

GRACE NOTES

February 2017



The Transfiguration of Jesus was a revelation of his divinity and preview of his resurrection glory. Before the eyes of his disciples he shone brighter than the sun and his clothes became whiter than snow. Faith in Jesus changes you. Be renewed by grace. Live in his light.

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**

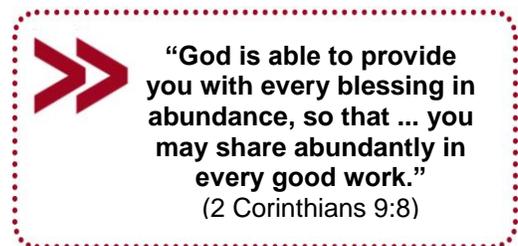
Regarding Faith and Finances



Let me get this straight: Faith and Finances are closely linked, and that does not mean a bad thing for either. I know that it is often difficult for people of faith to talk about money. And yet it can sometimes seem like that is all the church is talking about.

So why bring up the topic? Because each year, on the first Sunday in February, our congregation gathers for its annual meeting to approve among other things a budget. And because such a commitment to a financial plan can say a lot about our faith.

You are probably aware of the fact that Grace is not the only congregation that has seen a decline in membership and giving and as a result has had to reduce budgets and ministries. In the last decade or so, our national church organization has been in need of restructuring several times due to diminished income from churches like ours.



So then what does this mean? There is a reason Jesus talked about money a great deal. For one, it is a big part of our life. We are dependent on it for better or worse. But Jesus also reminds us that God is the ultimate source of what we have and need. That means that when we make our plans faithfully we can depend on God's help.

Budgeting for ministry may require further adjustments, and how we fulfill our mission will undoubtedly look different than in the past. But I believe that God continues to bless us with many gifts and joys at Grace, and that our faith and love are much needed by the members of our church and neighbors in our community.

>> While it is not easy these days to make plans for the future, we can always count on God's faithfulness to support the mission of the church. Please pray for faith in our planning of ministry, and for faith to provide our finances to experience, celebrate and share the good news of God's amazing grace.

Grace and peace, *Pastor Stefan Munker*

WHAT IS ... Grace?

Be Renewed by Grace in 2017



This year, we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation of the church by Martin Luther's conviction that we are saved by faith in God's grace alone.

Lutheran Christians emphasize the understanding of faith that God is amazingly good. God's love, forgiveness and salvation come to us freely and generously. Through Jesus' death and resurrection we have received the ultimate gift of divine grace.

Grace is God's gift of unconditional love, undeserved forgiveness, and undying hope. As Christians, we follow the example which Jesus Christ provided for living by trust in God's amazing goodness toward us, all people, and everything in this world.

God's grace is most clearly seen in the life, teaching and ministry of Jesus. Jesus restored harmony and ensured wholeness for creation when he gave his life on a cross and three days later rose again. And there is nothing at all we could do to merit being here, enjoying God's favor, and living forever. That's amazingly gracious!

MISSION INTERPRETER *Update*

Hello members of Grace & Happy New Year! Here is my first Mission Corner of the year; it is a story of how LSSI is helping others.

LSSI helping more people in Illinois reach their full potential in life

LSSI is still severely impacted by the lack of a state budget and the resulting cuts, but they continue to do outstanding work, serving those in need. Here are two examples:

"I don't want to be a burden to anyone else." That is why 26-year-old Lugene decided to enroll in Employment Skills School (ESS), a program of LSSI's Prisoner and Family Ministry (PFM) program. "When I got out I am on my own. I don't know how to do the references, how you go about getting your school transcripts. When they ask about your job skills I don't know how to be specific, what to say to get the job. I've got the will to work but don't really know how to sell myself for a job," said Lugene.

Watch a 3-minute video of Lugene in class. Read the rest of the story.

Here is part of the story from foster care: "I was dealing with a baby who was literally broken." That is how LSSI child welfare specialist Kelly S. remembers 3-month-old Evan when he came into foster care. His grandmother brought Evan to the hospital for a rash. It turned out that his "rash" actually was a yeast infection covering his entire abdomen, chest and neck. It was the result of being left covered in formula-soaked clothes and not being bathed. Although Evan is doing well now, his story is far from

over. He remains with his foster family while LSSI works with his mother on parenting and individual therapy. His stepfather is serving a 5-year prison sentence for aggravated battery related to Evan's injuries. Learn more about Evan's story.

