

GRACE NOTES

March 2017



Martin Luther's teachings reformed the church. Reformation faith in Jesus reforms our lives. We learn about God's grace to reform the world during Lent. Join us for faith study and spiritual reformation.

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

Faith that Keeps Reforming



The church season of *Lent* is going to start with Ash Wednesday on March 1. This year, as we commemorate the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's reform of the church, we are invited to consider how our Christian faith keeps reforming – first our own life, and then the church and world at large.

Luther was not alone in history to make things happen because of his religious convictions. He did not even set out to become a protester or start a new church. He was genuinely trying to live faithfully and that prompted him to criticize problems on the one hand and work for improvements on the other. Our Lutheran tradition leaves us the legacy of continuing to search and to strive for ways the good news of Jesus is heard and his love is shared today.

But it all starts with individual believers. Biblical faith in God's will is the source of our knowledge of God, ministry of congregations, and personal decisions in daily life. Each and every one of us shape the world based on our beliefs.

The *Small Catechism*, for example, was written by Luther as an instruction for common Christians. We will re-learn what this little book tells us about our faith practice during our Midweek services March 8 through April 5.



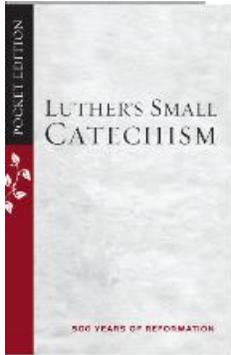
“I must still read and study the catechism daily, yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and a pupil of the catechism, and I do it gladly.”
(Martin Luther)

>> Hearing and experiencing God's renewing grace is what renews and empowers people like you and me to follow Jesus to the abundant life we celebrate on Easter. **So I invite you to keep reforming your faith in the gift of salvation** and faithfully reform your lives to fit God's kingdom.

Yours faithfully and reforming, *Pastor Stefan Munker*

WHAT IS ... *the Small Catechism?*

A Teaching Book of Faith



This year we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation of the church. Martin Luther felt strongly that all believers should know the good news of Jesus in the Bible and how it informs our daily lives.

One of Luther's concerns was that ordinary people did not have the means to read the Holy Scriptures and were often ill informed about the basics of the Christian faith. During the Middle Ages only church scholars had access to the Bible, and many common priests caring for their congregations were inadequately equipped at best.

So Luther set out to not only translate the Bible into his native language but also write simple explanations about the main tenets of the Christian faith. His "Small Catechism" was intended to equip parents for teaching the faith in which their children were baptized. The faithful learned at home about the Commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer and Sacraments, but also what they mean.

Luther's writings to church officials and lay people, like his 95 discussion theses, were printed and widely distributed. The Small Catechism is still used as a primary basis for Christian education such as Confirmation classes. To this day, Luther's faith teaching is informative for life-long Lutherans and spiritual seekers alike.

>> Download the *Small Catechism App* from Augsburg Fortress free through Apple or Google stores.

The text of the Small Catechism is in the back of our *Worship Book* and free print copies will be available at church during Lent.

A beautiful *Study Edition* is available for \$6.99 at www.augsburgfortress.org.

Special Article

2017 Grace Budget

Fellow members of Grace,

By now most or all of you have seen the letter from the church by Jerry Sharlog, the Chairman of our Finance Committee, regarding the budget for 2017 that was approved at the February 5th Annual Congregational Meeting. I'm writing you a note to reinforce that message, and make clear what your Council leadership has attempted to do in facing the 2017 financial situation at Grace.

The budget presented in the Annual Meeting Packet, with a projected deficit of \$5,077, represented the Council's majority (though not unanimous) opinion of how to present a

fiscally prudent budget for the congregation's approval. To be clear, this budget represented Pam Walger leaving her job and her ministry at Grace at the end of February of this year, and having Barb Willis absorb a 25% cut in pay, and possibly hours of work as well.

This decision was not reached lightly, but required many hours of deliberation by the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the Council as a whole.

