

# GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



## MARCH 2026 GRACE VINE NEWSLETTER

Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making his plea through us. We plead with you on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God!" God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21



# Letter from the Pastors

“(God) answered my prayer in such a way that in the last days, ignorant though I am, I might be bold enough to take up so holy and so wonderful a task, and imitate in some degree those whom the Lord had so long ago foretold as heralds of His gospel, bearing witness to all nations.”

From: *The Confession of Saint Patrick*

The thing about St. Patrick’s Day (and the same could be said of St. Valentine’s Day) is that St. Patrick’s Day – as is so observantly honored – has more to do with mythical little leprechauns, wishing on clovers, pots of gold at the end of the rainbow, and putting green food coloring/dye into our food, beverages, and even rivers than it does of St. Patrick himself and his work of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout Ireland.



**St. Patrick Window at Down Cathedral  
where the blessed saint is buried.**

Interestingly, St. Patrick, the ‘Apostle of Ireland,’ was not Irish – at least not by birth. Patrick was born in AD 389 in Roman Britain (that is: Britain while under the control of the Roman Empire) in Kilpatrick, modern-day Scotland. Patrick’s father was an alderman in his community and would later also become a deacon in the church. Sometime between the age of fourteen and sixteen, while home from school visiting his father, a group of Irish raiders attacked Patrick’s family’s estate, kidnapped Patrick and sold him into slavery where he labored as a shepherd in a remote part of Ireland. About six years after his kidnapping, God came to Patrick in a dream telling him to head for the coast and leave Ireland. Patrick managed to escape; as was promised, he was able to find someone who allowed him voyage with them on their boat, and he returned home.

Upon his return home Patrick had yet another dream – one which had much power over him. In this dream the people of Ireland were calling out to him, “We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more.” Patrick began his studies for the priesthood and was ordained. Some twenty or so years later (between 431 and 433), Palladius – who had been appointed bishop of Ireland – died and Patrick requested to become his successor. Patrick’s request to go to Ireland was not readily welcomed by his superiors in the church because they felt that his education hadn’t sufficiently taken root in him... he wasn’t exactly the most intelligent of people. Reluctantly his request was granted and Patrick was consecrated bishop of Ireland and had a very fruitful ministry there; he focused largely on the northern and western parts of the island which the gospel had not yet reached. It was under Patrick that the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ finally took root in Ireland; thousands of people and entire kingdoms were Christianized. Patrick built churches and monasteries all across the island with many of his own converts going

on themselves to become leaders in those churches and others became missionaries to the rest of Europe. Saint Patrick died in AD 461. 1

I don't know about you, but I find it easy to look at the Saints of the Church – these heroes of the faith – with wonder and amazement making them (in the mind's eye) larger than life with bold and daring confidence; indeed some of the Saints were this way... but not many. Then I read about Augustine and Patrick and I realize that, in fact, they were people just like us with the same worldly curiosity, fears, and shortcomings. For most of his life, Saint Patrick was very self-conscious, especially when it came to his worthiness to hold the office of bishop as well as his academic background; such self-awareness kept him humble. Despite his acute self-awareness, he was also confident in the call God placed upon him and was thus able to lean into the office of ministry and endure the many hardships, persecutions, and personal attacks that he experienced both from the druids on one side and his own colleagues in Britian on the other. Thus I am reminded that God can use whomever He so chooses to do the works of his kingdom. So Abraham was the moon worshiper whom God made to the example and patriarch of saving faith; Moses was a murderer and a stutterer, yet God used him to deliver his people from bondage in Egypt; David was a shepherd boy whom God raised to be king; he used Cyrus of Persia to be a messianic prototype to deliver his people from the Babylonians; he used Saul/Paul, the great persecutor of the earliest Church to be His apostle to the Gentile world. So Paul writes,

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." 2

Lenten Blessings,  
Pastor Kris

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1 The majority of the biographical information on Saint Patrick comes from Festivals and Commemorations: Handbook to the Calendar in Lutheran Book of Worship Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, MN. 1980

