



Lenten Greetings To You,

As we journey the coming weeks of the Lenten season, we are called to focus on an important issue that affects millions of people worldwide - hunger. Our midweek theme is **Hungry No More**. As followers of Jesus, we are called to love and serve our neighbors, especially those who are experiencing food insecurity.

Hunger is a pressing issue that affects individuals and families in our own communities and around the globe. It is a challenge that requires our attention and action. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus reminds us that when we feed the hungry, we are serving Him (Matthew 25:35-40). Our faith compels us to respond with compassion and generosity to those in need.

As we hear about different aspects of our theme each week, we will explore opportunities to get involved and make a difference in addressing hunger in our community. We can all make a difference right where we are. Perhaps by donating to area food pantries, volunteering time at a food assistance program, or community garden to donate produce. We can learn about educational aspects of hunger and advocate for policies that promote food security for all. We can pray for those who are hungry and for organizations working to alleviate hunger. Reflect on how you can live out God's call to feed the hungry in your own life.

Together, as a community of faith, we can make a difference and strive towards a world where hunger is no more. Let us be guided by love, compassion, and a commitment to justice as we seek to serve our neighbors in need.

May this month of March be a time of action, reflection, and solidarity as we stand together to say, "**Hungry No More**."

If you have any pastoral care needs, please let me know. You can reach me by phone/ text at 419-215-8370 or email at pastorjacitiell@aol.com

Lenten Prayer

Peace,

Pastor Jaci

O God, you desire that all people should eat and be satisfied. As we follow Jesus to Jerusalem and the cross, may our hearts be so transformed that we lose our lives in sharing your bounty with all in need. Amen

Pastor Jaci Tiell

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The Values We Share...

Worship weekly.

Invite others to join us.

Embrace one another.

Keep on learning.

Give regularly and generously.

Be good stewards and willing

March Gospel Readings...

March 3	John 2: 13-22
March 10	John 3: 14-21
March 17	John 12: 20-33
March 24	Mark 14: 1-15: 47
March 31	Mark 16: 1-8



Happy Birthday to everyone celebrating birthdays in **March**:

Branden Hille	3/4
Randy Jacobs	3/4
Kannon Heitzman	3/6
Eve Jackson	3/8
Mark Tornow	3/10
Tyler Marquardt	3/13
Valerie Marquardt	3/13
Lyle Schlievert	3/14
JoAnna Marquardt	3/19
Judy Zimmerman	3/21
Jennifer Haar	3/24
Becky Kayden	3/25
Adelyn Simkus	3/28
Mia Pirkil	3/29
Michael St. John	3/31

Congratulations to the following couples celebrating a wedding anniversary this month:

Gene & Judy Michel	3/3
Al & Joanne Domrose	3/26

Happy Anniversary

The **Food Pantry** item for **March** from **Grace** is:

Mashed Potatoes

130x box



Parsonage Task Force

As directed by the members present at January's Congregational Meeting, a Parsonage Task Force has formed to research how to move forward with the property. This process has been divided into three (3) phases: 1) gather questions and comments from the congregation, 2) host an Information Meeting to address the questions and comments, and 3) hold a Congregational Meeting to vote on the recommendation of the Task Force.

Everyone is encouraged to share your thoughts, either directly to members of the Task Force or in writing by using the bright green papers found in the entry way and narthex. You can leave written comments in the offering plate or with a Task Force member. The deadline for comments is Sunday, March 17. The Task Force will meet again on Tuesday, March 19 to read through the comments and assign duties to gather all the information necessary to host the Informational Meeting.

The Parsonage Task Force consists of Bruce King, Dave Weitelmann, Jayne Klett, Joe Hammel, Marilyn Crandall, Mike Schlievert, Nancy Pries, and Steve Blausey. Thank you all in advance for your active participation in the process.

Exciting Announcement!

We will be hosting a Community Concert in our sanctuary on **Sunday, April 7 at 4 p.m!** A Gospel Trio called "**Avenue**" will be traveling here from Nashville, Tennessee to perform for our community.

