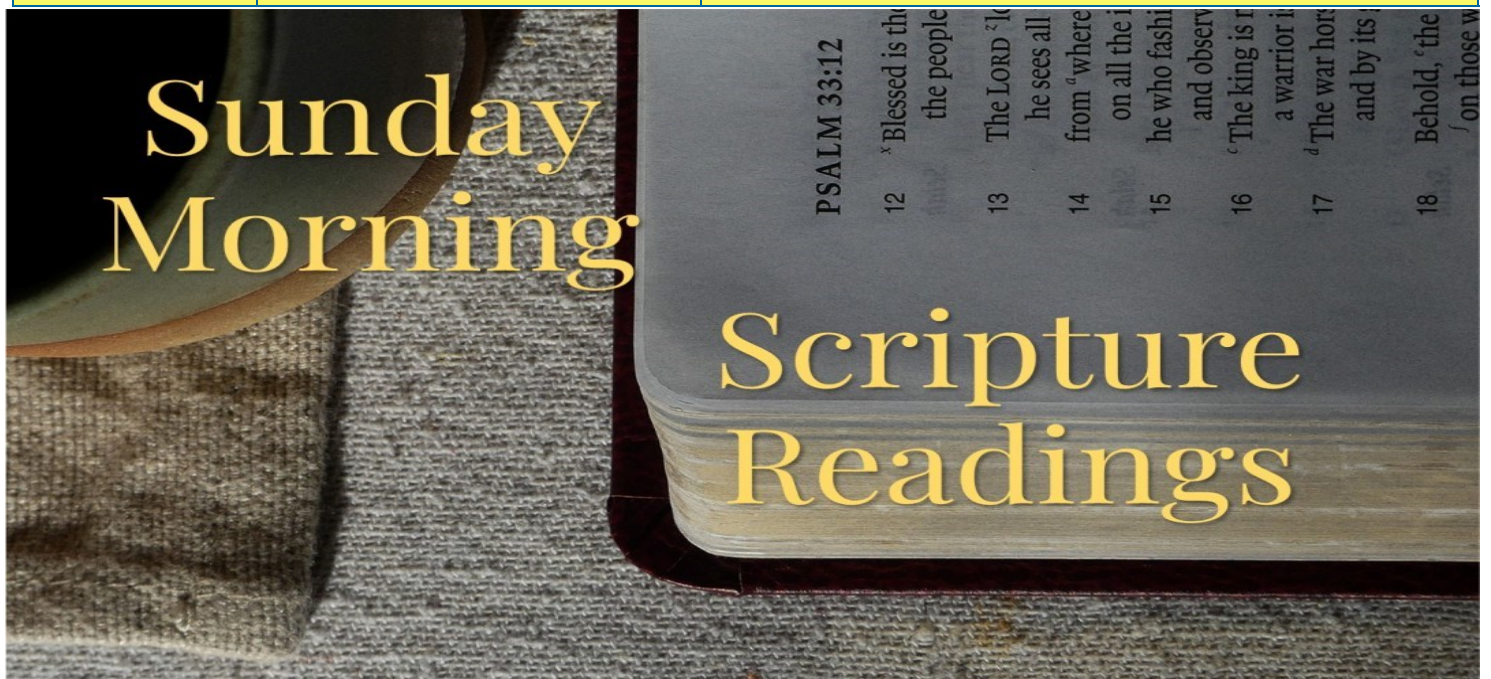
Join "A Bible and a Pencil" Bible study via Zoom on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm. The study is on the book of Exodus. Please contact Mark Brynestad via email at marknsue78@gmail.com for further information regarding this class.



An in-depth Bible study of Numbers via Zoom on Tuesday nights, 7:00, under the instruction of Mark Brynestad. Please contact Mark Brynestad via email at marknsue78@gmail.com for further information regarding this class.

Scripture Readings for June

Date	Gospel Reading	Additional Readings
June 2nd	Mark 2:23-28	First Reading Deuteronomy 5:12-15 Psalm Reading 81:1-10 Second Reading 2 Corinthians 4:5-12
June 9th	Mark 3:20-35	First Reading Genesis 3:8-15 Psalm Reading 130 Second Reading 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
June 16th	Mark 4:26-34	First Reading Ezekiel 17:22-24 Psalm Reading 1 Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:1-17
June 23rd	Mark 4:35-41	First Reading Job 38:1-11 Psalm Reading 124 Second Reading 2 Corinthians 6:1-13
June 30th	Mark 5:21-43	First Reading Lamentations 3:22-33 Psalm Reading 30 Second Reading 2 Corinthians 8:1-9, 13-15



June 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Worship 8:00 & 10:15am 11:15am Luncheon 1pm Church Doctors Presentation	3 LIMBO 6:30pm	4	5	6 5:10 pm Praise Band	7	8
9 Worship 8:00 & 10:15am	10 LIMBO 6:30pm	11 Naomi's Friends @ Ale's Crab House 11am OWLS 1:30pm	12	13 Parkinson's Support Group 2:30pm 5:10 pm Praise Band	14 6pm Family Fun Night	15
16 Worship 8:00 & 10:15am	17 LIMBO 6:30pm	18 Council Meeting 6:30pm	19 Office Closed Peace Bible Study 9 am	20 5:10 pm Praise Band	21	22
23 Worship 8:00 & 10:15am	24 LIMBO 6:30pm	25 Naomi's Friends @ Ale's Crab House 11am OWLS 1:30pm	26	27 5:10 pm Praise Band	28	29
30 Worship 8:00 & 10:15am						

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Equip
Share
Grace
Lutheran Church

502 N. Norma
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

For God so loved the world that
he gave his only Son, so that eve-
ryone who believes in him may
not perish but may have eternal
life.
John 3:16 (NRSV)



www.gracelutheran.org
www.facebook.com/gracelutheran.org

We're on the Web at:

Rev. Kris Madsen, *Senior Pastor*
Rev. Carleton Smece, *Family, Youth, and Education*
Michelle Koenig, *Office Manager*
Jane Kuhlman, *Music*
Paul Jauregui, *Custodian*



Phone: 760-375-9768
Fax: 760-375-1313
E-mail: gracelutheran@gracelutheran.org

Worship Services Sundays at 8 & 10:15 am
Team 784 Sundays at 9:15 am

