

The Grace Greeter!

**Grace Lutheran Church 2225 Washington Lincoln, NE 68502
July 2020**

'Local churches can lead the way'

Bill Wilson is the Director for the Center for Healthy Churches. He predicts that up to one-third of U.S. churches could be out of business by 2025. But he also acknowledges that this is all conjecture, given the unprecedented nature and unknown length of the pandemic that is upon us.

Yet despite evidence of a looming disaster, he remains hopeful that the church can rise to the occasion.

In a March 18 post on the center's website, he wrote: "The Church has an opportunity to show the world what healthy people do in times of crisis. Rather than panic and devolve into self-absorption and self-protection, we run toward the needs in our culture rather than away from them. We refuse to demonize others, but act out the story of the Good Samaritan on a daily basis. Local churches can lead the way to show their communities what 'love your neighbor as yourself' actually looks like."

Wilson believes that our response to the crisis will help determine what happens next. "Is this the death of the church or the rebirth?" he said. "We'll see."

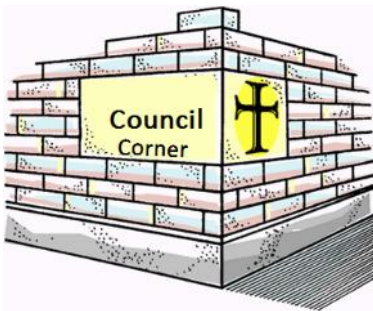
So what will loving the other and sharing ministry with others look like for Grace? At this point we don't fully know. Only God does. So be open to leading of the Spirit as we reflect and re-think how we are church in a pandemic and post-pandemic world.

In Christ,

Pr. Eric Tesher



- ◆ PLEASE CONTACT US! HIPPA laws do not allow the hospital to notify the church if there is a member in the hospital. The patient or a family member must contact the church office to let us know that about the hospitalization. During office hours, call 402-474-1505 or email office@egrace.org to let us know. Thank you!
- ◆ To contact Pastor Eric after office hours, you can call or text him at 308-708-1146 or email pr.eric@egrace.org.
- ◆ The deadline for the next Greeter will be July 20th.
- To help us stay connected during our time apart please send an email or letter with any personal update you want to share about yourself or prayer concern for someone else. We will post these under news and prayers in our weekly digital newsletter and our monthly newsletter.
- ◆ Church Council Vacancy: We currently have a vacancy on our church council. This is a three-year position beginning January 2020. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Pastor Eric, Neil Larson, or the church office.



Appreciation to Committee members

I would like to express sincere appreciation for the help from several individuals to remove the pile of dead branches in the area north of the east parking lot. We also trimmed the bushes and hedges on the north side of the facility and cleaned up along the east side of the facility of blown in leaves and debris. We also trimmed the north and south parking lots of the weeds that had grown up in the cracks. Those individuals were: Doug Krueger, Duane Mischnick, Dennis Madison and Roger Potts. Doug provided his trailer to load and haul the materials away. We are very grateful to all who helped to make it possible for the mini yard clean up that was not done annually in the early spring due to COVID-19.

Property Committee

UPCOMING

Mark Your Calendars

EVENTS



The Parish Education Committee, in cooperation with Friedens Lutheran Church and possibly Grace Lutheran Church in Walton, will be offer VBS materials for delivery to interested students. These materials will include a short five-lesson curriculum and instructions for various activities.

In addition, if there is enough interest, volunteers will also lead three of these five lessons over Zoom in the fourth week of July. Details and an enrollment form are available at:

<http://egrace.org/vbs.cgi>.

Wednesday Online
Saturday Online
Sunday Online
In-person will begin August 16!
More information to come!



Sundays in July

July 5

Introduction

The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

Readings and Psalm

Zechariah 9:9-12

Psalm 145:8-14

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30



Prayer of the Day

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

July 12

Introduction

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 55:10-13

Psalm 65:9-13

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23



Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

July 19

Introduction

It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 44:6-8

Psalm 86:11-17

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43



Prayer of the Day

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

July 26

Introduction

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

Readings and Psalm

1 Kings 3:5-12

Psalm 119:129-136

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



Prayer of the Day

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The great end for which you are to worship here is, that you may worship everywhere.

