



Equipper

Equipping God's people as we celebrate, teach, and share God's Grace.

March 2025



Pastor's Message

"Jesus Raises You Up"

Mark 8:27-29, "27 Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?" 28 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." 29 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

What are your deepest hurts and your grandest hopes? Do you have worries and fears, or great dreams and expectations? What happens when an ugly reality seems to rear its head no matter your planning or provision? What then? Does answering any of these questions really matter in the end?

Yes! The great preacher Charles Spurgeon was right, "We have great needs, but we have a great Christ for our needs!" And the living Christ is here for you in His word to offer you His life and His salvation as a gift. There is one question that consumes all other questions in this life. The question comes from Jesus himself, "Who do you say that I am?" Another question springs from it, "Who then are you in Him?" Maybe another way to ask both is this, "What happens when you are driven to your knees because of your sin, or overwhelmed by the chaos of the world in which you live, and Christ alone raises you up by His mercy?" What then?

The lyrics of a popular contemporary song by Brendan Graham and Rolf Lovland communicate who Christ is for us and what Christ is ready to do with us and through us. *"When I am down and, oh my soul so weary; when troubles come, and my heart burdened be; Then I am still and wait here in silence, Until You come and sit awhile with me. There is no life, no life without its hunger. Each restless heart beats so imperfectly, But when You come and I am filled with wonder, Sometimes, I think I glimpse eternity. You raise me up so I can stand on mountains, You raise me up to walk on stormy seas, I am strong when I am on Your shoulders, You raise me up to more than I can be."* ("You Raise Me Up" by Brendan Graham and Rolf Lovland; Copyright Universal Music Publications and Peermusic III Ltd.)

Wow! That sounds like pretty incredible vision, courage, strength, and power for you, exceeding all of your expectations. Who wouldn't want that? And yet, those sentiments pale in comparison to the powerful response of Peter to Jesus' question.

When Jesus asks the question “Who do you say that I am?” He’s not merely seeking to draw out an answer to give his disciples strength to live their lives more boldly or more courageously. No, it’s more than a self-help kind of thing. Jesus asks the question because their lives depend on their answer. Jesus was pressing life’s ultimate question on them that day. Amidst humanity’s longing for a leader and Israel’s longing for a Messiah back then, Jesus sets aside the false opinions of the day and let’s Peter say for all to hear, then and now: *“You are the Messiah”* (which means “the Christ”). Matthew’s Gospel records more of Peter’s statement: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

You see when Jesus is the answer to our deepest desires, life changes. When Jesus is the object of our greatest hopes, life changes. When the cross and the resurrection of Jesus becomes the central event in our lives and the assurance of our future no matter the circumstances, life changes. When He asks you, “Who do you say that I am?” It’s the most important question of your life, now and forever.

C. S. Lewis focused the issue sharply: *“A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn’t be a great moral teacher. He’d either be a lunatic-on the level of a man who says he is a poached egg-or else he’d be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is the son of God, or else a madman or something worse. Christianity, if false is of no importance and if true, of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important.”* (C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity, Book 2, Chapter 3)

The true biblical Jesus, the robust, challenging Jesus, is more than just a comforter. He challenges and confronts us because our life and salvation in Him are too precious to miss. He calls us to the exhilarating adventure of dynamic discipleship and abundant life to be lived in Him for others no matter the times. Though He meets us as we are with incredible grace, He loves us too much to leave us as we’ve been. He surely will raise us up to be more than we alone could be.

Prayer: *Dear Lord Jesus, give me wisdom to take Your question to heart. Let my mind concur with Peter so that, by faith in You, I might not be overcome by anything that seeks to draw me away from the life You have in store for me, now and forever. Amen.*

See you in worship,

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Pastor John M Taggatz



***Welcome to our new members Steven Pawlak & Kyle and Danielle Kadlec & family!!!
We are so happy that you have joined our congregation at Grace!!!***

New Members Class on Sunday March 30th from 1:30-5:30pm at Grace Lutheran School

Our next New Members class will take place in our Grace Lutheran School building located at 8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave. Pastor is planning to have the New Members Class on Sunday March 30th from 1:30-5:30pm. Please also let us know if you might need childcare for this event. Whether you have questions about Christ or want to deepen your faith in Him, this class will explore what the Bible says about our God, and how His love gives direction and meaning to your life today and forever. This class is designed for those who are interested in learning or reviewing the foundations of the Christian faith. Attendance at the class may lead to membership in our church, but there are no obligations. Let us know if you might need child-care. Watch an introductory video at: www.lhm.org/GodConnects.

Announcements

Please Note

Call the church office at 414.762.8990

- When a member of your family is admitted to the hospital, so a visit can be made by Pastor Taggatz.
- When your address, email, or your home or business phone number have changed, so church records can be corrected.
- When you are planning to move either out of town or locally.
- When you know you are pregnant so that we will be able to assist you in any way we can with prayers, encouragement and support.
- When a new baby arrives in your family and/or in the family of another church member.
- When you are planning a wedding, baptism or funeral.

