

GRACE NOTES

April 2020



Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!
through

-  Meaningful
Worship
-  Caring
Community
-  Inspirational
Learning
-  Loving
Service
-  Gracious
Invitation

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A Note **FROM THE PASTOR**

Dear Saints of Grace:



You are receiving this April edition of Grace Notes two weeks behind schedule. You will also notice that there is no calendar included in this edition. The reason for both of those is the same: the public health crisis and consequent financial crisis that we are currently living through. Things change weekly, daily, even hourly, sometimes. We are currently under a stay at home order that is due to expire on April 7. Many health and public safety officials are suggesting that the order will be extended by at least a few weeks. The peak of infections in the Chicago area is not expected until mid-April. That

would coincide with the traditional dates of Holy Week and Easter. No one wants to give up our Easter celebration. And no one wants to celebrate the highlight of our religion—the death and resurrection of Jesus—hunkered down in our social distancing routines. My intuition is that Christian denominational leaders (bishops and such) will come to a widespread agreement to move the celebration of Holy Week and Easter to a later date. Nothing is certain at the moment. So we await further information and further direction from our public leaders.

Meanwhile, believe it or not, church goes on. I know that on-line and telephonic chats are taking place among our members and friends. I know that you are praying for one another. I know that many of you are stopping each day at noon to say the Lord's Prayer with fellow members of Grace, even if we can't be together. The ministries that we support—including Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and RefugeeOne—continue to serve people in desperate need in our own community, across the country and around the world. Our staff and several volunteers are strategizing how to jump start us into digital competencies that we have not used in the past. Perhaps by the time you get this Grace Notes, we will have figured out a way to create a meaningful community worship service on-line. Many much larger churches have had that capacity for a long time.

There is so much about the future that we just don't know. The bedrock of our faith, however, is now and always has been the love of God in Christ Jesus. That is not diminished. It's not shaded or shrouded somehow. **FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD...**

We go forward in faith. I close with the words of a familiar prayer: “ Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our lord. Amen.

In Christ's love, joy, peace and hope!

Pastor Daniel Schwick

P.S. Please consider this a gentle reminder to keep your tithes, pledges of regular offerings, flowing to Grace. Almost all of the church's regular expenses continue even during the current lockdown mode.

P.P.S. Last week you should have received a mailing from Grace in which I specifically asked members and friends to indicate their preferred way(s) of receiving various kinds of communications from Grace. I included a tear sheet at the bottom of the letter for you to register your preferences. I FAILED TO INCLUDE A LINE FOR YOUR NAME! Please clearly write your name on the form before returning it to the church office.

COUNCIL *Highlights*

The following are some of the highlights from the March 24th, church council meeting. This meeting was held via video conferencing due to the shelter in place order.

- Betty Dietrich will be fulfilling the rest of Sue Garfinkle's term due to Sue's move.
- The Preschool is closed until further notice due to COVID-19
- There will be a combined service with PETRA on Wednesday nights during the months of June, July and August. More information will be forthcoming once details are worked out and we are able to gather again.
- Holy Week will be postponed until we are able to gather again.
- The Spring Event will become a summer/fall event.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Send Easter Greetings: Send Easter Greetings to our shut-ins. Look for the poster near the East Entry and pick up a new revised list of addresses for our homebound friends and send them a much appreciated Easter greeting.

Zumba Gold: Zumba Gold is held in the Youth Room on Thursdays at 10:00am. Watch the bulletin and newsletter for the restart date.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Eucharistic Visits: We've put the home Eucharistic visits on hold for a while until the virus concerns have calmed down. However, if you or someone you know would like to receive communion at home please request a visit by contacting the church office and we'll arrange for a visit.

Do You Believe in the Power of Prayer? Come and join those who do. Come for a visit and pray with the prayer group on the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Tuesday morning of the month at 9:30am. Begin your Tuesday's with prayer and reflection. If you have

questions or want more information please contact Karen Gretz. We'll let you know when we begin meeting again.

Altar Flower Delivery: Please consider making someone's day a little brighter by delivering altar flowers to them. We need a few more people to volunteer to deliver the altar flowers on Sunday afternoon or on Monday to someone who is sick or who can't attend church for some reason. You will benefit from the visit as much as the person who receives the flowers. Contact Eileen Clark at 847-296-5840 and volunteer today. You won't have to do it that often so why not consider it?