-William Ellery Channing, Perfect Life

Prayers

Bob Anderson needs prayers of healing as he deals with health issues at home. **Steve and Trish Rosno** need prayers of hope as extended family members battle health issues related to Covid-19. **Gladys Meyer** upon the death of her husband of 57 years, Jim.

News

Sermon mailing list! We are developing a mailing list of folks who might not have access to our online worship services and would want a copy of the worship/sermon mailed to them. We currently have 20 households on the mailing list. if you know of someone that might be interested then leave a voicemail for or send an email to Pr. Eric at pr.eric@egrace.org

Giving and Stewardship. Offering income during a time like this could be a concern. How can you give if you cannot make it to worship? Three easy options are to mail your offerings to the church office, drop it off in person (call ahead) or use the online giving link on our website.

Devotional Booklets for personal worship. The Word in Season and Christ in our Home devotional booklets are available at the church. We also have copies of the latest Living Lutheran magazine. Copies will be available in the main entrance doorway for you to pickup during the day.

Gratitude

Dear Lutheran Food Pantry supporters,

Give to Lincoln Day had amazing results in a time when people have lost jobs or suffered salary cuts. We live among a generous community, and we are so thankful for the generosity of each church and individual who continues to support the Lutheran Food Pantry.

People are wondering how the Pantry is doing financially during the COVID19 time. We want to assure you that we are strong financially at this time. Prior to the development of the virus, the Pantry received a generous gift from a trust fund of a person who was committed to the work of the Lutheran Food Pantry. That gift will provide well for the future of the Pantry.

As we said at the beginning of this pandemic time, we do not want to discourage the financial giving but the needs of your family are priority. What we want to encourage is the volunteer support to continue. Even if we have the ability to purchase the goods, we need the helpers to continue to distribute them.

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church continues to be closed to regular church activities, but the Pantry volunteers follow the CDC guidelines for the safety of all involved. If you are comfortable volunteering, we thank you and welcome the support. God's provisions continue to amaze us. "The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands." - Deuteronomy 28:12

Thank you for your continued support of the Lutheran Food Pantry. May God be with you.

In Christ, Tom and Lynn Ochsner, Coordinators and Samantha McBride, Financial Secretary

May Council Meeting
Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Present via Zoom: Neil Larson, Doug Krueger, Cindy Eberspacher,
Connie Thorson, Carla Ingersoll, Jan Branting, Roger Potts, Karen Billings,
Pr. Eric Leshner



Absent: All present

Neil Larson called the council meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Prayer: Shared prayer together

Approval of Council Minutes:

Roger made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes. Jan seconded. Motion passed.

President's Update/Correspondence: The Payment Protection Plan loan of \$25,000 went through and will be deposited into the church checking account.

Staff Reports:

Pastor Eric's Report: written report submitted

Director of Music Report: written report submitted

Financial Secretary's Report: written report submitted; \$445.00 collected during Lent will go to Lutheran Campus Ministry debt.

Treasurer's Report: written report submitted

Cindy made a motion to accept the reports. Roger seconded. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Finance/Stewardship - did not meet; council position is still vacant

Worship & Music - did not meet

Parish Ed - written report submitted; not feasible to gather for Vacation Bible School. Will collaborate with Friedens to determine best way to reach three different age groups, possibly by using Zoom, and condensing VBS from four days to two days.

Congregational Life - Carla reported the "First Annual Grace Jello Potluck" has been postponed until a date can be determined.

Property - written report submitted; did not meet as a committee. Roger is doing basic cleaning in the church while Robert recovers. For election day, voters entered through east door directly into gym instead of atrium. Roger and Mark Billings will deep clean the area used.

Social Ministry - had a Zoom meeting. Gathering Place continues to serve food in boxes over the fence, limited to two helpers. The Feast was cancelled for April 26, tentatively rescheduled for August 16 since the Thrivent grant must be used within a certain time.