For appointments or emergencies, call church office or Pastor's cell phone.

Pastor John Taggatz, cell: 715.467.1231

Monday 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Tuesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Wednesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Thursday 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Friday Pastor Off

Visitations: Monday – Thursday Afternoons

Heidi, Church Secretary

Church office: 414.762.8990

Church office hours: T-W-Th 9:00am – 12:30pm

REMINDER: If you have any announcements and/or additions you would like printed in the monthly *Equipper* please forward to the church office at church@graceoakcreek.org by the 17th of each month.

Look for the LARGE mite box to drop your change and dollars in to on March 5th and 9th



When you or your group plans to hold a meeting at the Grace Lutheran School campus, it must be cleared by Principal Steve Gettelman. His email address is: principal@graceoakcreek.org

ONLINE GIVING AT GRACE

You can now give to our Church online. It's easy, fast, and secure. If you're able, we also encourage you to set up recurring giving. Thank you for supporting our ministries here at Grace!!! Text the word: graceoc to 206-859-9405, use this QR Code or head to our web-site: graceoakcreek.org. You may give a one time gift or set up your regular weekly/monthly offering. Thank you for your generosity and support of the ministries at Grace!!!



Easter Breakfast is BACK!!!

Our Youth Group will be hosting their Potluck Easter Breakfast in the Church Narthex on Easter Sunday, April 20th from 7-9:00am. We are requesting members to RSVP and sign up for a dish to share. PLEASE SEE SIGN-UP SHEETS IN THE NARTHEX! A freewill offering will be taken to benefit the Grace Youth Group for their trip to the LCMS National Youth Gathering. Thank you for your support!!!

The Grace Lutheran Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday April 19th at 3pm. DONATIONS

NEEDED. This Easter Egg Hunt will be for Preschool through 4th Grade and it will be held at Grace Lutheran School. Our Grace Lutheran Youth Group members and their parents will be helping out with this event. We are asking for donations of already filled plastic Easter Eggs for this Easter Egg Hunt. If you would like to drop off your donations you can do so at Church or our Grace Lutheran School/Church Office. We are inviting the families from our Church, School, and Early Childhood Center to attend this event. Please join us!!! We will need our Junior and Senior High Youth to help us with putting our Easter Eggs for this event an hour before the event takes place.



Your 2025 Grace Lutheran Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex of the Church. Please feel free to pick your envelopes up and we thank you for your continued support of our Church, School, and Early Childcare Center through the stewardship of your time, talents, and treasures! God bless you! **Please do not use until January 2025.**

OUR GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL PANTHER NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX HERE AT CHURCH FOR ANY PARISHIONERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO PICK IT UP TO SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING AT OUR LUTHERAN SCHOOL.

Giving to Grace Through The Thrivent Choice Program

When you're ready to make an impact on the causes and nonprofits you care most about, we're here to help. Through our Thrivent Choice® program, you can make a personal donation or direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® to more than 40,000 churches and nonprofits. Eligible members can recommend where Thrivent distributes a portion of its charitable funding by directing Choice Dollars®. Members become eligible for Thrivent Choice based on insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent volunteer leadership.



Special notice regarding the Thrivent Choice Program: Thrivent members wishing to continue their automatic withdrawal to the charity of their choice will have to let Thrivent know either by e-mail or phone. All you have to do is call this 1-800 number in order to see if you have Thrivent Choice dollars to give. To continue to direct your Choice Dollars to the charity of your choice call: 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836) and state "Thrivent Choice."

For More information on the Thrivent Choice Program please go to:

<https://www.thrivent.com/what-we-offer/generosity/thrivent-choice.html>

Grace Ladies Guild

****Please Note: There will be no meeting in March****

"Loving Leadership"

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28 (NIV)

LWML SWD Leadership Development Workshops

This workshop will focus on fostering leadership skills that emphasize compassion, understanding, and effective communication. It is a great opportunity to grow personally and professionally!

Topics: Leadership 101, Motivation is Contagious, Leadership in Pairs, Look of a Leader

Choose your date to attend: March 5th- St Paul's Lutheran Church- Sheboygan Falls 8:30-am-3pm

Or April 5th-St Paul's Lutheran Church- Janesville 8:30am-3pm

Register online at www.lwml-swd.org/event/workshop

There is NO cost to attend. Simply bring along your lunch and an open mind to hear how the Lord may be calling you as a leader! Any questions, please contact Jennifer Olen 414.305.3740

Zone 1 Spring Rally

Saturday, April 12th from 9:00am-11:00am at Grace Lutheran-Milwaukee, 3030 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Free at Last ministry to present. ALL ladies are welcome to attend!



Ladies Bible Study

Please join us on Wednesday mornings at Church at 9:30 a.m. We are studying, "Flowing from the Cross: Six Facets of God's Forgiveness" by Daniel Paavola. Join us!!! All women of our congregation are invited to attend!