Donate Fabric to the Project Day Quilters: Do you have some fabric that you're not using that you'd like to donate? Or do you know someone who has some that they'd like to donate? Please bring it to church so that it can be used to make quilts for those in need. If you have any questions please contact Joanne Coy at 847-699-0198.

Coffee Servers: We would like some new people to consider signing up to serve coffee on Sunday mornings after the service. We all enjoy the fellowship during this time - why not offer to serve the treats. Let Pam Walger or Barb Willis know if you'd like to volunteer.

Ushers Wanted: We are in need of ushers for our Sunday service. Please let us know if you'd like to serve. Contact the church office at 847-824-7408.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Outreach*

"Feed My Starving Children" – An Update: I am regretfully announcing that, after prayerful consideration, I have cancelled our group outing at the Schaumburg location, 740 Wiley Farm Court, originally scheduled for Tuesday, March 31st.

Due to continuing advisories from the Centers for Disease Control, and in particular Dr. Anthony Fauci, the Director of the National Institute of Health's Allergic Medicine division, it seemed to me unwise to expose a significant number of at higher risk people to an event with a large number of people working in close proximity to one another, especially at a time of continuing uncertainty about the spread of COVID-19, or the novel coronavirus.

Any of you who want to volunteer to help out Feed My Starving Children individually, you may sign up with them at any time on your own. Simply access the website www.fmsc.org and follow the prompts to volunteer.

I realize the impact this ministry has on children around the world who need it, but I felt I needed to also consider the risk to all of you, the faithful volunteers who keep this ministry alive at Grace. Until further notice, I will not be scheduling group outings until more clarity on the risks to particularly people over the age of 60 is achieved.

Please feel free to discuss this issue with me at any time. Greg Linwood

Buck-A-Chick: You have an opportunity to purchase a chick (or two) for a rural family in an underdeveloped country. This Palm Sunday and Easter there will be Buck-A-Chick flyers in the bulletins. Simply fold a dollar into the flyer and put it in the collection plate. The money will be distributed through the ELCA World Hunger Program. Think of all the cute, fluffy chicks we can give. What a great way to celebrate Easter!

Mother's Day Bake Sale: Help us make your Mother's Day complete by purchasing a sweet treat for her at our bake sale on May 10th. (Perhaps you'll find something for yourself or the rest of the family, too!)

Proceeds from the sale will make summer swim passes affordable for some families in River Trails District 26 and also make summer programs affordable for some children at Robert Frost School in District 21.

With your generous help – by donating baked goods (bring them to church the morning of May 10) and/or buying some yummy treats – you will again help make a few families very happy this summer. Thanks from your Social Ministry Committee.

La Trinidad Community Dinners: April 19 and May 17, 2020 have been set for the community dinners at La Trinidad Lutheran Church in Humboldt Park. Members of the Social Ministry Committee leave Grace at 9am and participate in the worship service before serving the dinners. We enjoy the fellowship of these dinners and have many new friends. The Committee usually brings chicken, salad, breadsticks and desserts for each meal. We are in need of help not only to serve the meals, but also to help fund the cost of the food. Look for the poster in the Atrium or speak to a member of the committee if you would like to join us for this rewarding ministry. Monetary donations may be placed in a pink pew envelope and marked "La Trinidad Dinners."

A Season of Hope: The baskets are in the east entryway. The need for towels, soap, combs, toothbrushes, and nail clippers is still there. Watch for details on the new collection dates for this important ministry.

Volunteer at a Summer PADS Site: Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Prospect Heights has partnered with Journeys the Road Home to be a summer PADS site. They are in need of volunteers for Wednesday evenings from May 1st through September 30th. They will be hosting 40 men, women and children for a hot dinner and a safe secure place to sleep. In the morning they provide breakfast and a sack lunch. They are looking for volunteer support for their community outreach. This support can be in the form of volunteering to work a "shift" or by providing food for a breakfast, lunch or dinner. One male and one female monitor/helper are needed for each shift. All volunteers must attend a 30-45 minute orientation at the HOPE center. Additional assistance may be provided in the form of food donations to provide items for breakfast, lunch and dinner each week. If you are interested in helping with this community outreach in any way please contact Nancy Krieg at 847-537-4353. Thanks!