Memorials - will meet in June

Jan made a motion to accept the committee reports as printed. Doug seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business:

Shared Ministry follow-up – Council members will work on creating Grace's focus on the process of a shared worship and fellowship opportunities with Grace Walton, after receiving their conversation sheet. Each council member will fill out a "Who Are We?" sheet and submit to Pastor Eric who will compile them, then discuss at the June 9 council meeting. An initial Zoom meeting on June 16 with members from Grace Walton and possibly Friedens (if they are interested), will be led by Pastor Megan.

New Business:

In-person worship – when and how? Discussed the latest state guidelines for in-person worship. With so many tight restrictions, council agreed we are better off live-streaming services in June. Council will re-evaluate church closing at the June 9th meeting and discuss new ways we can worship safely when we do decide to open. Copies of the sermon can be mailed to members who do not have computer access. Jan made a motion that Grace Lutheran carry on as we are now until our next council meeting on June 9 and determine what we will do at that time. Roger seconded. Motion passed.

Being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Connie Thorson, Secretary



As noted in previous Grace Greeter articles, Grace's service at The Gathering Place has changed dramatically, as the result of

the COVID-19 pandemic. On any given day, only two volunteers are needed to help to box meals for distribution outside the building, over the fence. No food is to be brought into the facility by volunteers.

On June 15th, Regina and Steve Paschold assisted. The menu included a roast beef and cheese sandwich, with a side of macaroni and cheese, tossed lettuce salad, a plum, and a small package of granola bits, as 116 meals were distributed.

The future remains very uncertain in regard to when guests might again be dining inside, enjoying meals prepared and served by a greater number of Grace members.

The Lutheran Food Pantry needs the following food items:

- Canned fruit--peaches, pears, pineapple, Mandarin oranges, applesauce
- Peanut butter
- Condensed tomato and vegetable soups
- Noodles, dry
- Spaghetti/pasta sauce
- Personal care items (shampoo, toothpaste, bath soap)



Please bring your donations to St. Andrew's Lutheran at 1015 Lancaster Ln.

St. Andrew's hours are currently 8-12 Tuesday through Friday.

Thanks to everyone for helping keep the shelves of the Lutheran Food Pantry stocked with food available to provide for the food needy.

Birthdays

<u>Analise</u>	<u>Meitzen</u>	<u>Jul 1</u>
<u>Elizabeth</u>	<u>Johnson</u>	<u>Jul 2</u>
<u>Robert</u>	<u>Johnson</u>	<u>Jul 2</u>
<u>Lindsey</u>	<u>Howard</u>	<u>Jul 3</u>
<u>Adam</u>	<u>Branting</u>	<u>Jul 4</u>
<u>Bob</u>	<u>Viox</u>	<u>Jul 4</u>
<u>Audrey</u>	<u>Coatney</u>	<u>Jul 6</u>
<u>Misty</u>	<u>Lippert</u>	<u>Jul 7</u>
<u>Cynthia</u>	<u>Morales</u>	<u>Jul 7</u>
<u>Judith</u>	<u>Schroeder</u>	<u>Jul 7</u>
<u>Abby</u>	<u>Filbert</u>	<u>Jul 9</u>
<u>Jo</u>	<u>Miller</u>	<u>Jul 9</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>Schumacher</u>	<u>Jul 9</u>
<u>Kevin</u>	<u>Bard</u>	<u>Jul 10</u>
<u>Janet</u>	<u>Jodais</u>	<u>Jul 10</u>
<u>Sarah</u>	<u>Krueger</u>	<u>Jul 10</u>
<u>MacIntyre</u>	<u>Madison</u>	<u>Jul 10</u>
<u>Sydney</u>	<u>Robinson</u>	<u>Jul 10</u>
<u>Colton</u>	<u>Anderson</u>	<u>Jul 11</u>
<u>Darlene</u>	<u>Motycka</u>	<u>Jul 12</u>
<u>Lois</u>	<u>Schuerman</u>	<u>Jul 12</u>
<u>Tamya</u>	<u>Zimmerman</u>	<u>Jul 12</u>
<u>Raymond</u>	<u>Delka</u>	<u>Jul 13</u>
<u>Drue</u>	<u>Genthe</u>	<u>Jul 13</u>
<u>Emersyn</u>	<u>Haumont</u>	<u>Jul 14</u>
<u>Skylar</u>	<u>Hoxie</u>	<u>Jul 14</u>
<u>Cheryl</u>	<u>Petersen</u>	<u>Jul 14</u>
<u>Matt</u>	<u>Peppmuller</u>	<u>Jul 15</u>
<u>Donald</u>	<u>Riemann</u>	<u>Jul 17</u>
<u>Doug</u>	<u>Allen</u>	<u>Jul 20</u>
<u>Christine</u>	<u>Disney</u>	<u>Jul 20</u>
<u>Craig</u>	<u>Potts</u>	<u>Jul 22</u>
<u>LilyAnn</u>	<u>Newman</u>	<u>Jul 23</u>