Rise & Sonshine Bible Study

Saturday, March 8th & 22nd - 8:00am-9:30am

Location: The school library

We continue our discussion and study of Romans

All ladies welcome!



Sunday Morning Bible Class from 9:15-10:15am in the School Library

Luke: To All Nations

Luke's carefully written Gospel, compiled from both oral and written accounts, points to God's gracious salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. The peace that Christ has brought to the world enables us to break out in a liturgy of praise. The salvation story did not end with Christ's ascension, however; Christ's Church is called to go to "all nations"-men, women, children, the poor, the sick, and the disenfranchised-proclaiming the victory found only in Jesus Christ. We hope you can join us for our Adult Bible Class on Sunday mornings at Grace as we learn how Luke's

Gospel speaks to us about:

God's plan for bringing salvation to both Jew and Gentile;
believers' unceasing joy upon hearing the Good News;
the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life and in our own;
the enduring value and importance of prayer.

Save the Date!

Saturday, March 29th - Game Night at Grace!

March 29th Our Fellowship Committee will be having a game night at the school hall. You will be able to bring a board game of your choosing to share with others or we will supply some games for that night. We will also be having some cribbage boards, or you may like to bring your own, for those who would like to have a more quiet game. It will be another night of Fun Fellowship and Food. We ask that you bring a snack to pass and a non alcohol drink for you and your family. A sign up sheet will be posted at Church the first week in March - or check your email for the link to RSVP online.

The doors will be open at 6:00 and the games will start at 6:30. It will give you time to set up your games and people will be able to choose which game they will like to participate in. Please print out the rules for your game so we will be able to know how to play. We will continue to play until 8:30pm. We hope to see you there!





Philippians Conference

Grace Lutheran Church Stewardship Board in Oak Creek is excited to host the *Philippians Conference with Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador*, from the South WI District, and we would love for you to join us for this special event. This conference will focus on **stewardship as a whole-life response to the Gospel**, equipping church leaders and lay people with biblical insights and practical applications to strengthen their ministry and mission. Dr. Meador brings a wealth of experience in Lutheran stewardship and leadership training, making this an excellent opportunity for spiritual growth and encouragement. Please let us know if you will be attending by signing the sign up sheet located in the narthex or contacting our church office at: 414-762-8990 or church@graceoakcreek.org. We look forward to growing together in faith and service. **Please let us know if you plan on attending by no later than Thursday March 6th.** **See the flyer in the narthex for further details and how to sign up.**

Here are the details:

 **Date:** Saturday March 15th

 **Location:** Grace Lutheran School 8537 S Pennsylvania Ave, Oak Creek, WI 53154

 **Time:** 8:30am-2pm (Lunch Included)

Vacation Bible School Volunteers Needed – June 2025 We are looking for **volunteers** to help with **Vacation Bible School (VBS) in June 2025!** We hope to hold VBS at **Grace Lutheran during the second week in June (the 9th-13th)**, and we're excited to have **Mrs. Amy Pankow** as our **VBS Director** for this event. Our plan is to offer a **week-long VBS** for children **Preschool through Elementary School**, and we need your help to make it a success! Volunteers are needed for:

Leading Bible Study with the children

Helping with arts and crafts

Leading the openings and closings

Organizing and running games

Serving as VBS crew leaders to guide children from station to station

If you are interested in **helping out with this year's VBS**, please contact **Amy Pankow** at

apankow@graceoakcreek.org. Thank you for considering being part of this wonderful ministry for our children.

We appreciate your support and prayers as we prepare for VBS 2025 at Grace!!!



Opportunities at Grace

Volunteers Needed to Assist with Worship!

We are in need of additional people to assist as ushers and lay readers during worship services, especially for Sunday mornings at 8am and Thursday evenings at 6:30pm.

Ushers arrive early, greet people and hand out bulletins before service, gather offerings and assist with communion during service, and straighten up the church after service. Lay readers proclaim God's word to the congregation by reading the Old Testament and Epistle lessons during the worship service. If you are able and willing to help in either of these capacities, please sign up on the sheet in the back of church -- your assistance is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to approach the elder on duty with any questions you may have about these opportunities.

Ushers Needed

We are in critical need of ushers for both Thursday and Sunday services. If you have thought about being an usher but are concerned about the duties, please don't be. Here are some of the main duties: Arrive 20 minutes before service, Pass out bulletins, Collect offerings, Usher people for communion, Clean up after service

Greeting Card Ministry

The greeting-card ministry consists of volunteers mailing cards and notes of encouragement to people in nursing facilities, who are homebound, or otherwise can't be at church regularly. *'Think of your neighbor, love your neighbor.'* This is the way people answer that message, letting people know they haven't been forgotten. If you would like to share in this ministry, please take a card which is provided for you on the table in the narthex of the Church. Remember...you are giving joy to these people. If you are interested in taking part in this ministry, please contact Pauline Parker at: 414-807-6338 or paulinemom@aol.com.