2 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

# Scripture Readings for March

Date	Gospel Reading	Additional Readings
Mar 1	John 3:1-7	<b>First Reading:</b> Genesis 12:1-9 <b>Psalm Reading:</b> 121 <b>Second Reading:</b> Romans 4:1-8,13-17
Mar 8	John 4:5-26 (27-30,39-42)	<b>First Reading:</b> Exodus 17:1-7 <b>Psalm Reading:</b> 95:1-9 <b>Second Reading:</b> Romans 5:1-8
Mar 15	John 9:1-41	<b>First Reading:</b> Isaiah 42:14-21 <b>Psalm Reading:</b> 142 <b>Second Reading:</b> Ephesians 5:8-14
Mar 22	John 11:1-45 (46-53)	<b>First Reading:</b> Ezekiel 37:1-14 <b>Psalm Reading:</b> 130 <b>Second Reading:</b> Romans 8:1-11
Mar 29	Matthew 26:1-27	<b>First Reading:</b> Isaiah 50:4-9a <b>Psalm Reading:</b> 118:19-29 <b>Second Reading:</b> Philippians 2:5-11

Sunday  
Morning

Scripture  
Readings

PSALM 33:12  
12 Blessed is the LORD who  
the people  
13 The LORD who  
he sees all  
14 from where  
on all the  
15 he who fash  
and observ  
16 The king is r  
a warrior i  
17 The war hor  
and by its  
18 Behold, the  
/ on those w

# Announcements




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



Join us in the Fellowship Hall  
*Dinner at 6pm*  
*Service at 6:30pm*

*February 25<sup>th</sup> – Mexican Potluck*  
*March 4<sup>th</sup> – Comfort Food Potluck*  
*March 11<sup>th</sup> – Soup Supper*  
*March 18<sup>th</sup> – Italian Potluck*  
*March 25<sup>th</sup> – Best Casserole Potluck*

Save the Date  
 Friday, March 13 at 10am  
 Siimon Haamer from the Tartu Academy of Theology in Estonia will be visiting.  
 Come learn about the work that is being done through the Academy as well as Siimon's family story of life in Estonia behind the Iron Curtain.



**JUDGES**  
*Christ Among the Unsaintly*  
 A LENTEN SERMON SERIES  
 WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6PM  
*Begins February 25th*  
**LENT 2026**




**OWLS**  
 (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.

*Naomi's Friends*



**Naomi's Friend's is a Widow's Support Group.**

They meet the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month  
at Lugo's @ 11:45am.

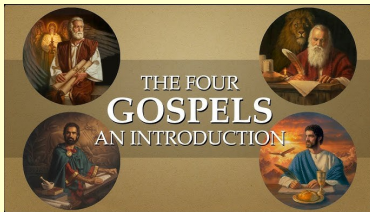
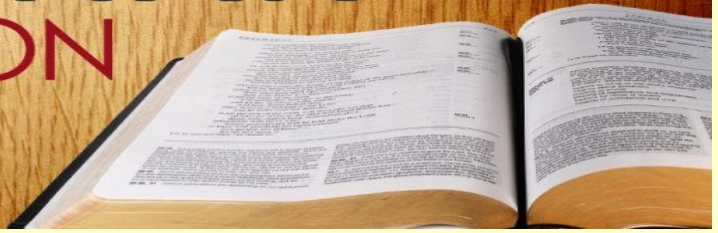
**HOLY WEEK**



**WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

Palm Sunday      March 29 at 8 & 10:30am  
 Maundy Thursday April 2 at 7pm  
 Good Friday      April 3 at 7pm  
 Easter Sunday    April 5 at 6:30, 8, & 10:30am

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Peace Bible Study meets the third Wednesday of the month at 9 am in the CR. The study is called *Introduction to the Four Gospels*. All are welcome.



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

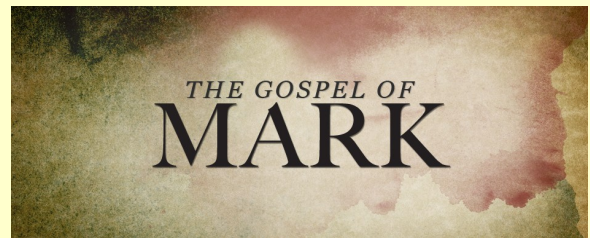
Team 784 meets in the Fellowship Hall

For ages 3rd grade to 90+

Kingdom Kids meets in the Conference Room for kids up to 2nd grade & adults



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](mailto:marknsue78@gmail.com) for further information regarding this class.



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

*Spotlighting*  
*the Family of Grace*

Ashley, Katherine  
and Nikki Olive



Who would believe the charm of living in this small desert town could draw anyone from as far away as Sydney, Australia? But Ashley Olive arrived in the early 2000's and went to work with Searles Valley Minerals as a Mechanical Engineer in their Capital Projects Dept.

Katherine had only driven by the sign to Ridgecrest in her youth en route to Mammoth before she also decided to come in search of a life in our community. Like Ashley, she went to work with Searles Valley Minerals in Trona, where she was Environmental Lab Director of the valley and Supervising Chemist of the main lab. Katherine's boss played matchmaker and after discovering many shared interests, love bloomed. Katherine and Ashley were married by Pastor Kris shortly after his arrival at Grace in 2018.