We will be offering a light dinner after the concert, and we'd love your help! Instead of preparing a dish for a potluck, we would like to suggest that you make a donation to the **Dinner Fund**. We will do the cooking for you! A **NOISY OFFERING** will be held on **Sunday, March 10th** during worship, so **BRING YOUR CHANGE**, and let's make some **NOISE!** Quiet donations will be received in the narthex through March 31. Please consider making a donation to make this community event a success!

If you have any questions, please see Karen Hammel. Thank you for your support! *Board of Congregational Life.*

Deacon and Lector Schedule for March

Date	Deacons	Lectors
Sun. March 3	Deb & Jeff Boos	Gordon Hille
Sun. March 10	Pr.Wietelmann/Bruce King	Joan Eckermann
Sun. March 17	Zak Avers/Steve Avers	Rachel Beeler
Sun. March 24	Gary Anderson/Randy Jacobs	Nancy Bennett
Thur. March 28		
Sun. March 31	Mary & Mike Schlievert	Joan Eckermann

Get in Touch with Grace...

www.graceelconline.org is our web site. The church office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00 to 3:00. Joyce is checking phone messages and email everyday. Write us at anytime at graceelc@gmail.com. Got a prayer request? Email it to the address above or call the office and leave a message. 419-862-3630.

Attention Prayer Partners...

There is one name left in the red Prayer Partner can in the Narthex. If you put your name in and have not pulled a name yet, please do!

Board of Education....

The Board of Education will meet on Saturday, March 16th at 9:00 am. All who are interested in developing Christian education opportunities please come ready to share your ideas.



RUTHANN ANDERSON MEMORIAL SERVICE

Thank you to all the members of our Christian community who have extended their love, prayers, support, condolences and compassion during our time of loss. Our healing continues as we strive to replace our grief with memories and thankfulness for the gifts Ruth Ann's life gave to us and to so many. The memorial service and celebration of life will take place at Grace Lutheran Church on Saturday, 20 April, with visitation beginning at 11:00 AM, the worship service at 12:00 and a celebration of life and fellowship meal after the worship service. Pastor Jaci will officiate. Additional information will be released as that date approaches.

Gary Anderson, Kirsten Georgi and Erik Anderson

Worship for the Season of Lent

March 6, 13, & 20. "Dinner Church" at 6:30pm (all in Fellowship Hall) with a rotation of North Central Pastors. (Theme: "Hunger No More")

March 24 - Palm Sunday, worship with palm procession and communion, 1030 am. and Sunday School at 9:30am.

March 28 - Maundy Thursday, worship with communion and the stripping of the altar, 7:30 PM.

March 29 - Good Friday, Tenebrae, 7:30 PM.

March 31 - Easter Sunday, worship with communion, 10:30 am and Sun-

OPERATION OREO *God Bless Our Soldiers*

Please keep all the military in your prayers, but especially: SGT Stephen Simkus, Cadet Julian Sanchez, 2LT Eli Gerkenmeyer, Sgt Ted Orzanski and MA2 Esteban Reyes.

Shipping price for one 'flat rate' goody box has gone up in price again – price is now \$18.40 per box. Anyone wishing to donate to Operation Oreo to help offset the cost of shipping and the contents of the Goody boxes -- Just mark "Op Oreo" on the memo line of your check.



If you have a name to add to our list or if you have any questions about Operation Oreo, please contact Jennifer Marquardt

WEEKLY OFFERING 2024

Week 1	\$11,833.00	Week 2	\$1,607.00
Week 3	\$2,050.00	Week 4	\$1,757.00
Week 5	\$2,465.00	Week 6	\$1,232.00
Week 7	\$1,502.00	Week 8	\$1,213.00

Total \$23,659.00

Needed from Offering for 2024	\$146,429	Budget Gap	(\$122,770)
Weekly Goal	\$2,816	Avg. Week	\$2,957

Bring your gifts with joy for they remind us of just how blessed we are to know this love that flows so generously from the spirit of God.

