

The Grace Family Weekly Message

20 January 2022



WORSHIP AT GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH THIS SUNDAY, THE 23rd OF JANUARY. The Gospel reading for Sunday is Luke 4:14-21.

See page 3 for more information about Sunday's worship service.

GRACE'S FIRST 2022 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER WORSHIP ON SUNDAY THE 30TH OF JANUARY.

A BIBLE STUDY ON THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH

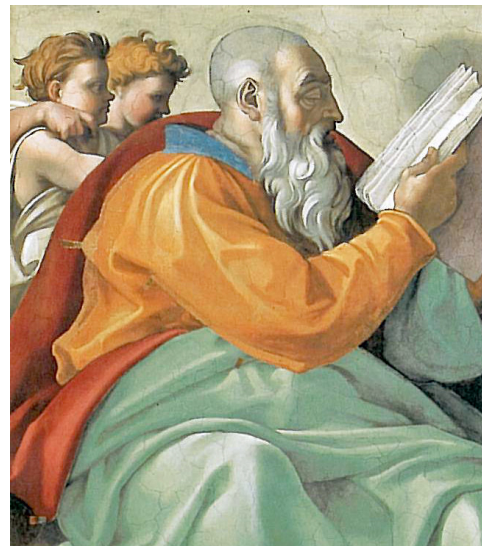
This week's Bible Study is the eleventh in a current series on Old Testament prophets. It looks at how the prophet Zechariah offered hope for a safe, secure future during times when so many were discouraged and depressed.

Zechariah 5:1-4 (Zechariah I)

¹Again I (Zechariah) looked up and saw a flying scroll. ²And he (the angel) said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." ³Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land; for everyone who steals shall be cut off according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cut off according to the writing on the other side. ⁴I have sent it out, says the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name; and it shall abide in that house and consume it, both timber and stones."

Zechariah 9:9-10 (Zechariah II)

⁹Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.



Zechariah, as he was depicted by Michelangelo on the Sistine Chapel ceiling in Rome.

Zechariah is a common name in the Bible. There are, in fact, 32 different Zechariahs, including Zechariah the father of John the Baptist, whom we studied in our 16 December Bible Study. The subject of this Bible Study is another Zechariah. Zechariah the prophet, who is credited with authoring the Old Testament book of Zechariah. This Zechariah was

the son and grandson of priests. His grandfather Iddo was in the group of priests who were allowed to return to Israel in 520 BCE by the new Persian Emperor Darius (Nehemiah 12:4). A young Zechariah likely was part of this group of Jewish exiles that returned to Israel with dreams of rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple.

Zechariah's first six chapters contain a series of visions in which the prophet sees strange sights that were explained by an angel (*messenger of God*). Zechariah's initial literary style, which was based on these visions, differed from the poetic oracles used by classical prophets like Amos, Hosea and Isaiah. For example, a huge flying scroll appears in his sixth vision (v5:1-4 above). The angel explained that the scroll is a "**curse**" that will "**enter the house of the thief and...anyone who swears falsely.**" This vision is presented as an answer to the problem of evil that dominated Habakkuk's prophecy (*last week's Bible Study*). Zechariah's sixth vision is a prophecy that God will remove thieves and liars from the earth.

Zechariah's first vision is a call for Jewish exiles in Babylonia to return to Jerusalem. His second vision projects how four nations that oppressed Israel will now be struck down. His fifth vision of a lampstand and olive trees promises God's presence in the rebuilding of the temple. His seventh vision pictures evil being captured and removed from the land. His eighth vision foresees a life of security and plenty in a future Jerusalem. Each of these visions can be interpreted as a message of hope.

In chapter 8, Zechariah's prophecy explains how everything changed for the Israelites after their return from captivity in Babylon: "**For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent...so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid**" (v8:14-15). Zechariah promises a new age ("**in these days**") for Israel that is distinguished by God's mercy.

The book of Zechariah is like the book of Isaiah in that its last part probably was not written by Zechariah himself. Scholars are confident chapters 1-8 are his, but the authorship of chapters 9-14 is uncertain. These chapters are different because their promises are more specific and messianic. The coming of a new king who is introduced in chapter 9 is a prophecy that the Kingdom of God is drawing near. God will give Israel a future Davidic king who "**shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea**" (v9:10). The description of the new king arriving "**triumphant and victorious**" on a young donkey is familiar to us because of how it is used to describe Jesus' triumphant Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:4-5).

The second part of this book concludes with an apocalyptic vision of God's ultimate triumph: "**On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea...And the LORD will become king over all the earth**" (v14:8-9). Zechariah's prophecy was originally composed to give hope to the Jewish people who emerged from the oppression of their exile in Babylon only to be discouraged by the formidable challenges of rebuilding their lives in post-exile Israel. But for those of us who are discouraged and disheartened after two years of covid oppression that shows no signs of abating, studying Zechariah's messages of hope can also be an antidote for our discouragement.

WEEKLY NEWS AND ACTIVITIES AT GRACE

© **WORSHIP ON SUNDAY.** This coming Sunday, the 23rd of January, is the Third Sunday after Epiphany. The service will take place in the Sanctuary, starting at 10:30 AM. The Gospel reading is Luke 4:14-21. Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) Clyde Bame and Church Musician Bobbie Bean will conduct the worship service.