Shop for the Food Pantry: Items needed include cans of tuna, chili, Spam, stew, corn, green beans, peaches, pears, spaghetti, chicken noodle soup, vegetable soup, beef vegetable soup, Spaghetti O's, pork and beans, and tomatoes. Also needed are boxes of Tuna Helper, macaroni and cheese, potato mixes, and rice mixes. Other food items requested are cake mixes, frosting mixes or cans of frosting, birthday candles, cookies and crackers. Non-perishable items needed include toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, dish soap and fabric softeners. Thanks for your continued support of this mission project. If you can't shop why not donate money in a pink pew envelope and mark it "Food Pantry" and food gift cards will be purchased for donation to the food pantry.

AROUND The Parish

Grace Garden Committee held its first meeting of 2020 and is preparing for a bountiful harvest later in 2020. We reviewed the successes from our inaugural garden in 2019 and discussed areas to improve upon. We will be building a compost bin to be located near the garden to collect compostable waste from the garden which will decompose over time and eventually returned to the garden. We will also be creating different structures to aid in the yield of specific plants as well as assist in the harvesting of the produce. Unanimously we agreed to involve the Sunday School and Preschool children more throughout the season in the planting and harvesting of the garden. The Sunday School children will harvest the garden as frequently as possible during their Sunday School lessons and join the Offertory Procession with the produce from that mornings harvest.



The garden beds will be prepped in the coming weeks, as the weather continues to improve looking toward a dedication ceremony in May. We plan to start growing plants from seeds very soon in order to have a very healthy crop of plants without the need to purchase the plants from the local retailers. We are planning to raise tomatoes, beans, peppers, cucumbers and carrots again this year.

Our committee is small, but talented and eager. If anyone else would like to join, even if they can only participate in one aspect of the process, you are all welcome. For example, not everyone can kneel on the ground to pull weeds or harvest the garden, but once the harvest is complete, we will need volunteers to deliver the produce to the various recipients in the area. If you are interested, please reach out to the committee and we will eagerly find a spot for you to assist with God's Work Our Hands!

Thanks, Michael Drelicharz 847.942.3086

Green Team Update: Grace's Green Team is working within Grace to make incremental improvements to the way we impact our environment. One area the committee decided to focus in on was in the water quality of the well water. To some, the well water had a sulfur smell. The Green Team, working with the Property Committee, had the well water analyzed (special thanks to Ardell Mueller). While the well water passed all quality tests, the well equipment and hot water heater needed some work. The Property Committee took the lead in making improvements to this equipment. Once we are back in the Church, take a drink and a whiff of our water. I think you will notice the difference.

The next focus areas of the Green Team will be to work with other committees to make small improvements in how we use Charter Hall and the Kitchen. Now that we have good well water, can we improve the hot water in the kitchen sink? Also, can we replace the dishwasher in the kitchen? We look forward to working with you and the various committees that use and work in the kitchen and Charter Hall to make decisions together. Please reach out to me to let me know other areas that the Green Team can work to improve.

Sincerely – Dan Reimann – Green Team Chair

FINANCIAL Update

Financial Report ending February 29, 2020

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$ 48,900	\$ 42,983	\$ (5,917)
Special Income	6,340	4,114	(2,226)
Prepaid Income	1,820	1,820	0
Total Income	\$ 57,060	\$ 48,917	\$ (8,143)
Expenses thru February	59,689	57,057	
Current Year Surplus or (Deficit)		\$ (8,140)	
<u>2019 Operating Surplus Carryover</u>		<u>40,001</u>	
Remaining Surplus		\$ 31,861	

You are looking at the financial status of your Church at the end of February. Can I say so much has happened since. With our Church being temporarily closed, we need to rely on our members to provide the necessary financial support in a different way. Mail is an obvious approach or just dropping it off at the Church, even slipping it under the door if no one is there. Whatever it takes, the people of Grace have always responded.

Notes of THANKS

Many thanks to WELCA for the delicious Easter treats.
Rich and Sue Buerger

Dear Grace Family, You have touched my heart with all of the support and kindness you have always shown me but it was especially evident during this sad time. Your cards, donations and hugs (before the social distancing) have sustained me through this difficult time. It's been a tough couple of months for me with losing both my brother and my husband within a short two month period of time.

