



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering in Grace, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

FEBRUARY 2024

Pastor's Ponderings



Our Bible study group is enjoying watching the TV series, "The Chosen." This series is a beautiful and creative depiction of Jesus' life and especially the lives of his disciples, "the chosen" 12. While the Bible does a great job of telling us what happened in Jesus' life and how Jesus touched the lives of thousands, "The Chosen" creatively gives the disciples backstories and tries to fill in some of the gaps to help us better understand these characters. It also takes time to look at how Jesus' ministry may have affected people and towns and local leaders along the way.

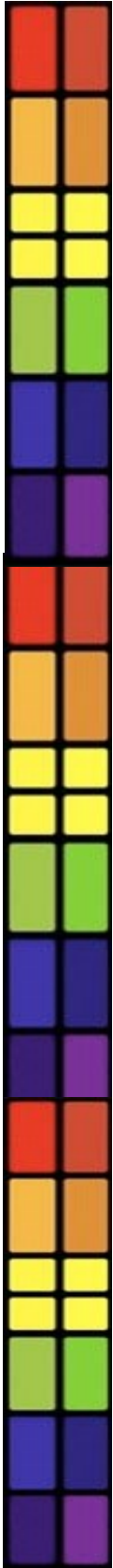
And coincidentally, that's the focus of a Lenten drama series I wrote over a decade ago, called, "In Jesus' Wake." It follows people who were affected by Jesus' ministry, after their encounter with him. For instance, what happened to the Gerasene demoniac after Jesus healed him? What happened to Zebedee Sr. after James and John left his fishing business to follow Jesus? What about the boy who shared his lunch, leading to the Feeding of the 5,000? What happened when Jesus moved on to other ministries? What happened "in Jesus' wake"? So this year seems like the right time to ponder these things in our mid-week Lent services.

Lent begins on Valentine's Day this year, which means Ash Wednesday has an oddly-divided focus, both on love and mortality. I hope you will join us for worship on Feb. 14 at 7:00 p.m. for Ash Wednesday as we begin this journey together. For the remaining Wednesdays in Lent, we'll enjoy Soup Suppers starting at 5:30, followed by Holden Evening Prayer worship at 6:30 p.m. where we'll also consider what happened, "In Jesus' Wake," using many talented actors from Grace. I hope you'll join us.

In Christ,
+ *Pastor Jennifer*

Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday Dinner – Tues. February 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Mardi Gras in Cambridge? Yes please! On the day before Lent begins, our Youth invite you to a Mardi Gras Dinner to help fund their Youth Gathering Trip to New Orleans. Come share in the festive atmosphere and enjoy jambalaya, cornbread casserole, bananas foster, pancakes, sausage, and other goodies prepared by our youth. This is an event you won't want to miss. Tickets are available for purchase on Sunday mornings or by contacting Pastor Jennifer.





Midweek Lent Worship

Believe it or not, Lent is almost here! So this year Valentine's Day's and Ash Wednesday both are on Feb. 14.

Feb. 14 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship

Feb. 21 5:30 pm Soup Supper

6:30 pm Lent Worship

Feb. 28 5:30 pm Soup Supper

6:30 pm Lent Worship

Lent Soup Suppers

What's Lent without Lenten Soup Suppers? Lent Soup Suppers will be held from 5:30-6:15 on Wednesday nights from Feb. 21 – March 20. Want to help serve or bring soup one of the Wednesdays? Check out the sign-up in the Fellowship Hall.

Confirmation Corner



This month, Mentor Night will be Wed. Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m. Mentors and students are encouraged to attend together, especially to get instructions on the Lent Project. In place of Confirmation class, all confirmands will attend the Wednesday night Lent services.

Sheets and Fabric Needed

Grace Quilters are in great need of clean, stain-free, cotton sheets. Any sewers who have unused fabric around, quilters would appreciate that donation as well. Donations can be dropped off at the church office.

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>

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

Monday Night Bible Study

In February, our Monday night study will feature 2 weeks of episodes from "The Chosen." Then after Lent begins, we'll do a 3-week bible study produced by the organization featured in our Lenten Challenge – AMMPARO – Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities. Immigration, asylum, and refugee issues are so complex and often misunderstood. Come learn more about the issues and how children who have fled from their homes in Central America are getting help through this ELCA initiative. Class starts at 7 pm each Monday night.

Feb. 5 – The Chosen: Clean, Part 1

Feb. 12 – The Chosen: Clean, Part 2

Feb. 19 – AMMPARO – Hospitality

Feb. 26 – AMMPARO – Who is Your Neighbor?