Perhaps not surprisingly, because of the serious impacts on the staff at Grace that this budget would have entailed, after lengthy discussion at the Annual Meeting, this budget was rejected in a written ballot by approximately 75% of the 78 ballots cast. After further discussion, the budget described in Jerry's letter was adopted. Copies of the approved budget will be available at the March 5th Special Congregational Meeting.

Here's the bottom line: Jerry's appeal for all of us to consider what our contributions and revised or new pledges will be for 2017 is critical. Meeting this budget is essential to us keeping our current staff employed at their current hours and pay. Failure to meet it will cause us to face a similar unpleasant decision at next year's Annual Meeting.

So, please prayerfully consider how you can help continue Grace's ministry at the corner of Wolf and Euclid in Mt. Prospect.

Yours in Christ,
Greg Linwood
Council President

MISSION INTERPRETER *Update*

Lutheran Advocacy Alert

Lutheran Advocacy invites us to join in amplifying our impact by meeting directly with our Congressional officers in-district and, depending on their position, urge them to protect refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants, or thank them for their support of these efforts.

Members of Congress will be back at home in their states, and districts, for President's Day, ***the week of February 20th***. When they return to Washington, they will need to decide how to allocate funds to agencies that are implementing the new Executive Orders, or whether to pass legislation that will protect those fleeing violence or persecution.

As Lutherans, *we have a proud history of starting ministries* that serve our neighbors across the street or across the world because we know that "all people are God's creatures, sinners for whom Christ died." As children and families from Central America *face policies that will further put them in harm's way*, we have the privilege to continue our tradition of humble servants by urging our Members of Congress to protect them.

To learn more about the ELCA's work to accompany Central American children and families, visit ELCA.org/AAMPARO, or our [Advocacy resource center](#).

Also please note that Metro Chicago Bishop Wayne Miller has initiated a new blog "Messengers Have Feet" sharing reflections on current issues. I hope you will look it up and check it out. Hopefully, you find it interesting & insightful. The website is: <http://messengershavefeet.blogspot.com/>.

Thank you & have a good day!
Yours in Christ, Greg Hammond, Mission Interpreter

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Ash Wednesday: Lent begins March 1 with services at 1:00pm 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 "*Reforming Faith*" about Luther's Small Catechism.

Midweek Services: "*Reforming Faith*" will be the theme about Luther's Small Catechism at our Holden Evening services between March 8 and April 5 this year. Join us Wednesdays after 6:00pm dinners for brief worship time at 7:00pm to be blessed with rest for your soul and inspiration for your intellect.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Friendship Group: Join us on Wednesday, March 1 at 11:30am for the annual Friendship Group Ash Wednesday Potluck Luncheon and Worship Service. Bring your favorite dish to pass for lunch like a main dish, salad or dessert. 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. If you are willing to help with the set-up and serving that day please let Pam Walger know. When signing up please indicate what type of dish you will be bringing.

Lenten Dinners: All are welcome on Wednesdays at 6:00pm from March 8 through April 5. If you would be willing to help with any of these dinners, please contact Pam Walger 847-824-7408. Lenten worship will follow the dinners at 7:00pm.

Zumba Gold: Join us in the Youth Room every Thursday at 10:00am for some fun exercise.

Sunday School Pancake Breakfast: The breakfast is being rescheduled because of a scheduling conflict. Watch the bulletin for the new date.

It's time to PAR-TEE!!! Grace's 1st Annual Mini Golf Outing: Come join the fun on Saturday, March 4th from 2-6pm. Come alone. Come with family. Bring your friends for an absolutely fun time playing a nine-hole miniature golf course. As you golf, you will learn about the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how to apply them to your everyday life. Have a cup of chili for an afternoon snack. Children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Bring that special putter if you have one! Will you make a hole in one? If you can't golf, come root for others. Bring your smile and let others know that church can be a fun place to go!

Chicago Wolves Game: Join us on Saturday, March 18 for an outing to see the Chicago Wolves play. We will meet at church at 5:15pm for supper (provided) and then travel to the Allstate Arena for the 7:00pm hockey game. Tickets are \$10.00 and everyone is invited. Call the church office or Margit Willis at 773-886-8788 if you would like to go.