Grace Lutheran Church Council met on February 15, 2024.

Treasurer's Report The January Treasurer's Report was presented to the council. We had strong income for the month of January, setting us up for a surplus to start the year. Two additional CD's were opened. We are also looking at Mission Investments through the ELCA. A motion was made by Steve, second Joan to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried. **Pastor's Report** - Pastor Jaci Please pray for the family of my cousin, Bethany Collier. She recently passed away and this has been a long and difficult journey for her and our family.

Board of Congregational Life **New Business:** We welcomed Karen Hammel, who led a discussion about providing food and set-up for a concert to be given by The Avenue Trio, a Christian music trio from Nashville. The concert will start in the Grace Sanctuary on Sunday, April 7, at 4 p.m. Following the concert, we will offer light refreshments to everyone in attendance in the fellowship hall. Food will include cold cuts and cheese to make sandwiches, a veggie tray, chips, and cookies. Karen will handle publicity for the event. This board will help with set-up and clean-up on April 7th, following worship. Easter is March 31 and we will offer a punch and cookie reception. We will set up at 9 am. **Board of Education** - Our gratitude is extended to Steve Blausey and Steve Avers for their help in preparing classrooms. A new class on Luther started February 4th. The class has been well attended. Future media-based topics include Dietrich Bonhoffer and Jesus Christ Superstar Teachers for the K-6 class in February are Jeff and Deb Boos. The Weitelmans will teach in March. The planning process has begun for starting a Preschool class in September. **Board of Property** For devotions, a reading about Merlyn Weng was shared with everyone acknowledging what a loss this board has suffered and what a privilege it has been to serve alongside of him. Heaven must have needed him more though. Till we meet again! **Old Business:** Zak Avers is still working on the elevator phone issue, water testing is going well, and no progress on the bell microphone yet. **Miscellaneous:** **New Business:** Steve read a letter from our renter stating that they would be out by Feb. 16th. Some discussion was then held about the future of the parsonage. We will need to have someone take the trash containers out to the curb now and the Avers' have graciously volunteered. Steve Also informed the Board that a new custodian has been hired. **Board of Witness and Mission:** \$760, Council funds donated to WAM Board, sent to Christy's Corner in Elmore. Temple Talk scheduled for March third by James Vernot, Mission Cry representatives. \$400 benevolence payment made to Salem Lutheran – Toledo. \$413.71, benevolence fund surplus, sent to Luther Home burial assistance fund. The congregational survey regarding benevolence giving results reviewed. 1) Hunger and Nutrition 2) Children and family services 3) Veterans support 4) Affordable housing, homelessness and shelters **Board of Worship** Ash Wednesday and Lenten meals or "Dinner Church" were discussed. Summer Worship will begin on June 2. We'll continue setting out sign-up sheets for lectors and deacons. There was discussion about going back to serving communal bread and wine. The board decided to go back to this format beginning on February 4. Members still have the options of using the prepackaged communion kits or supplying their own communion elements. An article will be placed in the bulletins and February Parish Reporter, and Joan will make announcements at Sunday worship and the January 28 congregational meeting. **Old Business:** 1) The vacant council positions are: Vice President, Financial Secretary, and Board of Congregational Life. 2) The Constitution was briefly discussed. Suggestions for updates were made. Goals for our Church Council were set A. Maintain financial solvency. B. Restructure how we operate as a congregation as a council C. Evangelism and expanding membership. **New Business:** Audit committee of Jen Haar and Linda Jacobs was appointed. The Congregational Report of the ELCA was filled out by Mary Schlieveert for the Synod. Gordon brought up the updating of the website. A recognition event is being planned. A Task Force has been formed led by Steve Blausey, to determine how to proceed with the parsonage.

The meeting was closed with everyone praying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted *Karen Hammel*, Council Secretary

(A complete set of minutes are available in the office).