- **WORSHIPPING IN YOUR VEHICLES.** With increasing concerns about covid risks, more worshippers are choosing to worship in their vehicles. All who worship, whether they remain in their vehicles or enter the Sanctuary, receive God's gifts of grace, the Word and Sacrament. Grace encourages anyone with concerns about remaining safe during worship to attend worship while remaining in your vehicles. Grace broadcasts the entire service on FM 94.1. During communion, Pastor will come out to your cars to commune each parking lot worshipper.
- **Worship Liturgy.** The current worship liturgy is Setting 4 (*page 147 in the Hymnal*).
- **Sanctuary Seating.** We have returned the full sanctuary to socially distanced seating (*every other pew; please do not sit in pews marked with red ribbons*).
- **Covid Safety Precautions.** Safety and health precautions that Grace has been using since September will continue: Stationary offering plates, stationary passing of the peace, communion in place, optional but recommended masking.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING ALL MEMBERS OF THE GRACE FAMILY AND VISITORS TO WORSHIP ON SUNDAY!

© **ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING LAST SUNDAY.** 61 persons attended worship last Sunday, including 16 persons who worshipped in eight vehicles in the parking lot. The offering total for the second week of the year was \$2,367. With a 2022 offering budget of \$145,000, offerings at Grace must average \$2,789 per week to reach this target. Thank you to all who attend worship and continue to contribute regular offerings.

© **PRAYER CONCERNS.** Please keep the following persons in your prayers:

The Family of Richard Reeder.

Mike Schlievert, Karen Hoffer, Tom Szor, Shelly Sherman, Barbara Harger, Beverly Koveing, Kathy Spangler, Patricia Morral, Karen Southwyck, Carol Morgan, Dustin Schmidt, Chris Marquardt, Donald Bench, Jeannette Young, Sean, Bethany Collier, Dan Van Etten, Scott Taylor, Jody Angelone, Ron Dangler, Jen and Steve, Marge Griffin, Jim Flick, Josh Hunker, Stephen Andrew, Dean Crandall, Kelly Troyer, Nadine Crisologos, Cheryl Hoot, Dick and Ruth Hammel, Reed Oestreich, Heather DeWitz, members of the Grace family who reside in nursing homes including Donna Foss (Parkcliff), Sandy Cutchall (Genoa), Joan Dietrich (Genoa), and Bertha

Marquardt (Orchard Villa), and members of the Grace family and their colleagues who serve in the Armed Forces. If you know of someone to add to the prayer list, please inform Pastor Jaci or the Church Office.

- © **CONGREGATION AND COUNCIL MEETING DATES.** The first meeting of the 2022 Grace Council took place last Thursday, on the 13th of January, via Zoom. Agenda items that were discussed or decided included: 1) prayer concerns, 2) the Secretary's report, 3) approval of the December and end-of-year Financial Reports, 4) establishing a Capital Reserve Fund to set aside a portion of current cash surpluses to pay for future capital replacement requirements, 5) Grace's responses to the **ELCA Congregation Report**, 6) the Pastor's Report, 7) Board Reports, and 8) the winter weather worship cancellation policy. A decision was made to cancel the potluck brunch on the 30th of January due to covid concerns. The Witness and Mission Report announced that the 2022 Lenten Offering will be dedicated to purchasing gifts of honeybees. The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday, the 10th of February.
- © **2022 GRACE CONGREGATION MEETING.** The Annual Congregation Meeting, which Grace's **Constitution** mandates to take place at the end of January, will take place after worship on the 30th of January in the Sanctuary. The primary purpose of this meeting is to present the **2021 Annual Report**. The potluck brunch that was planned to precede the official meeting has been cancelled due to the current omicron covid situation.



- © **2021 GRACE ANNUAL REPORT.** The **Annual Report**, which will be formally presented during the 30 January Congregation Meeting, has been completed. The 21-page report includes reports from Pastor Jaci, the Grace Council, all Boards of Ministry, the women's organization, Thrivent, Piecemakers and community organizations supported by Grace. The report provides end-of-year accounting for 2021 income and expenses as well as for all dedicated funds. A copy of the report can be downloaded from the Grace website at <https://www.graceelconline.org/grace-communications>. Copies will be sent to everyone on the Grace email list. Printed copies will be available in the narthex on Sunday, the 23rd of January as well as on the 30th of January.

- © **GRACE WATER SYSTEM UPDATE.** Technicians from Jamison Well Drilling Co., Mansfield, OH, were at Grace on the 19th of January to remove the old water pressure tanks and install a new VFD on-demand system. Post-installation procedures will take place this week. Testing will then determine if Grace's water contamination issues have been resolved. The Property Board hopes this installation will be successful in making Grace's water supply safe to drink--to the satisfaction of the Ohio EPA.
- © **WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATION.** In the event of severe winter weather (snow or ice) possible worship cancelations will be determined as follows:

- If Ottawa County declares a Level 3 emergency, worship and other activities are cancelled.
- In the case of Level 2 or other weather conditions that make driving hazardous, the Officers will decide whether to hold Sunday worship on Saturday evening or Sunday morning (by 8:30 AM).
- If Sunday worship is cancelled, 1) an email notice will be sent to everyone on the email list, 2) a cancellation advisory will be given to WTOL and 3) a cancellation notice will be posted on Grace's Facebook page.

