

Invitation to Read the New Testament in 2021.

Bishop Beaudoin and the Northwest Ohio Synod are inviting Lutherans in Northwest Ohio to join in reading the entire New Testament in 2021. The reading list is arranged in the order the New Testament books were composed, not in the order they are listed in the New Testament. The reading list starts with James and concludes with Revelation (*You may be surprised to learn that many New Testament letters were composed before the four Gospels were written.*).

You can download the "2021 Daily Bible Reading Guide" at <https://files.constantcontact.com/8f1c062f001/00c3b4ce-9a87-42a3-8bbf-52b4da8cdadf.pdf>

What is Worry?

Worry is a misuse of the imagination

Dan Zadra



I'm not sure how January came and went so quickly and we are already looking toward lent. This year during lent we will be having drive up worship in the

parking lot. Starting with Ash Wednesday on the 17th which will include the imposition of ashes and communion. Lent this year will once again look different but the board of worship and Bobbie and myself are working hard to create meaningful worship even amidst this most unusual time.

Our theme will be Perfect Love Casts Out Fear: Evening Prayer for Lent. The order is rooted in Evening Prayer but provides a pair of readings each week exploring dimensions of God's love for us and the love of Christ we share. We often imagine Lent as only a time of somber self-sacrifice, but the gospel acclamation for Lent reminds us to return to God, who is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. God is abounding in steadfast love and His perfect love casts our fear. Right now in our lives with the pandemic and craziness we need to hear about God's love for us and the love of Christ that we share. It's a word we desperately need to hear. Join us as we hear virtually from a different pastor each week about different aspects of love.

Then we will celebrate Palm Sunday followed by Holy Week. During Holy Week we will have many of the same elements of worship that we typically see during this week just in new ways. I look forward to celebrating Easter Sunday this year with a sense of renewed love for God and others as well as ushering in the season of spring to see the growth and goodness of God as a tangible reminder of God's love for us in creation.

In Christ,

Pastor Jaci

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



Happy Birthday to everyone celebrating birthdays in February:

Betty Breier	2/2
Chris Marquardt	2/6
Kathy Buhrow	2/10
Charles Pressley	2/11
Marissa Boos	2/12
Merle Haar	2/12
Kevin Heitzman	2/13
Gene Michel	2/20
Shawn Duncan	2/25
Amy Simkus	2/28

February Gospel Readings...

February 7 Mark 1: 29-39
February 14 Mark 9: 2-9

February 17 Ash Wednesday
Matthew 6: 1-6 16-21

February 21 Mark 1: 9-15
February 28 Mark 8: 31-38

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

15 oz. Can of Vegetables



We Want To Hear from You...

Please email Joyce or Pastor Jaci if you have a favorite hymn you would like to sing during Lent. I will incorporate it into one of our services.

Bobbie Bean

It seems there's always something for which I need extra strength from You, O God. Help me to remember that without You I can do nothing.

WEEKLY OFFERING 2021

Week 1	\$2,375.00	Week 2	\$2,207.00
Week 3	\$2,569.00	Week 4	\$9,917.00
Total		\$17,068.00	

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.

Needed from Offering for 2021 \$150,000 Budget Gap (\$132,932)

Weekly Goal \$2,884 Avg. Week \$4,267

Congregational Life Meeting...

There will be a **Zoom** meeting of the **Board of Congregational Life on Thursday, Feb 18, at 7:00 pm.** We would love to have input on activities or service projects that are safe and will provide a "community feeling" while remaining physically distanced. Please contact Mary Schlievert by text, phone, or email (419-350-1134 or jamasami@me.com) if you are interested in attending the meeting. I will need your email address so I can send you a Zoom link for the meeting. Looking forward to seeing you and hearing great ideas on Feb 18th!

Attn Pancake Lovers...



The Sophomore Class of Woodmore High School is sponsoring a Pancake, Sausage, Orange Juice and/or coffee Breakfast. The event will be pick-up drive thru Saturday, February 13th from 8:00 to 11:00am at the High School at 633 Fremont Street in Elmore. The cost is \$5.00 per person. Come out and support the Sophomore Class.

February Deacon Schedule

2/7/2021	Mark & Jennifer Haar
2/14/2021	Rachel Beeler & Pr. Dave Wietelmann
2/17/2021 Ash Wed	Randy Jacobs & Gary Anderson
2/21/2021	Mike & Mary Schlievert
2/24/2021 Wed	Mark & Jennifer Haar
2/28/2021	Joan Eckermann/Randy Jacobs

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 servants.