March 4 – AMMPARO – Making Change

Hospitality Committee Opening

We are looking for a few new members to serve on the Hospitality Committee. This committee is responsible for the Church celebrations and would love some more smiling faces. The hospitality committee helps with Lenten soup suppers, celebrations in the church like new member receptions, and the church picnic, to name a few. If you have just a little time to help us make our events even better, please contact Peggy Punsel at 608-347-7169.

Star Words

In this season when we celebrate the star that guided the magi to Jesus, we continue the tradition of Star Words here at Grace. There's still time to pick up a star with a word to help guide and focus you throughout this new year. If you'd like to receive a star virtually, you may go to this web-site: www.wordsatgrace.com



Enjoy the Snow?



Thanks so those who have kept our walkways clear! We continue to look for volunteers to shovel walks after a snowstorm. If you can help, please sign up on the kiosk in the Fellowship Hall.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
28 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sanctuary Choir	29 9:30 am Quilters 7pm The Chosen Study	30	31 6:30 pm Confirmation	1	2	3
4 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sanctuary Choir	5 9:30 am Quilters 7pm The Chosen Study	6	7 9 am Ruth Circle 11am Outreach Committee 6:30 pm Confirmation & Pre- Confirmation	8 10 am Staff Mtg	9	10
11 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15am Sanctuary Choir	12 9:30 am Quilters 7pm The Chosen Study	13 5:30- 7:30pm Mardi Gras Dinner	14 ASH WEDNESDAY 9 am Lydia Circle 7 pm Ash Wednesday Worship	15 Newsletter content due	16	17
18 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sanctuary Choir 11am-3pm Council Re- treat	19 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Lent Study	20	21 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service	22	23	24
25 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sanctuary Choir	26 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Lent Study	27	28 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service	29	MAR 1	2

GROWING FAITH-FILLED KIDS



Sunday School Started on 1/17!

We welcomed back our Sunday School students on 1/17 for the Spring Semester. Our first lesson is THROWBACK, a dive into the teachings of Jesus. From retro toys to fashion



trends, we all love a good throwback (especially for grown-ups because it reminds us of being young again). There are things that remind us of a moment in time, but other things feel timeless and like they're always in style. In this four-week series, kids will travel through the decades and see that the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels are always trending. As we hear from Jesus, we'll see it's always good to be humble, we can always forgive, Jesus is always fair, and love always needs action.

Bible Blessing

On Sunday, January 14th, during our worship service at 9:00 AM, we witnessed a special blessing for our students as they receive their very own Bibles. Pastor Jennifer presented a Bible to each family who then "placed into their child's hands the Holy Scriptures" as they promised them in baptism. After worship, there was a short class for our recipients to learn Bible Basics and take a tour through its holy work. Students who received bibles include Bentley Bauer, Elliott Bernhardt, Atticus DeMauro, Josephine Rue, Avery Schutte, Jack Cassidy, Ashton Thayer, Paige Neuenschwander, Jack Cassidy and Eleanor Mabie.

Lutherdale!

Time to start thinking Summer! Registration is now open for Lutherdale Summer Camp! Check out all the details on their website (<https://www.lutherdale.org/summer-camp>) and join us online for a Facebook Live FAQ if you're interested in sending your camper this summer! Here are the basic details:

- Grades 1st-2nd: July 7-9 or July 10-12, 2024
- Grades 3rd-8th: July 7-12, 2024
- Located in Elkhorn, Wisconsin
- Cost ~\$200, with fundraising opportunities through GLC



For more information about Lutherdale offerings, visit <https://www.lutherdale.org/>

Outreach and Social Justice

First of all, a big "Thank you" to everyone who participated in the ELCA Good Gifts and Fair Trade sale that was held during Advent. Over \$900 was sent to Good Gifts for the purchase of many chicks, goats, and pigs, as well as honeybees, Bibles, vaccines, school supplies, help for refugees, and even a latrine.



And, we hope that you enjoyed the good Fair Trade chocolate bars, cocoa, coffees, and tea. There are a few items left for purchase, located at the end of the kitchen counter. Please serve yourself and leave money in the tin provided.

Our Lenten Challenge will be for the ELCA's AMMPARO initiative. Join us in worship on Sunday, Feb. 18 to learn more, as we welcome AMMPARO representative Mary Campbell to share what AMMPARO is all about. More info will also be available in next month's newsletter.

Stewardship: We Are Called



"So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart."

Psalm 90: 12

It's a new year of stewardship—using our time, talents, and treasure wisely. As the earth lies sleeping beneath the snow and ice, a plan for

a Pollinator Garden on our church grounds is moving forward. If you're a gardener you probably enjoy looking at seed and plant catalogs this time of year, because you do need to plan ahead. A new garden plot of any kind involves work, and the committee will be asking some experts about a ideal size and location, choices of plants, and other materials. Volunteer opportunities are ahead!