News From Slovenia...An Unexpected E-mail

Over the holidays, I (Jay) received an email unlike any I had ever gotten. It read: " Hello. My name is Žan. I am new in faith and have been discipled by 2 brothers from America. I am feeling alone in the city that I live in because it feels like there is no Christians around me (at least that I know of), so I'm wondering if you could help me." The email was so vague in details, yet specific in its topic, i actually wondered if it was some kind of fishing scheme!

But after a few more emails, it seemed like the real deal, and so my coworker and I drove across the country to meet Žan. He is a 17 year old kid in a small town nearly two hours from Ljubljana. He shared with us his story. As he began high school he struggled with depression. It got so bad he ended up dropping out of high school and said that most days he could not even get out of bed. He looked to video games for escape, and started playing a Virtual Reality game, which is populated with other real people



playing as avatars and talking to one another, playing games together, and other things. In this game he say one person, whose avatar description said he was a Christian. Žan, not knowing any Christians himself, was curious about this, and started to talk with this person. Eventually, he shared the gospel with Žan, invited him to join him at his VR church, and started discipling him in the game with a friend. One of these two guys works with Cru, and told Žan the he should try to find Cru in Slovenia, and so he found my email, shared it with Žan, and he contacted us. As he shared his story, my coworker and I could hardly believe what we were hearing!

We have since been meeting with him weekly over zoom for discipleship, and together he has read the Bible in Slovene for the first time, and prayed in Slovene for the first time! He has been so teachable, and excited to grow in his faith, and learn how he can share with others the transformational power of the gospel that he himself has experienced.

As we pray, we often reflect on Jesus' words, "The harvest is plentiful," but often in Slovenia we can be tempted to question in our hearts, is it really? Are there really so many people ready for the harvest? Are there people in every municipality who are seeking God? Well God answered these questions with an emphatic "Yes!" with Žan. God did everything to bring Žan to us, and it has been a privilege seeing his hunger, and passion. When we shared with him our vision, he was so excited to be a part of it, and has been praying earnestly for a group in his municipality.

With Love, From Jay & Zina



A BIBLE STUDY ABOUT JESUS' CRUCIFIXION

About this Month's Bible Study. The month of March ends on Easter Sunday, the 31st of March. To prepare us for our Easter celebration, this Bible Study will use one of the world's great works of religious art to focus on the agony of Jesus' crucifixion that preceded his resurrection. That work is the central panel of the Isenheim Altar that is now displayed in the Unterlinden Museum in Colmar, France. The Isenheim Altar was painted by MaJas Grünewald in 1512-1516. It's vivid and gruesome depiction of Jesus suffering and death will help us understand how Jesus suffered so that we could know the joy of the Easter victory

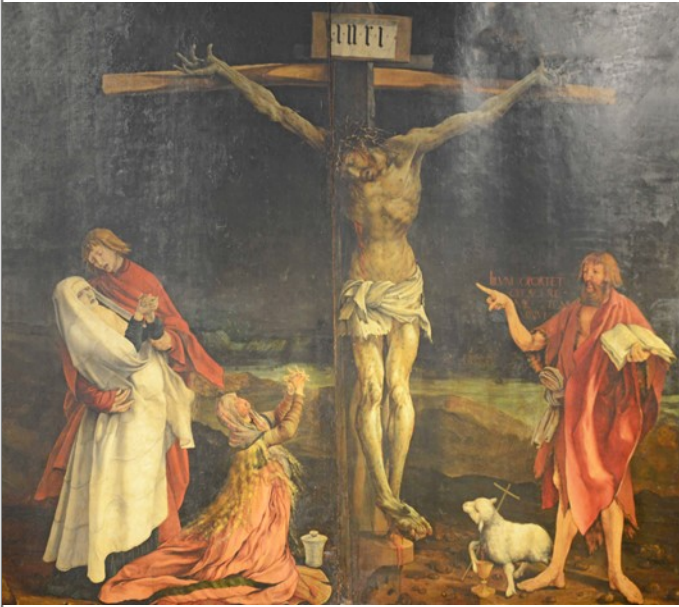


Matthew 27:45-51 45From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. 46And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" 47When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." 48At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. 49But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." 50Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. 51At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split.