- © **FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP.** The 2022 Flower Chart is on the Narthex table. Please consider signing up to provide flower arrangements that may be dedicated to loved ones or to recognize special occasions.
- © **PIECEMAKERS.** The Piecemakers quilting group is now meeting each Tuesday, starting at 9:30 AM, at the church. Anyone interested in being part of this vital ministry is invited to join them on Tuesday mornings.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS			
Date	Event	Time	Location
25 January, Tuesday	Piecemakers Quilters	9:30 AM	Grace
30 January, Sunday	Annual Congregational Meeting <i>Presentation of Annual Reports</i>	After Worship	Grace Sanctuary
8 February, Tuesday	Worship and Music Board	8:00 PM	Grace
10 February, Thursday	Council Meeting	7:00 PM	TBD
Regular Weekly Events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday mornings, at 9:30 AM, Piecemakers assemble to continue God's work • Tuesday evenings, at 7:00 PM, Choir practice • Sunday mornings, at 10:30 AM, Worship, with communion 			

- © **DEACON AND LECTOR SCHEDULE.** Deacons and Lectors scheduled to serve in upcoming worship services are listed in the table.

DEACONS AND LECTORS FOR UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES		
DATE	DEACONS	LECTORS
23 January	Dep & Jeff Boos	John Marik
30 January	Randy Jacobs & Gary Anderson	Steve Blausey
6 February	Jennifer & Mark Haar	Mark Haar
13 February	Mary & Mike Schlievert	Nancy Bennett

- © **2022 SYNOD ASSEMBLY.** The 2022 Northwest Ohio Synod Assembly is now scheduled to take place at Bowling Green State University on 3-4 June 2022. Grace is expected to be eligible to designate three delegates, one of whom must be under 30 years of age. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

- © **OPERATION OREO.** Please keep all military personnel in your prayers, but especially: SSG Stephen Simkus, U. S. Army, and Cadet Julian Sanchez, U. S. Military Academy.
 - Anyone wishing to donate to Operation Oreo to help offset the cost of shipping and also 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
- © **BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN DEVOTIONAL MESSAGES.** Our sister church, Bethlehem Lutheran, publishes a regular series of devotional messages on their Facebook page. If you are looking for a well-written series of messages for daily living, you might want to look at what Bethlehem is posting. Check at: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=bethlehem%20lutheran%20church%2C%20toledo>.
- © **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA 2022.** The Ottawa County Wreaths across America committee will conduct ceremonies at Clay Township, Harris Elmore Union, and Allen Township cemeteries on Dec. 17th, 2022. Donations will ensure that all veteran's graves receive a wreath.
 - Checks payable to Wreaths across America can be given to John Heminger, placed in the marked collection box on the table in the narthex or mailed to Wreaths Across America, 8444 W. SR 163, Oak Harbor, Oh 43449.
 - If you wish to designate the location, write Clay Township, Allen Township, or Harris Township on the memo line.
 - Veteran help will be required the day of the ceremony to lay the ceremonial wreaths. Tell John if you are willing to help and which branch of the service you would like to honor.
 - The WAA committee is also collecting receipts from the Community Market in Oak Harbor. Put them in the collection box, NOT in the jar for Miller's receipts.
- © **ELMORE FOOD PANTRY.** The Grace Food Pantry item for January is 7.25 oz. packages of Macaroni & Cheese. The Elmore Food Pantry, which is hosted at Grace, is open on the second Friday of each month, from 9:00 AM until noon. Anyone who wishes to drop off food items at the church may bring them to the church on Sunday or leave them inside the north door during times when the church office door is open.
- © **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:**
 - The Genoa American Legion (302 West St.) is hosting pancake breakfasts on the last Sunday of each month, from 8:00-1:00.
- © **SPECIAL BENEVOLENCE ACTIVITIES:**
 - **Millers Receipts.** Members of the Grace Family who shop at Miller New Market Grocery in Genoa should keep their receipts and give them to Marilyn Crandall

who will redeem them for Grace (or send them to 9591 W Moonlight Bay Lane, Oak Harbor OH 43449).

- **Prayer Shawls and Pocket Quilts.** If anyone would like a prayer shawl or pocket quilts to give to someone, contact **Nancy Pries (npries@yahoo.com, 862-3300 or 707-9799).**
- **Amazon Smile Fundraiser.** Amazon purchases earn cash contributions for Grace Lutheran Church if you enroll in the Amazon Smile program and name Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Elmore OH, as your designated charity. Log in with this address: smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1219970. If you use the Amazon Smile program and designate Grace as your charity, 0.5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to Grace. Donations received through this program are divided evenly between Operation Oreo and the Piecemakers.

Our prayer: Faithful God, give us the strength to persevere through discouragement and the vision to have faith in your promises.

GRACE CONTACT INFORMATION		
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