The time and talent sheets you completed in the fall have been reviewed to match up your interests and skills with some of the congregational committees that can use a few more members. The coffee hour schedule for 2024 has been mailed out—please look for your one week to serve and note it on your calendar.

CART Needs YOU!

If you're looking for volunteer opportunities or interested in donating to our local food pantry, we can help!

There is a donation drop box outside of the food pantry for donated items. For large donations, volunteer opportunities, or monetary donations, please contact the food pantry at 608.423.8142 or <https://cambridgecap.net/programs/nutrition/food-pantry/>

Cambridge Food Pantry Wish List



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2024, via Zoom due to weather

(Minutes below not approved until next Council meeting)

Call to Order. Vice-President Bob Koepp called the meeting to order at 7:10.

Attendance. Present: Mary Behling, April Mickelson, Bill Becker, Amy Simdon, Bob Koepp, Ann Engelstad, Bill Reay, Shawn Whitman, and Pastor Jennifer Jelinek. **Absent:** Peggy Punsel, Kelly Witte, and Connie Kreuser.

Devotions. Shawn Whitman presented devotions.

Approval December Minutes. Amy Simdon moved to approve the December minutes as written, April Mickelson seconded the motion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Approval of Agenda. Bill Reay moved to approve the proposed Agenda, Ann Engelstad seconded the Motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Correspondence. None to report.

Treasurer's Report. (a) Amy Simdon presented the December reports and her financial narrative for all to review. She noted that Grace was blessed with some generous year-end general gifts which resulted in a net gain of \$27,629.58 in December and a year-to-date gain of \$29,790.14. In addition, a specific donation was made to purchase a new computer and 2 screens for Catherine Elliot's office. Sufficient funds were left over to also purchase a new laptop for Pastor Jennifer. As of December 31, year-to-date General Giving was 9.4% (\$24,020) higher than 2022 and we ended the year 2.4% above budget. Special Giving was \$17,468 less than last year's year-to-date figures, but \$5,298 over budget. Total year-to-date giving was approximately \$7,600 more than last year and \$15,860 over budget. Total year-to-date expenses were \$20 less than last year and \$13,568 under budget. The end result through December 31 is that year-to-date ordinary net income is about \$7,600 more than 2022. Finally, the checking account balance has increased from \$9,443 to \$29,051. Ann Engelstad moved to approve the treasurer's report and send it to audit, Bill Reay seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Pastor's Report. Pastor Jennifer stated that she will be presenting Bibles to the third and fourth graders on January 14 and will then hold a small class to teach them how to use them. She also reminded everyone that the LEAD event will be held on Saturday, Feb. 17, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Prairie du Sac. If anyone is interested, they should register themselves directly at the event's website and let her know they will be attending. The church will reimburse the registration fee. The nominating committee is nominating Kristin Rue to take over as chair of Christian Education, Sandi Aston-Hall to take over as chair of Worship, and Char Luchterhand to take over as Secretary. The chairperson spot for Property is still open. She stated that some people have asked about having a new pictorial directory done and noted that some possible ideas are starting to be explored. Finally, she expressed Catherine's appreciation for the new computer and indicated Kris Tobias is coming in to help her set it up.

Committee Reports. April Mickelson (Outreach) reported that the Advent Fair Exchange and Good Gifts has raised \$922 which was submitted to purchase a variety of items. They are close to breaking even on their initial investment for sale items and are confident of meeting that goal. There are still some donation funds available to purchase items for both the LAYETTES and School Kits. The Blue Jay Backpack project has started with a wide variety of snacks donated at this time. The bags will be picked up on Jan. 22 and they plan to stuff them at Grace on Jan. 24 at 10 a.m. A thank you video was received from the ELCA. Discussion is underway for the next Lenten Challenge. Peggy Punsel (Hospitality) reported that are still looking to add some volunteers to the committee and they will be meeting in February for upcoming Lenten events. Ann Engelstad (Worship) provided a copy of the 2023 Worship Committee Report which will be printed in full in the Annual Report. Bill Reay (Property) reported that he has not received a reply yet from Jefferson Glass Inc. regarding the front doors. Connie Kreuser (Stewardship) submitted a report that they are moving forward with the pollinator garden proposal. They will be looking over the grounds with some experts regarding a good location and they have a commitment for some plant donations. They are considering a spring fund raiser and will be requesting monetary donations and supplemental things such as mulch and additional plants, and possibly volunteers to help plant. Catherine Elliott has offered to send out Time/Talents/Treasures forms to new congregational members and Janet Koepp has offered to complete the tallying process so they can follow up with members. No other reports this month.