I hope that you are all staying safe and I look forward to seeing all of your happy faces again soon. Please be strong and know that God is taking care of all of us until we can hug and see each other again.

Thank you Grace family – you do good work.
Blessings, Pam Walger

Dear Grace Friends, You are so generous and kind! Thank you for your outpouring of items to support RefugeeOne's Household Goods Drive! I was touched by your generosity and love. I believe you were all doing God's work with your hands. The items were delivered on March 14 to RefugeeOne.

Thank you, Jennifer Stutheit



Thank you for your overwhelming support and generosity of collecting caps and lids for River Trails School District – Recycle Bench Project. With your generous donation, the District collected enough lids to not only have one bench, but up to three benches created by all the recycled lids and caps. So THANK YOU!

Sincerely, Nancy Wagner, Superintendent of Schools

I just wanted to say thank you to everyone who helped with the Valentine's Day boxes. I really appreciate it and it helps me knowing I have my Grace family supporting me. Thank you!

Samantha Pracko

Thank you for the Valentine's Day box -- it was really appreciated and enjoyed.
Alex Nickl

Thank you for your generous gift of \$160 to the ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

This is a season of reflection and sacrifice, but it is also a season of hope. As we walk the 40-day journey of Lent, we know that we are walking toward Easter and the promise of renewal. Your gifts to the ministries of the ELCA are bringing that promise and hope to your neighbors around the world.

With your gifts, you are putting God's love into action . . . Thank you for sharing the hope of new life and the fullness of Christ's joy
With gratitude, Rachel Wind, Executive for Development, Mission Advancement

Birthday LIST

April

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---------------------------------|
| 4 | Beverly Storz
Pam Walger | 15 | Debera Bodett |
| 6 | Zoe Stephanie | 16 | Alex Nickl |
| 7 | Eloise DeCarlo
Jonathon Bouris
Andrew Stutheit | 20 | Christina Rogers |
| | | 22 | Stephanie Wilm |
| 10 | Shanna Martinez | 26 | Carolynn White
Jeff Stutheit |
| 12 | James Shaffer | | |

CELEBRATIONS OF *Life*

Funerals and Memorials

We support one another in our grief through mutual support and the assurance of our faith in Christ's promise of everlasting life.

We extend our sympathy to Pam Walger and family on the death of her husband Philip J. Walger on February 23, 2020. A funeral service was held on February 28, 2020.



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A congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America (ELCA)

OUR *Mission* AND *Vision*

Our mission is to tell the good news of Jesus and touch people with his love.

Our vision is to joyfully praise and serve God, committed to being a church of friendship, openness and diversity.

Staff *DIRECTORY*

Pastor: Daniel Schwick
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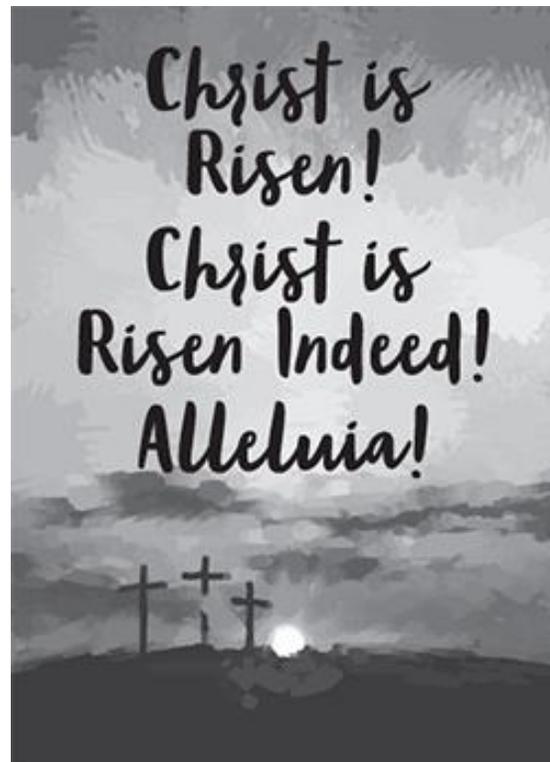
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ARTICLE *Deadline:* April 19