“Young At Heart:” Save Saturday, April 8 for the Women's Gathering “Young At Heart.” Take a humorous look at the process of aging with local author Nancy Stacy who is “Young at Heart, but older in other places.” Learn some tips so you can grow young. Come join us at 9:30am for coffee and coffee cake. The program will be followed by a light lunch. Bring a friend. And, bring the oldest thing you own. Maybe some interesting and fun items will appear! Watch for ticket sales March 19, March 26 and April 1.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

See Sights of the Reformation: Take a tour with Rick Steves to places of Reformation events from the comfort of our church. Pastor Munker will show travel videos at 10:00am on Monday, March 13, and again Tuesday, March 14 at 7:00pm. Invite a friend to join you.

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*

Rummage Sale: Let us know if you would be willing to help organize and work at the annual Grace Rummage Sale April 27, 28, and 29. We would like to continue our

tradition of having a rummage sale here at Grace but we can't do it without faithful people who are willing to commit to helping organize all of the logistics of the sale. Please contact the church office, Pam Walger, Minda Josten, or Margit Willis if you can help. With all the resale shops in the area, we need to be on top of our game. Keep that in mind as you put things aside for our sale.

Community Dinners at La Trinidad: For several months the members of the Social Ministry Committee have been going to the monthly community dinner sponsored by La Trinidad in Humboldt Park. We have donated salads, desserts, and beverages as well as many hours helping to serve and clean up. This has been a wonderful opportunity for us and we would like to extend an invitation to you to join us. There is a poster in the atrium with the date of the next community dinner. If you cannot join us, please consider donating towards one of the food items listed on the poster for the dinner.

Summer Mission Trip: Lutheran Church of Good Shepherd is planning and inviting others to join their 4th annual Mission trip July 30-August 3. Anyone entering High School or older may attend. Participants will help with flood recovery in the Greater St. Louis area which was hit by a massive flash flood in December of 2015. Recovery has been slow and a federal grant expires in November, so there's a lot to get done this summer. The group leaves Sunday after lunch and returns Thursday after breakfast. If you are interested contact Pastor Eric Schlichting, 847-537-4353 or lcgspastor@gmail.com.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Outreach*

Dinner and Devotion: Invite your friends (with or without a church) to our Wednesday dinners at 6:00pm and worship following at 7:00pm between March 8 and April 5. The meals are always delicious and offer an opportunity to get to know one another, and the services have beautiful music and will (re)introduce Martin Luther's faith teachings during the 500th anniversary year of the Reformation.

Baskets of Promise: This Lent we are collecting the following items to assemble 20 Baskets of Promise for Lutheran World Relief:

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” – Our Next Group “Appointment:” Our next chance to go as a group from Grace to the Schaumburg location of Feed My Starving Children, 1072 National Parkway, to pack “Mannapacks” will be Tuesday, April 18th, from 6pm to 7:30pm. There are thirty-three spots reserved for our group.

Sign-up sheets will be available starting Sunday, April 2nd. But, if you want to reserve your spot right away, access the website www.fmssc.org and follow the prompts to “join” the group named Grace Lutheran Church (group leader Greg Linwood). Or, another way of volunteering now is to contact me directly, either at 847-502-7744, or via e-mail at gregorylinwood@sbcglobal.net, and I will add you to our group.

In addition, for those of you unable to pack that evening, or even for those of you that can, as we have for our recent outings, we will make it possible for you to donate to cover the expenses of the supplies used to provide the meals. Feed My Starving Children doesn’t get any government grants and none of the food they use is donated – they rely on individual donations. The cost of the food we pack on each of these outings is usually between \$2,000 and \$3,000! You can donate by stopping by the sign-up table, starting April 2nd, or by seeing me directly at any time.

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.

