



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering in Grace, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

April 2025 Newsletter

Pastor's Ponderings



Several years ago my husband and I went to see "Les Miserables" on Broadway. It was excellent, as I knew it would be. The music was gorgeous, the acting was superb, and the show was heart-wrenching and heartwarming at the same time. For 3 hours, we were transported to Revolution-era France to eavesdrop on the

lives of interesting, challenged, flawed characters. I love Les Mis because it's filled with moments of grace and redemption, forgiveness and sacrifice. As we sat in the theater, laughing, crying, and suffering with the characters, we felt like we were almost a part of the drama. I love a good drama – watching, reading, and writing them – hence, our Lenten dramas. I feel like we can learn about the Bible in different ways when we see stories acted out, when we see characters come to life in front of us. God's Word comes to life to us in new ways when we can watch it, rather than just read or listen to it.

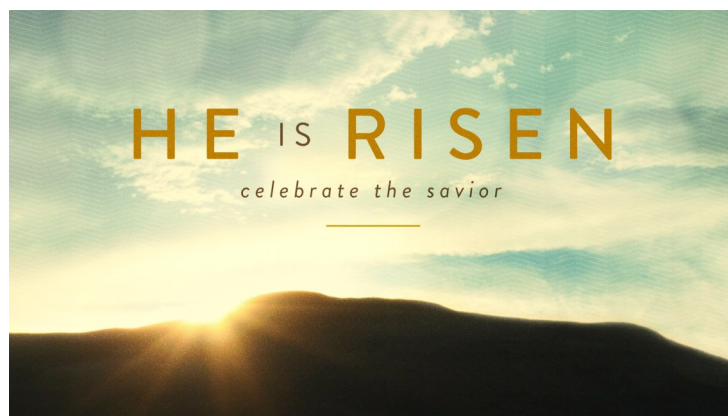
This month, Lent will draw to a close. We will watch another drama unfold in front of us in our worship. Jesus will enter Jerusalem again, being welcomed with palm branches and shouts of "Hosanna!" The leaders will fear the power Jesus has over the people. The disciples will struggle to understand Jesus' words, and some will waver in their loyalty to him. Jesus will be taken away, beaten, mocked, and nailed to the cross as the crowds demand his death, and while his followers flee and weep.

But this drama isn't a performance, after which we go out for dessert. This drama is the very heart of our faith, a drama that demands our participation. We're not merely observers in this story. We will wave palm branches and shout, "Hosanna!" We will realize our flaws and see our part in grieving our Lord. We will grieve as our Lord goes to the cross, realizing our own sins and guilt along the way. We will leave in silence, following Jesus' last breath.

My friends, this drama is our story of salvation. We don't just watch it unfold. We join in the drama, realizing that everything Jesus did was for us. And we're mindful that after the tears of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the drama is not yet finished. We are invited to return again that Sunday morning, to sing, to praise, to rejoice that Jesus' story is not finished on the cross. We will gather to rejoice, knowing that God's story is our story, and it's a greater story of grace and redemption than we could ever imagine. Join us for worship during Holy Week to participate in your story of salvation, remembering that everything Jesus did, he did for you.

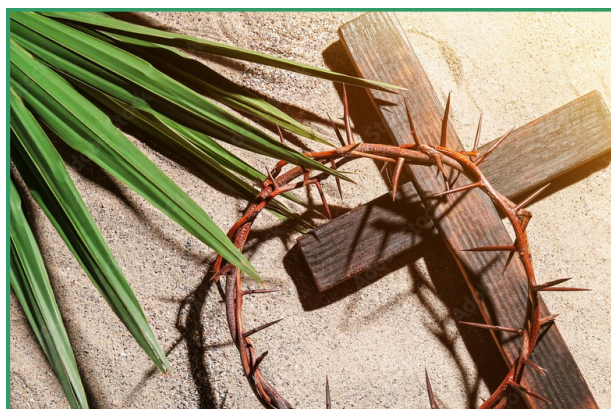
In Christ,
+ *Pastor Jennifer*





Midweek Lent Worship

Join us for our final 2 midweek Lent services on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm for the conclusion of the drama series, "The Making of 'Messiah: A Documentary.'" Stan & Sylvia will hear from several children who got to meet Jesus, and they'll meet one of Jesus' own disciples as well.



Journey Through Holy Week

April 13: Palm Sunday Worship - 9am

April 17: Maundy Thursday Service - 7pm

April 18: Good Friday

Community Service at Veteran's Park-12 noon

Good Friday Service - 7pm

April 20: Easter Sunday Worship - 7am & 9am

Confirmation Corner



As we continue during Lent, students are required to attend the Wednesday night Lenten services at 6:30 p.m. – April 2 and 9. And to complete the final sermon note in their booklet, they need to attend either the Maundy Thursday (April 17) or Good Friday (April 18) service, both at 7:00 p.m. Please keep an eye on the acolyte schedule, as we have extra services this month. Mentor Night this month is April 23, with a return to class on April 30.