This passage from Matthew describes the culmination of Jesus' crucifixion, his last words and death. This scene is portrayed in the central panel of the Isenheim Altar. When we begin our approach to Easter by first understanding the agony of Jesus' suffering and the crushing grief of those closest to Jesus, the joy of Jesus' victory over death becomes even greater. Examining that great work of art (on right) will help us do that. Re-read the passage from Matthew 27 (above), then look carefully at how this altar scene portrays the moments of Jesus' death. The scene is gruesome; the crown of thorns still brutalizes Jesus; his body is covered with marks of torture; the nails in his hands and feet magnify how grotesque his execution was; his side has been pierced to confirm his death. Grünewald's crucifixion painting is stark and austere. He distills this momentous event down to its essential elements. The sky is black. The crowds of jeering enemies who shouted "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and the soldiers who executed Jesus are gone. Even the two bandits who were crucified with Jesus are out of the picture. The figures that remain tell stories that are worthy of our deepest thoughts:



John the Baptist. The figure on the right who points his finger at Jesus is John the Baptist. John was executed by Herod well before Jesus' death, so his appearance is symbolic. John was the



To comprehend how Jesus died, keep Grünewald's image of the crucified Jesus near you while you read Psalm 22 (Psalm 22 is traditionally intoned at Grace on Maundy Thursday while the altar is stripped).

Messiah's forerunner. In Matthew 11, Jesus said "This is the one about whom it is written: 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'" (v11:10-11). John represents the Messianic expectations embodied by Jesus that were now devastated by his death. The Lamb. Look carefully at how the Lamb's right leg encircles a tiny cross as it bleeds into a

chalice. According to Old Testament law, lambs were sacrificed to atone for sin (Lev. 5:6). When Jesus was sacrificed on the cross, he became the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29). The Lamb's blood flowing into the chalice symbolizes the eucharist.

The Perfume Jar. When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Mary Magdalene anointed Jesus' with the expensive perfume that was in this jar in an act of extreme devotion. When the disciples protested this as unwarranted extravagance, Jesus praised Mary: *"She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial"* (Mark 14:8). Now the jar sits empty at Mary's feet because she used it to anoint Jesus for his burial.

Mary Magdalene. The person nearest to Jesus on the left is Mary Magdalene. Matthew and Mark both confirm that Mary Magdalene was present during Jesus' crucifixion: **'Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons'** (Matt. 27:55). In the altar painting, Mary extends her clasped hands to Jesus in a plea of anguish. Mary was the first person to have a post-resurrection encounter with Jesus (John 20:14).

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and John, the Disciple whom Jesus loved. Mary and the Apostle John are embraced in grief. As they witnessed Jesus' death, their lives were changed by what Jesus told them just before his death: **"When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, 'Woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother'"** (John 19:25).

This month, as we go through our traditional cycle of Lenten and Easter worship events, our joy over the Easter victory can be enhanced by beginning this cycle with a meditation on how Jesus and those closest to him suffered.



MARCH 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Third Sunday of Lent 9:30am Property Board 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	4	5 9:00am Quilting	6 9:00am Walkers 1:00pm Grief Support 6:30p - Dinner Church	7	8 9 - Noon FOOD PANTRY	9 Day Light Savings begins
10 Fourth Sunday of Lent 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	11	12 9:00am Quilting	13 :9:00am Walkers 10:00am WAM 1:00pm Grief Support 6:30p - Dinner Church	14	15	16 9:00am Board of Education Everyone is invited to share ideas
17 Fifth Sunday of Lent 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Clyde Bame-Preaching	18	19	20 :9:00am Walkers 1:00pm Grief Support 6:30p - Dinner Church	21 7p-Council	22	23
24 PALM SUNDAY 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	25 Holy	26 Week	27	28 7:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship	29 7:30pm Tennebrae Worship	30 5:00-8:00pm times to set up for Prayer Vigil in the Sanctuary
31 EASTER SUNDAY 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	HE IS RISEN					