Substitute Wraparound Care Worker Needed - Day School:

We are in need of a substitute wraparound care worker at Grace from 6:30-8:05am or that can be available from 3:30-5:30pm, Monday through Friday. The pay for this position is \$15.00 an hour. If you are interested in helping out with this position in subbing on a routine basis, please contact our ECC Director Rachel Miliacca at: eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org or at 414-762-8755.

Easter Lilies/Plants

To help make our Easter celebration more memorable, Milaeger's is offering a beautiful assortment of plants to celebrate the glorious Easter holiday. 1) Sign-up for your preferred flower/plant on sheets posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. 2) Enclose cash or check in the envelopes provided and place in offering basket or hand to an elder. **All money and orders need to be placed by March 17th, 2025.**

Choir at Grace!

Choir practice is on Thursday evenings in the church following worship. Please consider joining our church choir. Music has a unique way of connecting us with God, and being a part of the choir is a beautiful opportunity to share your voice and your faith. Whether you're an experienced singer or someone who simply loves to sing, we welcome you with open arms. Martin Luther once said, *"He who sings, prays twice."* Please contact Kathy Kolb, our Choir Director, for further details if you are interested in joining our church's choir

Worship Services at Willow Crest Nursing Home

Volunteers Needed

Grace Lutheran Church members have helped out with leading worship services at Willow Crest Nursing Home on Sunday mornings. We have started leading these worship services again and could use some volunteers to help out with this ministry.

The worship services are roughly 30 minutes long and are held at 10:00am on Sundays at Willow Crest Nursing Home located at: 3821 Chicago Ave., South Milwaukee, WI 53172. You may end up leading a worship service at Willow Crest once a month, or every 5 to 6 weeks, depending on how many people are willing to volunteer in leading worship services at Willow Crest. We would also provide you with resources to help you lead worship services at Willow Crest.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Jeanne Meyer at: meyorch@sbcglobal.net or 414-719-2257 or Lori Kachelmeier at ilkachel2@gmail.com or 414-828-0290. You would also be able to shadow a current Willow Crest Worship Leader if you are wanting to learn more information about this ministry.

2025 Altar Flowers

Sign-up for 2025 Altar Flowers! The sign-up sheet is posted on the white board in the narthex. Place your flower order directly with Parkway Floral in South Milwaukee at (414) 762-0246. Flowers will be delivered to church, free of charge, before the Thursday evening service. You can also supply your own arrangement. Rachel Miliacca at the ECC can provide you with a vase liner. Your flowers will be refrigerated after the Thursday service so they will be fresh for Sunday's services. Take your flowers to enjoy at home after the 10:30am service on Sunday.

Reminder: If you want to put flowers on the altar, you must pay for it directly to the florist (Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee) if using a florist. Also, there are special offering envelopes in the narthex for Altar Flowers that you can use to make payment.

Portals of Prayer Devotional

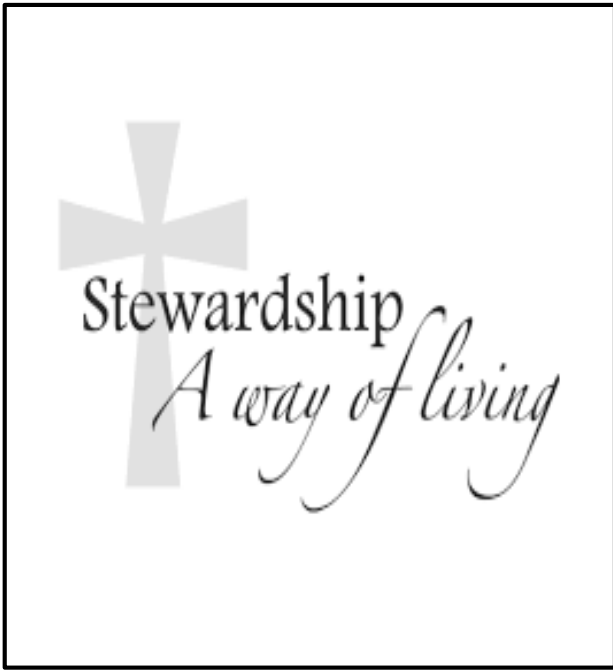
Over the years the church has provided the Portals of Prayers devotional book to our members. Throughout these years the church has carried this expense. To help offset that burden we now have envelopes available in the narthex for our members to designate funds to this devotional book. It is our goal to continue to provide this amazing tool to our members in their faith journey.