Want to worship from home? Here's how!

Grace's Sunday services continue to be broadcast on Spectrum cable channel 987 Sundays at 9am. Sunday services are also livestreamed on Grace's Facebook page. Just looking for sermons? Check out our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdWxSntOyuupFnyLgxSU8aw>

Holy Humor Sunday – April 27

Mark your calendars! Not only do we have Easter this month, but we have Holy Humor Sunday! Join us the Sunday after Easter for our annual celebration of joy and laughter, laughing at Jesus' defeat of death at his resurrection. Want to share a joke or funny story? You can either share it yourself on April 27, write it down at church, or send it to Pastor Jennifer by April 23. And if you feel like wearing something goofy to worship that day, we'd love it!

Thank You!

A big thank you to the talented Neil Johnson, who designed and created these beautiful signs for our rooms and offices at Grace. Notice the Grace logo bracket. Thanks, Neil!

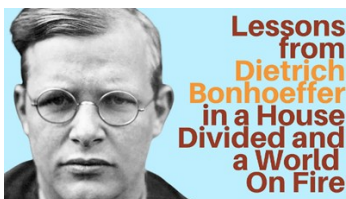


MEMBER DEATHS/ FUNERALS

Louise Butterbaugh - Burial, March 14, 2025

Monday Night Bible Study

Join us as we continue exploring the life and theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and the lessons we can use as we live at the intersection of faith and civic life today. Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor and theologian living in Nazi Germany, who eventually joined the resistance and was arrested and killed before the end of WWII. The studies are Monday nights at 7 pm.



March 31 – Bonhoeffer: Taking a Stand
April 7 – Against Christian Nationalism

Church Office Hours

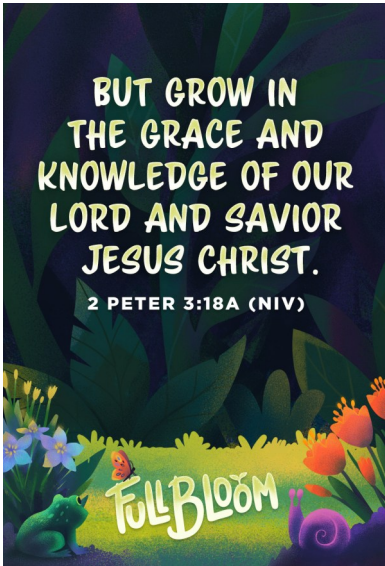
The Church Office is open from 9 am – noon, Monday through Friday. Variable additional hours are available; please contact us if you'd like to make an appointment (608)423-3135 or via email at gracelutherancambridgwi@gmail.com



APRIL CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<p>30</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:15 am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p> <p>7pm Bonhoeffer Study</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9 am Ruth Circle</p> <p>11am Outreach Committee</p> <p>5:30 Soup Supper</p> <p>6:30 pm Lent Worship</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:10 am Sunday School</p> <p>10:15am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p> <p>7pm Bonhoeffer Study</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7pm Council Meeting</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9 am Lydia Circle</p> <p>5:30 Soup Supper</p> <p>6:30 pm Lent Worship</p>	<p>10</p> <p>2 pm Staff Mtg</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13 PALM SUNDAY</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:10 am RISEN Eggstravaganza</p> <p>10:15 am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Newsletter content due</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7 pm Maunder Thursday Worship</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12 pm Community Good Friday Service</p> <p>7 pm Good Friday Service</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 EASTER SUNDAY</p> <p>7 am Sunrise Service</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p>	<p>21</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6:30 pm Confirmation</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:10 am Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p> <p>7pm Study</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:30 pm Confirmation</p>	<p>MAY 1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6 pm Piano Recital</p>	<p>3</p>

GROWING FAITH-FILLED KIDS



What We're Learning in Sunday School

Spring is the season for new beginnings! Whether you're cleaning out parts of your home or watching the flowers bloom in your garden, it's a time for new life and growth. Like a good gardener, Jesus wanted to help cultivate the seeds of faith in his friends so they could all grow closer to God. In this 4-week series, kids will learn all about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as he sowed the seeds of new life in the world. Kids will discover that God sent Jesus to save us, Jesus understands when we're hurting, makes all things new, and connects us to God. This series is all about growing in faith and blossoming in God's love.