This Christmas season LSSI is doubly blessed with two special matching grants, one that specifically underwrites the Prisoner and Family Ministry (PFM) program and another that benefits clients in other areas, including foster care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, Head Start, etc. Learn more at <http://www.lssi.org/LSSI> helping more people in Illinois reach their full potential in life.

Greg Hammond, Mission Interpreter

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Only ONE Service: On Sunday, February 5, we will once again gather only at 10:00am for worship before our annual congregational meeting following the service.

Ash Wednesday: Heads up, Lent begins March 1 with services at 1:00 and 7:00pm! Remember God's gift of grace in baptism and grow into new life with the imposition of Ashes and an introduction to this year's midweek series about Luther's teachings.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Birthday Card Shower: To distinguish our members who are 90 or better we ask the congregation to shower them with birthday wishes (cards or postcards) to brighten their special day. Harmon Loeb will celebrate his 90th birthday on January 31, 2017. Please shower him with good wishes at: 2024 Wintergreen, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-4827.

Annual Congregational Meeting: Meal, reports, elections and approval of proposed budget following 10:00am worship on Sunday, February 5 – all completed way before the big game starts.

Coming in 2017: Grace Lutheran's 1st indoor 9-hole Golf Tournament. Would you like to use your God-given talent and construct a putting green hole? The groundwork is laid. I am looking to put that extra effort to make the course really awesome. If interested, call Barb Nagle [847/800-6674](tel:847/800-6674) or email bnagle273@gmail.com for details. Have any golf putters? Please consider sharing for an evening. The date will be in March.

Send a Valentine: Look for the poster in the atrium with the big red heart on it to find the names and addresses of people who would enjoy receiving a Valentine wish from you. Take home a list and send a card soon.

Friendship Group Outing: The Friendship Group is going to Chef Pings for a Valentine Luncheon on Wednesday, February 15, 2017. Please meet at church at 11:30am to carpool to the restaurant at 1755 Algonquin Road, Rolling Meadows. Chef

Ping's motto is "Happy Eating meets Happy Gathering so join us for a "Happy" time! Look for a sign-up sheet on Pam's door on January 29th to let her know you will be attending.

Friendship Group Ash Wednesday Potluck Luncheon and Worship Service: We will meet on March 1ST at 11:30am. Bring your favorite dish to pass for lunch. Following lunch there will be an Ash Wednesday worship service at 1:00pm. Look for the sign-up sheet on Pam Walger's office door in a few weeks. If you are able to help with the set-up and serving that day, please let Pam Walger know.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

Life of Purpose Group: We will meet again Tuesday, February 7 at 2:00pm. Join with others to explore God's plan for your life and our church's mission. Pastor Munker will help us support each other as a group through worship, fellowship, study, service and outreach.

First Communion Class: Instruction about the sacrament at the Lord's Table will be provided during two sessions for children in 5th grade on Saturday mornings 10-11:30am, March 25 and April 1. Their celebration of First Communion will be held the day of the institution of the Lord's Supper during our 7:00pm service on Maundy Thursday, April 13.

>> All baptized of any age are welcome to receive the sacrament of the altar. Those interested in receiving Jesus' presence and gifts in bread and cup may contact Pastor Munker any time. Please RSVP by March 26 if you plan for your child to attend the classes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Help Needed: Would you like to be a greeter, lector, usher or communion assistant at either of the Sunday morning worship services? If you are interested in helping with one of these ministries, please contact the church office and speak with Barb at 847-824-7408.

Helpers Wanted: Bakers and helping hands are wanted for the Annual Meeting/Souper Bowl Sunday on February 5, 2017. The Annual Meeting of the congregation will be held in conjunction with our Souper Bowl Lunch. If you would be willing to help serve food on that day or to bake a dessert, please let Pam Walger know at 847-824-7408.