Katherine became familiar with Grace by attending concert association meetings held there as she served for years as member, treasurer and vice president. Having been raised in the Lutheran Church community in Southern CA, but distanced from church in adulthood, she suggested attending to Ashley, who was raised in the Anglican Church growing up in Australia. They started attending Grace together in 2011, enjoyed joining dinner with friends, and still enjoy hearing God's Word every Sunday since eagerly joining Grace's church family as members in 2012.

Katherine sang with the praise team and Ashley worked audio/visual, where he was involved with getting Grace on livestream, which turned out to be a real blessing when covid hit! Not surprisingly, life changed dramatically when their daughter Nikki arrived in 2021. Katherine became a stay-at-home mom supporting Nikki's development, achievements and discoveries. Hopefully, Nikki inherited her mother's singing talent! Nikki now attends pre-school and ballet lessons and can look forward to her parents introducing her to their favorite things: hiking (particularly when photographing rare flowers), camping, snorkeling reefs (Ashley introduced Katherine on their honeymoon), snow skiing (Katherine introduced Ashley just prior to Nikki's arrival) and, maybe this fall, meeting with new dinner with friends groups.

## Katherine's Chili Recipe

### Ingredients:

2 ½ lb	Ground Turkey
1	White Onion, chopped
1	Red Bell Pepper, chopped
2 cloves	Garlic, chopped
3 Tbsp	Chilli Powder
1 ½ tsp	Dried Oregano
1 tsp	Cumin
1 tsp	Dried Basil
¼ tsp	Red Pepper flakes (optional)
2 lb	Tomatoes, chopped
2	Tomato Sauce, 8 oz can
1	Tomato Paste, 6 oz can
1 Tbsp	Sugar
2 tsp	Salt
1	Kidney Beans, 15 oz can, washed and drained
1	Black Beans, 15 oz can, washed and drained



### Directions:

1. Add oil to a large pot and brown meat on high heat.
2. Add onion, bell pepper, garlic, chili powder, oregano, cumin, basil, red pepper, and mix well, cook for approx. 5 min while stirring.
3. Stir in tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste, sugar, salt and mix well.
4. Once boiling, reduce heat to low and simmer for 40 minutes covered.
5. Add beans, and simmer for 10 minutes covered.

Serve topped with shredded cheese, and/or saltines, and/or in a bread bowl.

# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 6 pm Youth Group	<b>2</b> 5:30pm Model Plane Group 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>3</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>4</b> 9am Music Together 6 pm Lenten Supper	<b>5</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	<b>6</b> 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>7</b> 10am Music Together
<b>8</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 6 pm Youth Group	<b>9</b> 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>10</b> 1:30pm OWLS 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>11</b> 11:45am Naomi's Friend's @ Lugo's 9am Music Together 6 pm Lenten Supper	<b>12</b> 2:30pm Parkinson's Group 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	<b>13</b> 10am Estonia Speaker 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>14</b> 10am Music Together 4pm Peter Pinto Concert
<b>15</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 6 pm Youth Group	<b>16</b> 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>17</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	<b>18</b> 9 am Peace Bible Study 9am Music Together 6 pm Lenten Supper	<b>19</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	<b>20</b> 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>21</b> 8am IMTT Renewal 10am Music Together
<b>22</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 6 pm Youth Group	<b>23</b> 6:30 pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>24</b> 1:30 pm OWLS 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>25</b> 11:45am Naomi's Friend's @ Lugo's 9am Music Together 6 pm Lenten Supper	<b>26</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	<b>27</b> 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>28</b> 10am Music Together
<b>29</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour Palm Sunday	<b>30</b> 6:30 pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>31</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>1 APRIL</b>	<b>2 APRIL</b> 7pm Maundy Thursday	<b>3 APRIL</b> 7pm Good Friday	<b>4 APRIL</b>
<b>5 APRIL</b> Easter Sunday 6:30am 8am 10:30am						

Celebrating 70 Years  
 1956 - 2026  
**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)



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[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/gracelutheran.org)

We're on the Web at:

Rev. Kris Madsen, *Senior Pastor*  
 Rev. Carleton Smece, *Associate Pastor*  
 Christine McClain, *Office Manager*  
 Jane Kuhlman, *Music*  
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Worship Services Sundays at 8 & 10:30 am  
 Christian Education Hour Sundays 9:15 am