Important Sunday School Dates

April 13th (Palm Sunday): RISEN Easter Event
April 20th - NO Sunday School (Easter Sunday)
May 25th: Kids Takeover Worship

RISEN: Grow with God

(April 13th during Sunday School)

Mark your calendars for April 13th from 10:15 am to 12:00 pm, for our Easter event - *Risen: Grow with God*. We'll be celebrating with an Easter Egg Hunt at the end of the event! Please note, there will be no Sunday school on April 20th in observance of Easter. We look forward to seeing everyone as we grow together in God's love!



2025 Lenten Challenge

Don't forget our Lenten Challenge this spring! Our focus is on refugees here in the US who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, violence, and/or persecution. They are here legally, after a 2-5 year intensive vetting process. They are authorized for employment and expected to work. We are joining the efforts of the Lutheran Social Services Refugee Resettlement program to assist refugees in achieving job placement and attain self-sufficiency. Some of the services provided may include cash assistance to help with basic needs like food, shelter, and transportation, health insurance, employment services for job readiness, English language classes, and medical screening.



Please join us as we reach out to our brothers and sisters. Your donation can help us reach our goal of raising \$2,000 for refugee services by Easter Sunday, April 20th. Be sure to include 'Lenten Challenge' in the memo line of any donations.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!



Erik Jelinek



Robert Kyle



Amanda, Nathan, & Evany Kress



Nikki Wykowski, Johnny, Eilza, Roxy, & Tess Armstrong



Erika Froeming, Matt Kiehn, & Callen Keihn

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2025

(Minutes below not approved until next Council meeting)

Call to Order. President Kelly Witte called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Attendance. Present: Sandi Aston Hall, Steve Bielefeldt, Pr. Jennifer Jelinek, Marcia Klemp, Connie Kreuser, Charlene Luchterhand, April Mickelson, Kristen Rue, Richard Scott, Amy Simdon, Kelly Witte. **Absent:** John Jensen, Peggy Punsel.

Devotions. Amy shared devotions.

Approval of Minutes. Steve moved to approve the February minutes. Richard seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by those who attended the February meeting.

Approval of Agenda. Char moved to approve the agenda. Amy seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Correspondence. Pr. received an e-mail from Lutheran Campus Ministry in Madison. They have a new pastor, and we are invited to an open house on April 6 from 2:00-4:00 pm.

Treasurer's Report. We had a net loss of \$4,346 in February, giving us a total loss of \$3,328 for the year. Our General Giving for February was \$13,517 less than 2024 and \$2,569 less than the 2025 budget. The February Special Giving was \$1,881 more than last year and \$9,086 less than budget. Our February expenses were \$9,970 less than last year although most of the difference was due to the sabbatical expenses last year. We were \$7,243 under budget. The checking balance was \$4,249 less than at the end of January with the general fund balance approximately \$5,074 less. April moved to approve this treasurer's report and send it to audit. Marcia seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Pastor's Report. Lent has begun. Seventy-six people attended the Ash Wednesday service. The first of five soup suppers will be held tomorrow. Supper at 5:30 PM with the worship service at 6:30 PM. Pr. and her family will be on vacation during March 22-29. Pr. Jennifer Kuhnert will fill in as pastor on March 23.

Committee Reports. (Provided in writing and/or discussed in the meeting as needed.)

- **Education.** (Kristen). Planning to finish the youth space this summer, and looking forward to furniture donations and new carpet. Kris Tobias is working on Internet access for downstairs.
- **Outreach & Social Justice.** (April) Has set a Lenten goal of \$2,000 designated for refugees in Wisconsin. Working with Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Inc. Have set up a display in the narthex and will place "quiz" cards on the soup supper tables to promote thoughtful discussions. May also post facts in the Sunday bulletins to promote refugee awareness.

- **Worship.** (Sandi) Lenten services will follow the usual schedule with soup suppers held prior to service. Each service will include Holden Evening Prayer and a short drama that Pr. Jennifer has written. There will be an early morning Easter service in addition to our regular service, as the early services have been well-received during the past few years. Easter flowers will be ordered through "Honey Bee a Flower" florist shop. Pr. Jennifer will contact Jeanine Thurow about creating new paraments for Easter and also discuss decorating for Easter with Jill Jensen.

Old Business.