New Grief Share Group at Grace Lutheran School

No matter what the circumstances, grief recovery is a painful process. Have you or someone you know experienced the death of a loved one recently? Near the end of February we are starting a special seminar that we sponsor for people dealing with the loss of a family member here at Grace Lutheran. We understand how deeply grief and loss hurt people and families, and we simply wanted you to know about our Grief Share group. It's a place where many people have found they can begin putting their lives back together again with the Lord's help and with the love and encouragement of His Church. Our Grief Share grief recovery seminar and support group will meet on Monday evenings starting February 17th from 6:30-8:00pm in the school library and it will end on Monday May 19th. We will take off April 21st for Easter Monday. The cost for attending is \$20.00. Grace Lutheran School is located at: 8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave. Lori Kachelmeier and Jeanne Meyer will be the leaders for this Grief Share Group. Grief Share features nationally recognized experts on grief recovery topics. Seminar sessions include *"Is This Normal?"* *"The Challenges of Grief,"* *"Grief and Your Relationships,"* *"Why?"* and *"Guilt and Anger."* For more information or to register go to the website: www.griefshare.org and enter our zip code "53154" to the left of "find a group" box and do a search. It will bring up our Monday 6:30 pm meetings. For further questions please call Lori Kachelmeier at: 414-828-0290.

“Abiding Produces Fruit”

God calls us to live lives of abundant fruitfulness (good works— thoughts, attitudes, or actions that glorify God). The key to bearing fruit is found in the 15th chapter of John’s Gospel where Jesus tells us that He is the Vine and we the branches. As the Vine provides nourishment to its branches, Jesus fills, sustains, and empowers us. It is the connection we have with Jesus, the Vine, that makes our fruit possible. Jesus said, *“I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in Him, he it is that bears much fruit...”* (verse 5). By God’s grace, we understand that, through our own power, we are unable to bear fruit. Because it is Jesus Who enables us to be fruitful, we can bear fruit, more fruit, and much fruit in our lives, thus bringing glory to our Heavenly Father (verse 8).



God’s Word refers to the connection between the vine and branches and our connection with Jesus as “abiding.” Through His holy Word and Sacraments, Jesus abides in us, stays with us, and makes Himself at home with us. Through His holy Word and Sacraments, we stay in touch with Him, remain attached to Him, and receive life and power from Him. His life-giving Word abides in us, making us fruitful, like healthy branches on a good vine. If our connection with Jesus is severed, it is because we have caused the separation. Jesus will *“never leave [us] nor forsake [us]”* (Hebrews 13:5).

The fruit that we bear is not only made possibly by our abiding in Jesus, it indicates that we have been and are in union and communion with Jesus. Our fruit is Jesus working in and through us. Our fruit is seen as we share the Gospel with others and introduce neighbors, friends, and co-workers to Jesus. Through faith we understand that our efforts to advance the Gospel are both a responsibility and privilege. The more we “abide” in Jesus, the more we will share our time, talents, and money with God by serving and witnessing and giving to others. Each and every day we are given opportunities to bear fruit. Some acts of service may be as small as opening the door for others or they may be as big as spending the entire day or several days helping someone in need. It may be giving money sacrificially to help others in need. Through faith, by God’s grace, we can be ready and willing to bear fruit, bringing glory to God through our faithful and fruitful lives.

*Blessings on your
Stewardship journey!*



A Steady Reminder of God's Presence

"Mark and I had been married 26 years. Our sons were 18 and 20. We loved being parents, but with our younger son graduating high school, we were eagerly anticipating the empty nest and having more time for each other.

In the fall, when our younger son started college, Mark began having stomach issues and back pain, which would linger for a few days and then disappear, only to reappear later. He also developed a cough. When his doctor ordered an MRI, the results were devastating—Stage IV pancreatic cancer, already in his liver and both lungs. Mark was only 53.

Our lives were turned upside down. I suddenly found myself trying to provide emotional support to Mark and our sons during the worst experience any of us had ever endured. I wanted and needed to keep myself together to focus on caring for Mark, but I was emotionally drained—full of sadness and terrified of what the future held. I had always been a "take responsibility for everything myself" kind of person. However, I knew I couldn't do this alone.

I talked to my pastor about it, and she suggested matching me with a Stephen Minister. I agreed, and less than two weeks after Mark was diagnosed, my Stephen Minister came for the first of her weekly visits.

It's difficult to convey how important this Stephen Ministry relationship was for me. Our pastor was wonderful, and we had an amazing amount of support from many other people, but the time I spent with my Stephen Minister was the only time in the week when I could truly focus on my own needs. She was there just for me.

My Stephen Minister let me know that, while she was very concerned for Mark, her role was to be my support—to listen and help me process what I was feeling and going through, without giving advice or telling me what to do. The consistency of our Stephen Ministry relationship was crucial in helping me cope. Her weekly visits became an anchor in my life—something I could rely on when everything else was so uncertain. She was a steady reminder of God's presence, helping me know I was never alone.

Although Mark and I chose to talk publicly about his condition, my Stephen Ministry relationship was completely confidential. I knew I could share anything with her, and that's where it would stay.

Mark's illness progressed rapidly—ten weeks of treatment, followed by six weeks of hospice, and then his passing. My needs changed as I went from being a wife to being a caregiver to being a grieving widow and dealing with everything that the loss of a spouse entails. Through it all, my Stephen Minister's love and support continued. She was there for me at every stage of my journey. It was never easy, but my Stephen Minister helped me through the most difficult moments of my life.