Souper Bowl of Caring: Once again we will participate in the nationwide food drive on Super Bowl Sunday. On February 5, bring nonperishable items and monetary donations for local food pantries to be collected by Grace youth after 10:00am worship.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Outreach*

Baskets of Promise: This Lent the Social Ministry Committee is asking the members and friends of Grace to join Lutheran World Relief's **Basket of Promise** appeal. Each week, we'll collect a different item that we'll use to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations.

Our goal is to assemble at least 20 LWR Personal Care Kits during Lent.

HERE'S OUR COLLECTION SCHEDULE:

March 5 – Bars of Soap (4 to 5 oz.), any brand, in original wrapping

March 12 – Bath Towels (light-weight bath- size towel between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27", dark color recommended)

March 19 – Toothbrushes (adult size, in original packaging)

March 26 – Combs (sturdy)

April 2 –Nail Clippers (metal, attached file is optional)

April 9 (Palm Sunday) – Bars of Soap

There will be baskets in the east entryway area to collect your donated items. Thank you so much for your support.

Feed My Starving Children: The following dates have been reserved for Grace at the Schaumburg FMSC packing site: April 18, June 20, August 15, and October 17. Watch Grace Notes and the bulletin for more details and sign-up information.

Valentine Care Packages: The Social Ministry Committee is once again collecting treats for our college kids. They enjoy both sweet and salty treats. Bring your donations to church by Sunday, February 5th and have them in the collection box by 10am. The committee will pack the treats that day for delivery. If you'd like to donate money to pay for the shipping, please place your donation in a pink pew envelope marked "College Care Packages".

Bring a Friend to our Golf Outing: If your friends don't already think people in the church are crazy, this may finally convince them. Just invite them anyways and see what happens when they come to us for a round of golf inside the church next month.

Shop for the Food Pantry: The following items are always needed: juice, small cans coffee, tea, tomato products, condiments/seasonings like ketchup, mustard, mayo, salt, pepper, detergent, dried beans/peas, canned fruit, fruit/vegetable juice, oil, pancake mix and syrup, pasta, paper products, dry milk, rice, soap, shampoo, soup, snacks, and toilet paper. If you forget to shop you can also choose to donate money in a pink pew envelope and mark it "Food Pantry" and food gift cards will be purchased for the pantry.

FINANCIAL Update

Current year financial status thru December 31, 2016

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$288,156	\$255,895	(\$2,261)
Special Income	32,040	43,477	11,437
Prepaid Budget Income	11,672	13,435	1,763
Total Budget Income	\$331,868	\$312,807	(\$19,601)
Operating Expenses thru Dec	<u>331,863</u>	<u>314,388</u>	
Surplus or (Deficit)		(\$ 1,581)	

The above represent the end of year 2016 status for Grace. Though income finished \$19,601 below the budget, the net deficit for the year has dropped considerably from the \$21,000 deficit at the end of September to the above figure of \$1,581. Certainly more manageable. A hardy thank you goes out to all who either increased their donations over the last quarter or gave specifically toward a special deficit reduction appeal. A total of \$5,659 was received. A one time gift of \$5,000 from Grace Preschool and \$2,800 from the Salem Korean United Methodist Church for the use of our premises from the end of September contributed greatly Thank You To All.

NOTES OF Thanks

Dear people of Grace, I would like to thank you for your generous gift presented to me on Christmas Eve. The kindness of people like you is a sign of God's gift of hope we celebrated together. Gratefully yours, *Pastor Stefan Munker*



Thank you to Shyanne Martinez, Addison and Andrew Stutheit, Gianna Lauletta, Connor Dietrich, Zoe and Anna Stephanie, Matthew Pracko, Thomas and Hannah Roth, Allen and Rachael Rogers, and Danielle Drelicharz who presented the play "That Special Night" by Kathleen Tunseth on December 18th at the 9am service. Special thanks to Minda Josten, Sue Buerger and Betty Dietrich for their help.

Thank You for being the caring and generous congregation that you have always been. We truly appreciate your generous Christmas gift. Wishing you peace in 2017.

Barb Willis, Pam Walger, Susan Nelson

Thanking all of you for your generous support to our LCC Food Pantry. Money, food, volunteers are all donations we receive, helping us to serve the needy families of our community. In 2016 we served 5,760 families helping to feed 17,519 family members. Contributions are generous. All our bills are paid. We have funds to spring of 2017. Thanking all of you for your 2016 support.