- **Communion Rail Cushions.** After our February meeting, another potential fabric option became available when Jill Jensen located the source of the fabric on our pews. Sherpa Scarlet is still made by Absecon Mills. Char has been in contact with Pete of Heirloom Furniture Repair. He is able and willing to order it. The fabric we chose in February costs \$77.90/yard and Sherpa Scarlet is less at \$62.50/yard, although Pete estimates that shipping costs may be twice the cost of the other fabric, since Absecon Mills is in New Jersey. Char moved that we move ahead with Sherpa Scarlet rather than the fabric we voted on in February. Using this fabric will provide a consistent look to our sanctuary rather than introducing another color and pattern. It has held up well on our pews, and most members who saw samples liked the red, consistent look. Char further moved that if for some reason there is an impediment to ordering Sherpa Scarlet, we will revert back to our original choice. Sandi seconded both parts of the motion. Unanimously approved. Char will contact Pete with our decision. He will order the fabric right away. When he receives it, he will send us an invoice. When we pay the invoice, he will reserve our spot on his schedule.
- **Personal Safety Task Force.** Will meet after Easter.
- **Carpet.** Richard will pick up carpet samples this week for Catherine to choose from for the Administrative Office. Cost will be around \$1500. To be installed after Easter. The estimate to carpet the lower level (rooms and hallways) is \$17K- \$18K. We discussed options (rolled carpet, carpet squares, luxury vinyl plank, concrete coating) and timing (i.e., does it all need to be done at once?). Richard will explore options. Given other property issues requiring attention, we will need to establish priorities. Pr. Jennifer will discuss needs/desires with the Sunday School staff. Pr. Jennifer ordered one box of carpet tiles as back-up for our sanctuary.

New Business.

- **Pictorial Directory.** When printed, we are planning to offer copies to members for a "suggested donation."
- **Handicap Parking Spaces.** Food for thought and observation...Do we need more handicapped parking spaces, or do we have enough? It was suggested that white stripes may help us optimize the space in the front of the church.

Adjournment. Sandi moved to adjourn the meeting. Richard seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM. We ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 8 at 7:00 PM. Connie will present devotions.

Submitted by Charlene Luchterhand, Council Secretary

From the Treasurer

February 2025 Financial Snapshot

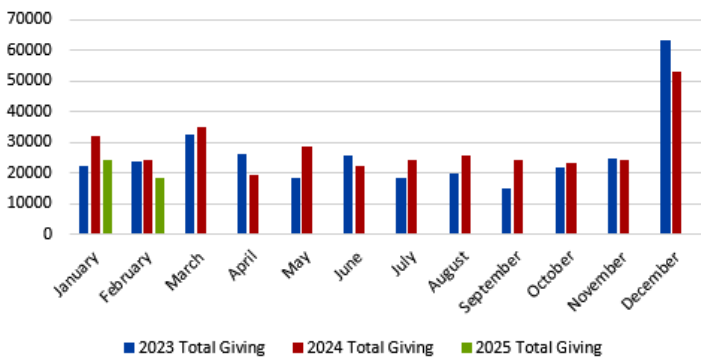
Income	Year-to-date February 2025 Actual	Year-to-date 2025 Monthly Budget	Over/(under) budget
General Giving	38,830	47,917	(9,086)
Special Giving	4,036	5,000	(964)
Misc Income	<u>2</u>	<u>586</u>	<u>(584)</u>
Total Income	42,868	53,502	(10,635)
Expenses			
Administrative	18,449	18,810	(361)
Mission	4,886	8,667	(3,780)
Pastoral	22,211	24,192	(1,981)
Program	649	1,770	(1,121)
Other	-	-	-
Total Expenses	46,196	53,439	(7,243)
Total Net Income	(3,328)		(3,392)

Thank you to everyone for your generosity and stewardship. Please remember that in addition to the Sunday service, you can give online through Vanco (<https://www.vancopayments.com/login>) or through Venmo, using the QR code.

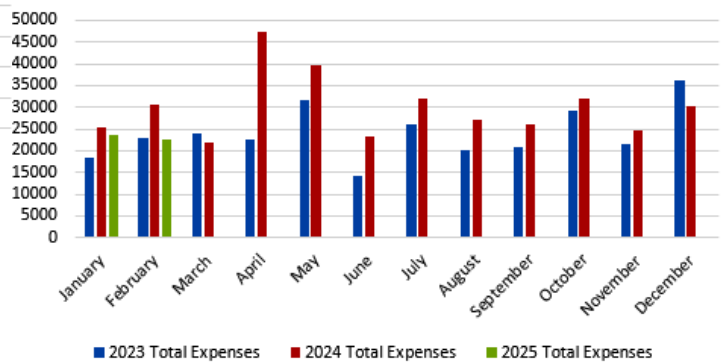


venmo

Comparison of Total Giving - 2023/2024/2025



Comparison of Total Expenses - 2023/2024/2025





Staff and Council



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Handbell Choir Director Ann Engelstad gaengelstad@charter.net

COUNCIL

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Vice President Steve Bielefeldt

Secretary Char Luchterhand

Treasurer Amy Simdon

Outreach April Mickelson

Education Kristin Rue

Stewardship Connie Kreuser

Hospitality Peggy Punsel

Evangelism Marcia Klemp

Worship Sandi Aston Hall

Property John Jensen

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