I really can't say enough about how much I appreciate my church's Stephen Ministry. The compassionate, consistent, and confidential support of my Stephen Minister was so important in helping me cope—and then begin to heal."

Stephen Ministry is a way congregations can provide high-quality care and outreach to hurting people in the congregation and community. Stephen Ministers are congregation members who have gone through 50 hours of training (and on going training monthly) to provide one-to-one, Christian-centered care. Each Stephen Minister is matched with a hurting person—men are paired with men, and women with women—and meets weekly with that person to listen, care, pray, and encourage. Stephen Ministers care for those dealing with grief, divorce, job loss, hospitalization, financial struggles, loneliness, convalescence, terminal illness, and many other life difficulties.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister, or if you are interested in being a Stephen Minister, you can talk to Pastor Taggatz or to one of our Stephen Leaders, Jeanne Meyer or Lori Kachelmeier.

Lenten Midweek Series for Grace Lutheran Church

Ash Wednesday March 5th – Easter Sunday April 20th, 2025



“Good News from the Beginning: The Gospel in Genesis”

Join us for this exciting series as we meditate upon the Gospel, as it’s so richly proclaimed to us from the Book of Genesis. Please note: **ASH WEDNESDAY** will be on Wednesday March 5th with Holy Communion at 6:30 p.m. There will be no Thursday evening service that week. The Lenten Services following Ash Wednesday will be on Thursday nights at 6:30pm without communion.

Here is an overview of the series...Old Testament, Law; New Testament, Gospel. Old covenant, Moses; new covenant, Jesus. Mount Sinai, Ten Commandments, bad news; Mount Calvary, John 3:16, good news. Genesis, the fall into sin; Revelation, heaven. No question where we’re heading as we begin the Lenten season—the cross of Jesus Christ on Calvary, that event so detailed in all four Gospels, is the event that secures Good News for the world, that whosoever believes it shall not perish but have eternal life in heaven. There’s also no question that the season of Lent is a time to reflect on and repent of our sins, and sin first infected the world in Genesis 3 and is shown to us in stark reality in the thundering of Sinai and the Commandments we fail to keep.

But it’s way oversimplifying—in fact, it’s wrong—to think that people had to wait all those Old Testament centuries to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his cross. From the very beginning—at least within hours of the first sin—God was also promising the Savior. *Genesis* means “beginnings,” and that first book of the Bible tells not only of the beginning, the creation, of the world, but also of the first words of Good News. That’s what our sermons during these Lenten midweek services will explore—the Gospel as it’s so richly proclaimed in the book of Genesis.

March 5th, 2025, 6:30pm (with communion, no Thursday Service this week)

Ash Wednesday: The Good News of a Savior Who Covers Our Sin, Genesis 3:1–13, 21

March 13th, 2025, 6:30pm (no communion)

Lenten Midweek 2: The Good News of a Savior Who Conquers Evil, Genesis 3:14–15

March 20th, 2025, 6:30pm (no communion)

Lenten Midweek 3: The Good News of a Savior Who Gives Us a New Beginning, Genesis 6

March 27th, 2025, 6:30pm (no communion)

Lenten Midweek 4: The Good News of a Savior Who Gives Himself in Our Place, Genesis 22:1–18

April 3rd, 2025, 6:30pm (no communion)

Lenten Midweek 5: The Good News of a Savior Who Unites Heaven and Earth, Genesis 28:10–22

April 10th, 2025, 6:30pm (no communion)

Lenten Midweek 6: The Good News of a Savior Who Brings Good from Evil, Genesis 50:15–21

April 17th, 2025, 6:30pm (with communion)

Maundy Thursday: “He’s Got Us Covered,” Psalm 32:1–5

April 18th, 2025, 12pm (no communion)

Good Friday Noon Day Service: “A Time to Speak,” John 19:17–30

April 18th, 2025, 6:30pm (no communion)

Good Friday Tenebrae Service: “He Died!” Genesis 5

April 20th, 2025, 6am (no communion)

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service: “Three Days!” John 20:1–18

April 20th, 2025, 8:30am & 10am (with communion)

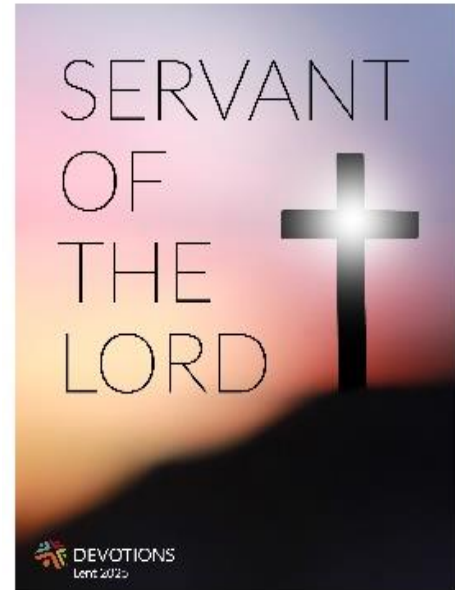
Easter Sunday Festival Service: “Easter Guarantees...” Psalm 16

Lenten Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

“Servant of the Lord”

In Jesus Christ, God Himself enters our human condition. In *Servant of the Lord*, we see Jesus as God’s Son and our Redeemer. He has made the Heavenly Father known to us. Proclaiming the kingdom of God, Jesus served us—lovingly, patiently, compassionately—as He died for our sins and rose three days later in Easter victory.