<u>Lorraine</u>	<u>James</u>	<u>Jul 24</u>
<u>Savannah</u>	<u>Smith</u>	<u>Jul 24</u>
<u>John</u>	<u>Lunde</u>	<u>Jul 25</u>
<u>Kathryn</u>	<u>Vader</u>	<u>Jul 25</u>
<u>Braden</u>	<u>Riemann</u>	<u>Jul 26</u>
<u>Sue</u>	<u>Clymer</u>	<u>Jul 28</u>
<u>Kimberly</u>	<u>Fritchie</u>	<u>Jul 28</u>
<u>Barry</u>	<u>Moore</u>	<u>Jul 28</u>
<u>Judy</u>	<u>Grabow</u>	<u>Jul 29</u>
<u>Wendy</u>	<u>Apple</u>	<u>Jul 31</u>

Anniversaries

<u>Richard and Sondra Block</u>	<u>Jul 15</u>
<u>Pr. Eric and Julene Leshar</u>	<u>Jul 15</u>
<u>Dean/ Beth Kimmerling-Dumler</u>	<u>Jul 16</u>
<u>Reid and Amanda Genuchi</u>	<u>Jul 18</u>
<u>Matt and Amy Knobbe</u>	<u>Jul 18</u>
<u>Bob and Donna Schnell</u>	<u>Jul 20</u>
<u>Michael and Lynette Lewis</u>	<u>Jul 28</u>





Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

June 2020

"Out of my distress I called on the Lord" (Psalm 118:5).

We are a nation in distress. We are a church in distress. The coronavirus has killed 103,000 of us. The virus of racism has taken hundreds of thousands more throughout our history. Now these two deadly viruses converge. Under this distress the veneer of equality has cracked and we see the pain, anger and frustration of those who have been denied the rights and dignity so many of us expect and often take for granted.

I have heard it said that slavery ended with the Civil War. Why don't people of color "just get over it." Here is the question we need to ask, "How do you get over something that isn't over?" The extrajudicial killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd that we have seen have laid open the wound in our country that has never been fully dealt with and has never healed. The officer's knee suffocating the life out of George Floyd "reminds us that blatant acts of intimidation, hatred, and violence continue" ([Freed in Christ](#) social statement, page 3).

Continued peaceful protests, vigils and demonstrations are not only legitimate but essential to move this country and this church to honest and deep self-examination. Just as the body of Christ is COVID positive, so is the body of Christ infected with racism and white supremacy. We cannot turn away from this truth. To deny it is dishonest and dangerous.

Let us stand with those peacefully protesting and acting responsibly. Looting and destruction of property does not further the cause of justice. Government has a role to uphold civil order while also a role to respect peaceful protest. There are those in law enforcement who are acting wisely, even while others have acted irresponsibly. I ask you to support the many people, including those in our church, who are working to de-escalate tensions between law enforcement, protesters and the community.