Walker R Reach, Director LCC Food Pantry, Lutheran Church of the Cross

Thank You to everyone who braced the cold weather and came out to help at Jayne's Cookie Walk. Thank you to Amy Drelicharz, Connor Dietrich, Andy Reimann, Megan Nickl, Olivia Nagle, Maddie Stephanie, Zoe Stephanie, Terri Sauermann, Steve Hanna, Christine Rovani, Gianna Lauletta, Danielle Drelicharz, Matthew Pracko, Samantha Pracko, Shyanne Martinez, and Alan Rogers for your help in setting up and decorating for the day. Your hard work made the cookie walk a wonderful time. Also, a big thank you to everyone at Grace for all of the delicious cookies you donated. Your generous gifts helped make this year's cookie walk a huge success. \$703 was raised.

Thank you to the following who helped take down the Christmas decorations: Steve & Sharyl Hanna, Mary Jo Menelle, Ray & Joanne McCullim, Joanne Coy, Jerry Sakover, Alan Clark, Greg Linwood, Betty Carlson, Bev Storz, Don Linder, Pam Walger, Mike Drelicharz, Cory Olson, Curt Carlson, Rich Buerger, Margit Willis, Barb Willis, Carl Imburgia and Gordon Greaves. We apologize if we missed someone.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the staff and the residents of Wheeling Township, we would like to express our gratitude for your donation of eight (8) \$25 Aldi gift cards to the Wheeling Township Emergency Food Pantry on November 22, 2016.

It is because of your generosity that Wheeling Township is able to help its needy residents. Your thoughtful donation will make an immediate impact in someone's life by providing relief during their time of hardship.

Thank you again for assisting us with fulfilling our mission of "Neighbors Helping Neighbors".

Sincerely, Kathleen M. Penner, Supervisor; Julie Villarreal, MA, Director of General Assistance

To the Membership of Grace Lutheran Church: A big Thank You for your donation to the Wheeling Food Pantry. The food will be distributed to those families of children who attend Consolidated School District 21 schools, Wheeling High School and the residents of Wheeling. Our mission is to try and help those in need, in some way, with their financial, physical and/or emotional problems to they may lead normal, self-sustaining, independent lives. *"There are reasons why someone is hungry, it's about more than food."*

Jim Bradley, Director, Wheeling Food Pantry

SPECIAL *Events*

- **February 5:** Annual Meeting and Souper Bowl of Caring, Worship at 10:00am
- **February 7:** Life of Purpose Group meets at 2:00pm
- **February 15:** Friendship Group Outing, meet at 11:30am
- **March 1:** Ash Wednesday, Worship at 1:00pm & 7:00pm

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 Janice Zemaitis and Carol Burgeson on the death of their mother Lorraine Mudrak on December 16, 2016.

We extend our sympathy to Linda Pettingill and family on the death of her husband Michael on January 2, 2017. A memorial service was held at Grace on January 7.

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Judy Holbrook who died on January 5, 2017. A memorial service was held at Grace on January 28.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Nick Lauletta who died on January 15, 2017. A memorial service was held at Grace on January 21.

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of former member Thelma Lundgren who died on January 9, 2017.

Birthday LIST

February

1	Sandy Doran	15	Dorothy Martinson Cynthia Menelle
3	Michael Boros	16	Margit Kjeldbjerg
5	Kurt Aspen	18	Daniel Sacco Anna Stephanie
6	Dan Kjeldbjerg Kelley Berlin Linda Lazzara Salvador Mejia	19	Dianne Bachmann
7	Brandon Gosell Rachael Rogers	21	Karen Gretz Robert Boros
8	Betty Kopke	22	Amy Hammond
9	Viola Wiebe Danielle Knopoff Carissa Carlson	23	Joanne Coy Joann Kuklinski
10	Barbara Willis Cheryl Ellertson	24	Carolyn Garza Lauren Jozefat
11	Max Schulze	25	Daniel Polfuss
13	Dolores Randmark Darcy Sowle	27	Lisa Peltekian
		29	Thomas Roth

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A congregation of the
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in America (ELCA)

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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: Stefan A. Munker
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ARTICLE *Deadline:* February 12