Get in Touch with Grace...

www.graceelonline.org is our web site. Check out the new site. The church office is closed at this time due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Joyce is working from home, checking messages, email, and mail 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.

Pastoral Care...

In the event of a need for pastoral support or care, please contact Pastor

Jaci Tiell @ 419-215-8370 or pastorjacitiell@aol.com Thank you.



***Wear Your MASK
STOP the Spread***



Council Minutes from January 14, 2021

The Grace Lutheran Church Council met via Zoom on January 14, 2021 at 7 p.m. Members present were: Nancy Pries, Karen Hammel, Amy Simkus, Mary Schlievert, Gary Anderson, Deb Boos, Randy Jacobs, Rachel Beeler, Steve Simkus, Pastor Jaci, and guests Bobbie Bean and Joyce Bruntz.

Gary called the meeting to order and led us in prayer. We welcomed new members, Mary Schlievert and Randy Jacobs.

Installation of Grace Lutheran Church Council members will be held on Sunday, January 17, 2021 during worship. Members are asked to stand outside of their cars during the Installation Ceremony.

The Prayer Concern List was updated.

The Secretary's Report from the December 14, 2020 meeting was approved as presented.

The December 2020 Financial Report was approved as presented.

The ELCA Congregational Report needs to be updated. We will be looking at the roster to determine active members.

Board Reports/Committee Reports

Board of Worship – Reported by Rachel Beeler

*There will be deacon training after worship on January 31.

*Ash Wednesday and Lenten services are being planned.

*The next meeting will be on January 19 at 7 p.m.

The Call Committee will meet on January 21, 2021.

Board of Property – Reported by Steve Simkus

*Thermostats have been replaced in the office, basement, and fellowship hall.

*The organ is under surveillance.

*The Ottawa County Inspector came and we are waiting for the report.

*The committee will research repair costs of the bell tower and determine if we should move forward with the repair.

*The outdoor sign will be updated with a new facade and letters.

*HVAC –The filters have been replaced and the boilers have been checked.

*The next Board of Property meeting will be on February 4, 2021

Board of Witness and Mission – Reported by Amy Simkus

The Board of Witness and Mission has selected the ELCA Good Gifts Fruit-Tree Farm as Grace's special Lenten offering project for 2021. A fruit tree can farm be gifted with a donation of \$150. Based on past Lenten contributions, the Board has set a goal of raising \$900 to donate six fruit tree farms. Members may make their donations at the Lenten mid-week services, or by using the Lenten Special Offerings envelopes and dropping them off at Sunday services.

(Continued on page 4)

(Council minutes continued from page 3)

Pastor's Report – Reported by Pastor Jaci

In addition to regular weekly duties, preparations are being made for Lenten midweek services.

Announcements:

There will be an Annual Congregational Meeting on January 24, 2021 following worship. The Annual Report will be distributed this upcoming Sunday.

Our next Council Meeting will be held on February 11, 2021 at 7 p.m.

Mary made a motion, second Rachel, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hammel

Church Council Secretary

BENEVOLENCE NEWS...



Lenten Special Offering Project. The Board of Witness and Mission has selected the ELCA Good Gifts Fruit-Tree Farm as Grace's special Lenten offering project for 2021. A fruit tree farm can be gifted with a donation of \$150. Based on past Lenten contributions the Board has set a goal of raising \$900 to donate six fruit tree farms. There will not be any traditional soup suppers during Lent this year, but members can still make their Lenten Special Offerings when they attend the Lenten Mid-Week services, or they can donate Lenten Special Offerings along with their regular weekly offerings (just write "Lenten Offering" on the memo line of the Lenten Offering check).

Member Benevolence Survey. The Board of Witness and Mission is seeking your guidance on how Grace benevolence giving should be allocated and disbursed. A copy of the survey is printed on the last page of the Weekly Message. The survey asks you to identify up to six benevolence causes that are the most important to you. If you did not complete this survey last Sunday, we hope you will complete and turn it in to the church office or Amy Simkus, Nancy Pries, or John Heminger.

OPERATION OREO...

Please keep all of the military in your prayers, but especially: SGT Stephen Simkus, Cadet Julian Sanchez and Garrett Mapes.