Buck-a-Chick: Have you ever thought of giving someone a baby chick for Easter? Now you can by donating a dollar to Buck-a-Chick on Palm Sunday and Easter. Watch for the bulletin inserts and wrap up your dollar to help someone earn a living and feed their family.

Notes of **THANKS**

Thank You to everyone who contributed goodies for the College Kids Valentine boxes. Fourteen boxes were filled to overflowing!

Thank You to Chris, Cindy, Rachael and Alan Rogers, Sue Buerger and Cindy Pirron for the wonderful lunch on February 5 and to all the bakers who made a delicious sweet table.

As our **Refugee Ministry** is phasing out visits with our first family, we offer thanks to God for inspiring members of Grace to work with RefugeeOne and other faith groups. Thank you to all who were involved in planning, organizing, and publicizing for making this a success so that a family from Syria could find safety, welcome, and self-sufficiency. Also thanks to all who visited them for support, those of you who donated

money or items for the apartment, and anyone who prayed for this ministry and 'our' family. Let's pray for God to show us what or who will come next.

Thank you: I want to thank the people of your church for donating wrapped gifts for the River Trails District 26 Holiday Give-Away. While I apologize for my late thanks, be assured that the good works of Grace were part of the reason that over 200 children and their families had a brighter Christmas.

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church has been a part of the Holiday Give-Away for many years and the generous spirit of your church is what inspired me. God Bless You.

Finally, I especially want to thank Nancy Greaves for her help and support in making the Give-Away a success.

Best wishes for 2017! Jeff Prostko, Holiday Give-Away Coordinator

Dear Friends in Christ, Thank you for your recent gift of \$638.00 to Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). We are grateful to your congregation for investing in the wellbeing of all Illinois citizens, offering people the opportunity to reach their full, God-given potential.

Your generosity helps bring health, healing and wholeness to thousands of people across the state. Over 80% of LSSI's clients have an income of under \$15,000 per year. The faithfulness of congregations like Grace is critically important in this work.

As Christians we believe that all things work together for good. Surely your congregation's gift will bring good to those who rely on Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and its ministries. Thanks again for your thoughtfulness.

Peace and prayers, Mark A. Stutrud, President and CEO

SPECIAL *Events*

- **Ash Wednesday:** Wednesday, March 1st services at 1:00pm and 7:00pm. Friendship Group Potluck luncheon at 11:30am.
- **9-Hole Golf Tournament;** Saturday, March 4, 2-6pm at church.
- **Special Congregational Meeting:** Sunday, March 5 between services to approve two reports that were incomplete when presented at the February 5 meeting.
- **See the Sights of the Reformation:** Monday, March 13 at 10:00am and Tuesday, March 14 at 7:00pm at church.
- **Chicago Wolves Game:** Saturday, March 18. Meet at church at 5:15pm.
- **"Young At Heart:"** Women's Gathering at church on Saturday, April 8 at 9:30am.
- **Feed My Starving Children:** Tuesday, April 18 from 6-7:30pm.

Birthday LIST

March

1	Cheryl Trunda	16	Gloria Ohman Danielle Drelicharz
2	Marilyn Lonigro Darlene Aspen	17	Evelyn Lovdjieff Kay Holzer
3	Shyanne Martinez	18	Matthew Pracko
4	Sharyl Hanna Nancy Dembkowski Kathleen Finn Robert Ashbrook Joe Trsar Landon Walger Noah Roth	20	Deanna Carlson
		21	Jim Bataille
		22	Richard Buerger
5	Margit Willis	23	Mary Jo Menelle
		24	Jon Keasling Mike Drelicharz
6	Dennis Ellertson Nacio Martinez Derek Ellertson	25	Jean Imburgia Sarah Young
9	Martha Jasniowski	26	Rebecca Menelle Victoria Menelle Zoe Bouris
10	Cory Olson	27	Cynthia Rogers
12	Arlene Kieffer Curt Carlson Bill Grimpe	29	Jack Ferguson Addison Stutheit
13	Ruth Dolson		
15	Samantha Rude		

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A congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church
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.

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ARTICLE *Deadline:* March 19