We have in Jesus the supreme example of devoted service. His teachings defined the lives we are to live—both in praise and honor to God and in love and peace toward one another. All this Jesus did as God’s chosen Servant, sent from heaven to earth to be our King, Savior, and trusted Friend.



We are offering these devotions at our Church in both a physical booklet form and we will be emailing them out to our members. This devotional will include our Lenten Worship Schedule for Grace with contact information for our Church. To view the devotions online go to: <https://www.lhm.org/lent/>

Consider using this devotion not only for your own personal and family devotions during the Lenten season, but also to share with your neighbor, family member, friend, or co- worker so that they too can share in the comforting Gospel of our Lord’s passion and death for the forgiveness of our sins.

What is Lent? The season of Lent begins in February or March. The word *lent* has its origin in the same root as one of the German words for “*spring*,” *Lenz*. As nature awakens from the death of winter, so the Christian finds newness of life in Christ, rising from sin’s death. During the 40 days of Lent, God’s baptized people cleanse their hearts through the discipline of Lent: *repentance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving*. Lent is a time in which God’s people prepare with joy for the paschal feast (Easter). It is a time in which God renews His people’s zeal in faith and life. It is a time in which we pray that we may be given the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God.

Customs: Lent begins with Ash Wednesday when ashes are placed on the forehead to symbolize repentance. The color for this service is black or purple. The color for the rest of Lent is purple. The hymns and services of Lent do not include the joyful word, “*Alleluia*.” Consider fasting during daylight hours. Spend your regular mealtime in prayer and devotional reading. If you cannot abstain from food for health reasons, abstain from something else (*e.g., television or another leisure activity*). Do not fast on Sundays, which are not part of the 40 days of Lent. Read Bible stories with children each day.

We use these social media platforms to share the special things going on at church, school and the Early Childhood Center.

Most importantly, we share on social media the Gospel of God's redeeming love!

We enjoy using technology to continue the work of spreading the Good News of God's Riches at Christ's Expense!

LIKE our page, and make sure you SHARE these messages with others too!



gracelutheran_oakcreek



*Grace Lutheran Church, School & Early Childhood Center
Oak Creek, WI*

Introducing RaiseRight -- the new name for Scrip
The same program and process, just a different name.

What is RaiseRight? It's a no-cost fundraiser that helps support the ministries at Grace. We purchase gift cards at a discounted rate and sell them at face value. Each merchant sets their own discount. The discount percentage is on the form.

How does it work? You complete an order form to purchase gift cards through a RaiseRight coordinator. Forms are on the table in the Narthex, in the church office or from a RaiseRight Coordinator. Return the completed form and payment to a RaiseRight Coordinator, who will be in the Narthex after each service or to the church office. You receive the face value of the cards you ordered. If the card you ordered is in our stock, you will receive it immediately. Otherwise, we will order the card and you will receive it the following week. The difference between the face amount and the discounted amount is used to support the ministries at Grace for our church, school and ECC.

An added benefit to parents of students at Grace School, ECC or Martin Luther High School

You will receive half of the discounted amount we receive toward the tuition you pay. If you do not have tuition to pay, you can indicate on the form to "Support a Student" and have half of the discount goes toward a student who needs help with their tuition. For example: You purchase a \$100 gift card for Woodman's. You pay \$100 and receive a \$100 gift card. We receive a 5 percent discount, so pay \$95 for the card. You will receive \$2.50 toward your tuition. The more cards you purchase, the more tuition credits you receive.

Help with the process The RaiseRight coordinators are: Gail Nowakowski, Donna Dotson, Beth Jackson and Marlene Voss. You can call Gail Nowakowski at any time at 414-791-4075 with questions, or talk with one of the coordinators in the Narthex after each service.

HAPPY
Birthday!

May God bless you with an abundance of peace, joy, and love this coming year.

BookAbundances.com

Happy Anniversary!