Psalm 118 continues: "I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (21-24). Christ, the cornerstone, has already broken down the wall that divides us. The time is now. This is the day.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Grace Staff & Council

Rev. Eric Leshner,

Senior Pastor

308-708-1146

pr.eric@egrace.org

2020 Church Council

David Sage

Parish Administrator

office@egrace.org

Anne Melang-Thoren,

Director of music

anne@egrace.org

Jennifer Aliwarga-Carlson

Assistant Organist

Robert Stimbert,

Custodian

Judi Schroeder,

Nursery Coordinator

Elizabeth Krueger,

Nursery attendant

Neil Larson

Council President

Carla Ingersoll

Vice President

Karen Billings

Congregational Life

Jan Branting

Social Ministry

Cindy Eberspacher

Parish Education

Doug Krueger

Memorials

Roger Potts

Property

Vacant

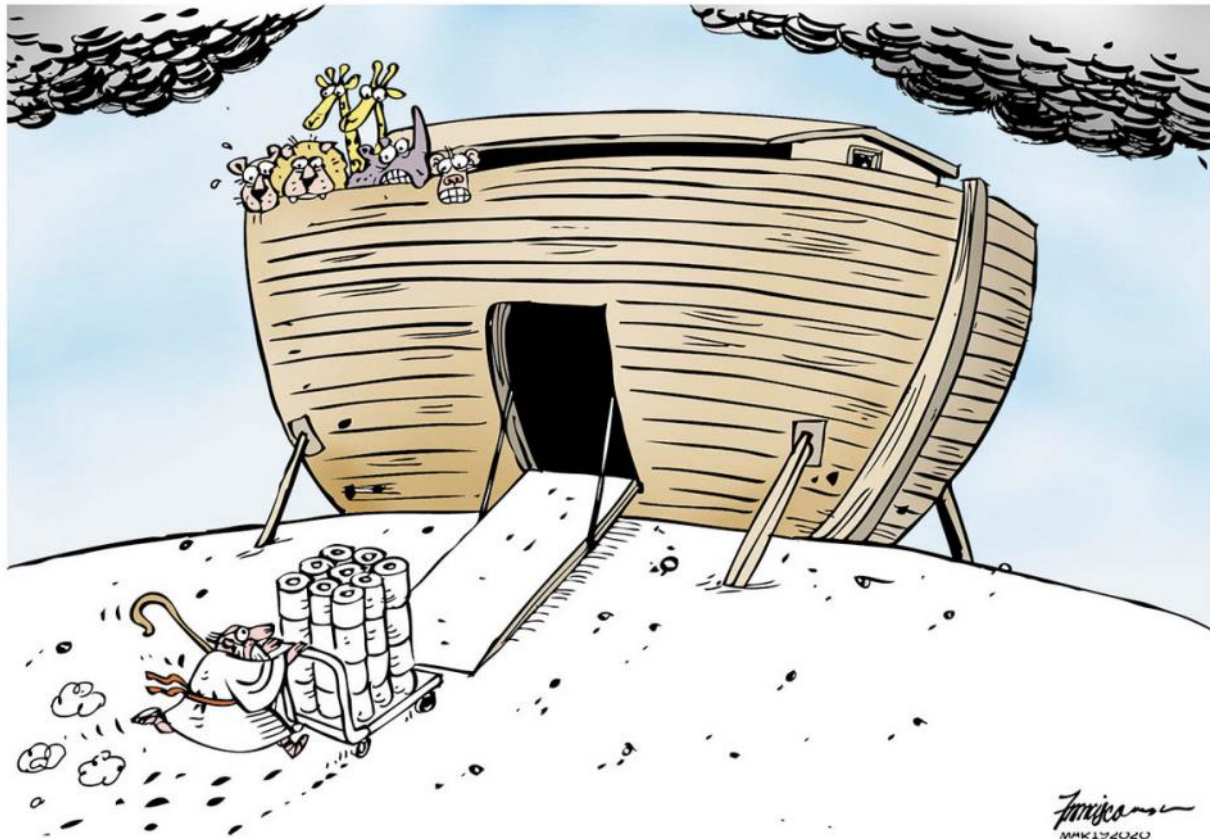
Stewardship/Finance

Connie Thorson

Secretary

Jim Krueger

Treasurer



Amico
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Grace Lutheran Church
2225 Washington Street
Lincoln NE 68502
402-474-1505
office@egrace.org

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