Anyone wishing to make a donation 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



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

February 2021 will be the 12th consecutive month in which worship and church activities at Grace have been dramatically altered by the worldwide covid pandemic. At this point, some Grace members have received covid vaccinations but appeals for masking, social distancing and sanitation measures remain in place so any return to normal worship and church activities is still several more weeks and perhaps months away. Your Council continues to actively monitor this situation and will make changes based on what is safe and meaningful. Our report this month covers these topics:

Thank You to Grace Members. During the past year when worship and church activities have been severely restricted, we asked members for their cooperation in conducting worship outdoors in our parking lot where we could provide the safest worship setting for the majority of our members. We also asked everyone who steps outside of their vehicles to wear masks and respect social distancing guidelines. Grace members have cooperated with these requirements and your Council expresses a sincere thank-you to all of you for respecting the safety of Grace members.

2020 Grace Annual Report. The **Report** was completed and distributed prior to the 24 January Congregational Meeting when it was accepted and approved. You may still obtain copies of the **Report** by requesting one from the church office or downloading it from the Grace website (www.graceelconline.org, open the "Grace Communications" page, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on "Download 2020 Annual Report."). The **Report** describes a year when Grace "found new ways to be the church" in the face of pandemic restrictions.

Sharing Our Surplus with Benevolence Causes. For the second consecutive year, Grace ended the year with a financial surplus. One of the questions the Council will have to deal with this year concerns whether to adopt a policy that commits a substantial share of any year-end surpluses to additional benevolence causes that are identified by the Board of Witness and Mission. Such a decision would be based on an understanding that churches should serve "the least of these," not be building up big savings accounts.

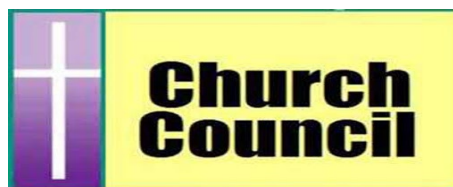
Should the Grace Membership be Reviewed? Another question the 2021 Council must decide is whether to conduct a comprehensive membership review. Grace officially reports 330 "baptized members," but the number of people who actively participate in the life of the church is substantially less than that. Is it time to conduct a membership review to determine how many members Grace actually has?

Upcoming Worship Plans. Pastor Jaci and the Board of Worship are planning a full series of worship services for the Ash Wednesday-Lenten-Easter Week cycle. There will be an **Ash Wednesday service** in the Grace parking lot at 7:00 PM on the 17th of February that will include the imposition of ashes (self-imposition) and communion. There will also be **Mid-Week Lenten Services** on 24 February and the four Wednesdays in March (in the parking lot at 7:00 PM). And there will, of course, be a full cycle of traditional services from Palm Sunday on 28 March through Easter on 4 April (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil, Easter). You can find more details on Grace worship plans in the **Weekly Messages** that are sent each week. It's not too early to get all of these dates into your planning calendars.

Members of the Grace Family who have comments or recommendations regarding these or any other issues of concern to our church are encouraged to give them to any Council member. Comments to the Council President may be sent via email to dcmgaryandeson@gmail.com.

Gary Anderson

Council President



February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot	3	4 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot 5:30pm - Property Board Mtg in Fellowship Hall	5	6
7 Epiphany 5 :10:00am - Parking Lot Worship 6:30pm– Boy Scouts in the Fellowship Hall	8	9 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot	10	11 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot 7:00pm - Council Meeting via ZOOM	12	13
14 Transfiguration of Our Lord 10:00am - Parking Lot Worship 6:30pm– Boy Scouts in the Fellowship Hall 	15	16 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot	17 ASH WEDNESDAY 7:00pm– Service of Ashes and Communion/Parking Lot 	18 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot	19 9:00am– Noon FOOD PANTRY	20 9:00am– Noon FOOD PANTRY 9:00am Boy Scouts Fellowship Hall
21 First Sunday of Lent 10:00am - Parking Lot Worship 6:30pm– Boy Scouts in the Fellowship Hall	22	23 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot	24 7:00pm Lenten worship in the parking lot 	25 11:00am - ESC Meal Distribution in Parking Lot	26	27
28 Second Sunday of Lent 10:00am - Parking Lot Worship 6:30pm– Boy Scouts in the Fellowship Hall	<p align="center"><i>No act of kindness, no matter how small is ever wasted.</i></p>					