3/1 Jaden Pfeilstifter
3/2 Tiffany Laabs
3/2 Aaron Mould
3/2 Trista Patten
3/3 Kyle Mallum
3/4 Melissa Swainston
3/6 Lisa Norton
3/7 Anthony Hengst
3/7 Leigh Schmeiser
3/8 Lance Kopperud
3/9 Debbie Oelke
3/10 Erica McKinney
3/11 Cris Evers
3/12 Karina Penn
3/13 Jenny Svick
3/13 Nathan Svick
3/15 Sharon Bzdawka

3/16 Michael Toman
3/17 Lori Jablonski
3/17 Eric Kamprath
3/18 Lacey Schaefer
3/19 Pastor John Taggatz
3/20 Aaron Larson
3/20 Taylor Lau
3/22 Thomas Hengst
3/25 Drew Gottwald
3/25 Jennifer Mendez
3/25 Braden Simmons
3/26 Carol Loveall
3/26 Dave Stecker
3/27 Jason Flower
3/28 Leroy Handle
3/30 Lana Lara

3/31 JoEllyn and Steve Pfeilstifter

Grace Lutheran Oak Creek

Youth Lock-In: March 14th & 15th

In the spirit of fellowship and fun, I am thrilled to announce an exciting event for our youth! We are planning a **Youth 'Lock-In** at Grace Lutheran School on **Friday, March 14th**, starting at **6:30 pm**, and concluding on **Saturday, March 15th**, around **6:30 am**. This event is open to **5th grade through High School youth** and promises to be a night filled with laughter, learning, and connection. We are blessed to have Concordia University Wisconsin's Youth Ministry Team leading this event. They will bring high-energy games, authentic relationship-building activities, and meaningful devotions centered on God's Word.



What to Bring: Snacks, A pillow, sleeping bag, and comfortable sleeping mat, A Bible, A spirit of fun and fellowship

Event Highlights: Dinner (Friday evening), Snacks throughout the night, Devotions centered on God's Word, Active and engaging games, Breakfast in the morning (pending volunteer availability)

Your Help is Needed!

To ensure a safe and enjoyable event, we are looking for **parent or adult chaperones** to assist during the lock-in. If you are able to help, please email me at **pastor@graceoakcreek.org**. Your participation is vital to the success of this event and greatly appreciated!

RSVP & Volunteer

Please let us know if your child will attend by replying promptly. Each child may bring **one friend**, but we ask that attendance be confirmed early as we need sufficient adult supervision to proceed with the event. Your support and timely response will help us create a memorable experience for our youth, filled with fellowship, fun, and growth in God's Word. Thank you for your enthusiasm and partnership in making this lock-in a success! We look forward to hearing from you soon!



HELLO March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Class 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Divine Worship	3 6:30pm 6-8 Grade Confirmation Class 6:30pm - 8:00pm Grief Share	4 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner) 3:30pm - 10:00pm Texas Roadhouse Dining Out 6:30pm - 8:30pm Stephen Ministry Meeting	5 9:30am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Ash Wednesday - Divine Worship	6	7	8 8:00am - 9:30am Rise & Sonshine Bible Study
9 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Class 10:30am Divine Worship	10 6:30pm 6-8 Grade Confirmation Class 6:30pm - 8:00pm Grief Share	11 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	12 9:30am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm All Boards 7:30 Council Meeting	13 6:30pm Divine Worship	14 Youth Lock-In	15 8:30am - 2:00pm Philippians Stewardship Conference
16 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Class 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Divine Worship	17 6:30pm 6-8 Grade Confirmation Class 6:30pm - 8:00pm Grief Share	18 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	19 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	20 6:30pm Divine Worship	21	22 8:00am - 9:30am Rise & Sonshine Bible Study
23 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Class 10:30am Divine Worship	24 6:30pm 6-8 Grade Confirmation Class 6:30pm - 8:00pm Grief Share	25 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	26 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	27 6:30pm Divine Worship	28	29 6:30pm - 8:30pm Game Night at Grace School
30 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Class 10:30am Divine Worship 1:30pm New Member's Class						

Radio Worship Service

"*The Lutheran Hour*" can be heard anytime on the internet at lhm.org – scroll down the page and click on, "*listen now*." You can also listen to any of these local radio stations on Sunday mornings:

WTMJ Milwaukee, WI 103.3 FM Sunday at 6:30 am
WTMJ Milwaukee, WI 620 AM Sunday at 5:30 am
WTMJ Milwaukee, WI 620 AM Sunday at 6:30 am

"*The Lutheran Hour*," which began in 1930, is the world's oldest continually broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program, now heard on more than 1,200 radio stations, pro-claims the message of Jesus Christ to a world-wide audience.



Prayer Hot Line

In order to request prayers by members of Grace, please contact one of the following people. Your request will be made known to all members of our Prayer Line. Prayer requests for worship service should be directed to the church office or Pastor Taggatz.

10AM – 3PM
Carol Thurber, 762-9615

3PM – 9PM
Pauline Parker, 764-5574

Internet Prayerline
Pauline Parker
paulinemom@aol.com

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, SCHOOL, ECC



CHURCH & ECC
3381 E. Puetz Rd.
Oak Creek, WI 53154

SCHOOL & CHURCH OFFICE
8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oak Creek, WI 53154

WEBSITE
<https://graceoakcreek.org>

Pastor John M. Taggatz
PH: 414.762.8990

Thursday Worship 6:30 pm
Sunday Worship 8:00 am and
10:30 am