Old Business. (a) Front Door - Bill. As noted under Committee Reports, there is nothing new at this time. When the committee hears from Jefferson Glass, Inc., they will contact Pastor Jennifer. General information regarding the possible project will be presented to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. **(b) Pollinator Garden.** Nothing beyond Connie's report noted under Committee Reports. **(c) 2024 Budget.** After the budget was approved last month, Breah Klemp approached Amy and indicated that she had actually asked for \$3,500 for Sunday School/Confirmation due to the number of new families with children. Bill Becker moved to amend the budget to increase the Sunday School/Confirmation budget to \$3,500 and increase the anticipated income by \$1,000 to keep the budget balanced and to approve the budget as so amended. Mary Behling seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

New Business. (a) Annual Meeting Agenda. Pastor Jennifer presented a proposed Agenda for the Annual Meeting. It was suggested that Sabbatical be added under Unfinished Business. April Mickelson moved to approve the Annual Meeting Agenda with such addition, Bill Reay seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. **(b) Staff Office Plan.** Pastor Jennifer stated that she and staff members have been working on a plan to reorganize the office next to hers to make the space more user friendly for staff meetings as well as still available for the music department use. It was agreed that this is a worthwhile project. **(c) February Meeting.** Pastor Jennifer said the next meeting would usually be Feb. 13, but that's the day before Ash Wednesday. She will talk to new and continuing members to pick an alternate date.

Adjournment. There being no further business, Bill Becker moved to adjourn the meeting, Bill Reay seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned, followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Report submitted by Mary Behling, Council Secretary.

From the Treasurer

December 2023 Financial Snapshot

Income	Year-to-date December 2023 Actual	Year-to-date 2023 Monthly Budget	Over/(under) budget
General Giving	278,662	272,000	6,662
Special Giving	35,298	27,000	8,298
Misc Income	3,940	3,040	900
Total Income	317,901	302,040	15,861
Expenses			
Administrative	95,677	105,566	(9,889)
Mission	51,549	47,000	4,549
Pastoral	133,813	136,473	(2,660)
Program	6,972	12,540	(5,568)
Other	-	-	-
Total Expenses	288,011	301,579	(13,568)
Total Net Income (Loss)	29,890	461	29,429

Thank you for all of the generous year-end donations. We are starting 2024 with a strong balance in our account that will allow us to continue sharing the Good News to our members and community.

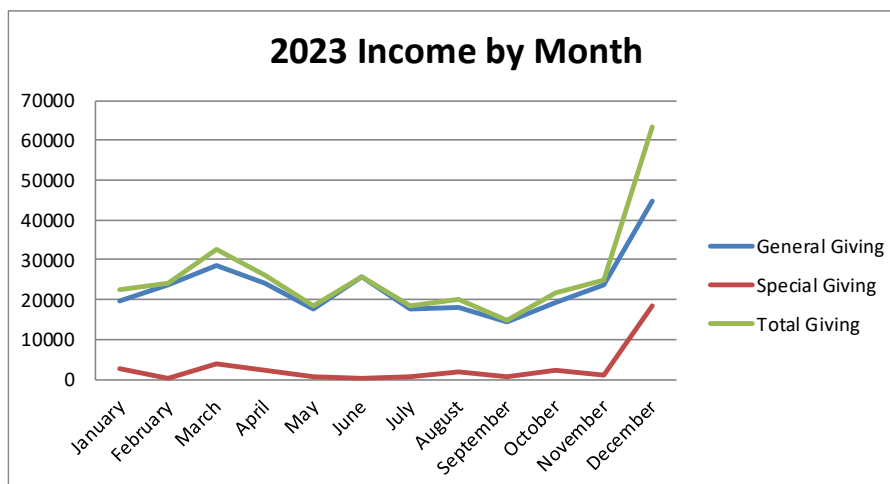
Please remember that in addition to the Sunday service, you can give online through Vanco

<https://www.vancopayments.com/login>

or through Venmo, using the QR code.



venmo





Staff and Council



STAFF

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Volunteer Coordinator Cindy Hartman cindyh1029@msn.com

Financial Secretary Diane Russo Cell: (847) 826-0131 gracelutheranfinance@gmail.com

Organist Kenneth Hoversten kenneth.hoversten@gmail.com

Handbell Choir Director Ann Engelstad gaengelstad@charter.net

COUNCIL

President Kelly Witte

Vice President Bob Koepf

Secretary Mary Behling

Treasurer Amy Simdon

Outreach April Mickelson

Education Bill Becker

Stewardship Connie Kreuser

Hospitality Peggy Punsel

Evangelism Shawn Whitman

Worship Ann Engelstad

Property Bill Reay



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