

The News of Grace

Volume 37, no. 2

February 2014

“State of the Parish”

You yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. (1st Thessalonians 5:2-11)

Every Voters’ meeting I deliver a “State of the Parish” report which is just my summary review of what has been going on in the congregation since the previous Voters’ meeting. That report, which seeks to thank those who have been instrumental in the work of the congregation while sharing my opinion on how we are doing, is heard by very few since our Voters’ meetings are attended by our leadership and then a few of our lay people. That is not unusual, but really typical because there are not any ‘hot-button’ issues such as voting on a major building project or issuing a Call to a professional church worker. These items will cost money and so they get our attention. Of course there is also the issue of conflict that seems to attract folks and fortunately we don’t have any of that, though that does not mean that everyone is on the same page with everything all of the time. Usually conflict is not about theology but personality, or it is not about mission but how much mission costs. There may be other less important matters, even trivial matters that cause conflict and division and I am thankful that it has not gotten to that point here in my time at Grace, though we must not think that we are immune. For the most part then there is peace and security.

I also offer a “State of the Parish” report to the Fellowship Club as they gather on a monthly basis. This organization of our congregation consists of our senior members. I always like to remind Pearl Spotts that the state of our parish is Arkansas, and she always gives a chuckle to that. Over the last year plus some of the women of Grace, under the direction of our A.C.T.S. social group (Active Christians To Serve), have been providing these long-time faithful members of Grace a lunch and then we have devotion, a time of sharing and my parish report. My report to them consists of sharing who has been in the hospital, how our shut-in members are getting along or who has died since the previous meeting. They are interested in and sensitive about knowing these things. They also continue to faithfully support the mission and ministry of Grace. Grace Congregation is their family and they represent the grandparents and great-grandparents of this congregation.

As we listen to St. Paul writing in his first letter to the Thessalonians, he seeks to remind them of who they are, “children of light, children of the day.” They are God’s people in Christ Jesus. He has called them out of darkness, given them faith which receives the other gifts He freely gives, faith, love and eternal salvation. He then encourages them not to sleep but to be vigilant, awake and sober. Paul is saying to them that while there is peace and security, while they are enjoying prosperity, they must not forget what is inevitable for all of us. I think that the members of the Fellowship Club know about this better than the rest of us as they number their days. They find comfort in knowing that Christ died for them and that they will live with Him. For our parish to be healthy, this is what we all need to realize and remain vigilant about. Our day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night and so we must stay awake and remain sober. This includes our regular worship of the Lord, personal devotion and Bible Study. It also implies that we will be supportive of the Lord’s work and give service to our neighbor as our faith’s witness as we have been called to do.

GRACE AT WORSHIP

How does that look here at Grace? There are slightly less than 500 baptized members of Grace. That is what we carry on our membership roll. We have two Sunday morning Services and a Wednesday evening Service for those who cannot attend on Sunday or who prefer to attend on Wednesday. Our weekly average attendance is right at 200. That means that any given week there is 40% of our church family in worship. While that percentage is consistent with national averages that would not be a passing grade on a test. St. Paul writes, “therefore encourage one another and build one another up.” Let us do

that in love and let it be received as such by those who need to be encouraged to remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy. As Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27) This day we are given to keep holy is for us, our rest and restoration in the Lord. “Let us keep awake and sober,” and let us set aside a day and time in order to be nourished in our faith through Word and Sacrament and then offer our thanksgiving and praise.

I am pleased to report that on Thanksgiving Day our attendance was 125. On Christmas Eve we had 241 in attendance, many of whom were visitors. Our Christmas Day Service with Holy Communion was attended by 88. These special Services are great opportunities for us to invite family and friends. These Services are enhanced by special music under the direction of Nathan Beethe. We have many members who share their talents for these Services which are some of my favorite Services and are truly the reason why we actually observe those special holidays.

GRACE AND THE CHURCH AT-LARGE

We are called to encourage one another and we are further called to be an encouragement to others, even those we do not know and will never know. As 2013 drew to a close so did our congregation’s participation in our national church body’s *Fan Into Flame* emphasis. In 2010 the Voters’ approved a pledge to this program of Synod, above and beyond our budgeted yearly commitment to missions. \$50,000.00 was pledged on behalf of our congregation and then our members were encouraged to make a commitment to Grace to help fulfill this commitment. Some gave one-time gifts others made a three year pledge and others chose not to participate. While some gifts continue to come in even now I am pleased to report that Grace members gave over \$59,000.00 to this program of Synod. The funds received by Synod are used proportionately for International and National Mission emphases with a percentage even being returned to Grace for our own special Evangelism projects. We were able to designate the international portion of these dollars to Missionary Mark Eisold and his mission work in Peru.

Our regular church budget includes funding for regular Missions. These dollars are sent to District (our Mid-South District) and then a portion of that commitment goes to Synod. In the year just ended, 2013, our mission commitment was \$52,000.00 which is a little over 10% of our total church general fund budget.

GRACE ENDOWMENTS

Grace has three active endowment funds that are managed by our Board of Endowment. These funds are a true blessing for our congregation. They represent planning for the future and the income they generate benefits our work together. As of the year just ended our General Endowment Fund has a balance of over \$46,500.00 and in 2013 contributed \$5,000.00 to our Building Fund. The Voters' approve uses for this fund's income as recommended by our Board of Endowment. The Behnke Scholarship Fund has a balance of over \$270,000.00 and The Clawitter Scholarship Fund has a balance of over \$150,000.00. The income that is generated from these funds is used to provide scholarships for our students who attend one of our ten Concordia Universities or our two Concordia Seminaries. Those scholarships are awarded for the academic year beginning in the fall. This year's three scholarships total \$22,500.00. Funding for another designated endowment fund in memory of Arnold and Lois Berner is in place awaiting designation. A designated endowment is an opportunity to continue giving to the Lord's work done through Grace even after one has gone to be with the Lord.

GRACE FACILITIES

In my State of the Parish report to the Voters' meeting the first of December I reminded them that we have been in the Family Life Center for fourteen years. What a blessing it has been for Grace and our mission and ministry here at Hillcrest and Kavanaugh. While we still call it "the new building" it is not new. It has served this congregation well over that period giving us needed space for our activities from church potlucks to Sunday School and Bible Class to Vacation Bible School, as well as for our outreach into the community through our Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC).

Grace ECDC serves over sixty children and has an operating budget that is larger than the church budget. Colleen Moorman is the preschool Director and has a staff of twenty. In 2013 its budget was over \$650,000.00. The funding for this program is generated almost entirely by tuition charged the families whose children participate in this program. There are other gifts which contribute to the program's income. Let me encourage you to take time to register your **KrogerPlus Card** for the benefit of Grace Lutheran ECDC. There are instructions for doing so in this newsletter. Kroger returns 5% of every purchase to our program if you have taken the time to make ECDC your designation. This costs you nothing and is a benefit for this ministry of Grace. Think about how something like this done individually helps us collectively.

The past year the Board of Church Properties initiated a project for the downstairs of our original church building. At one time that area served as our Fellowship Hall even as our ECDC began in those quarters as a Mother's Day Out Program almost twenty-five years ago. When we built our Family Life Center our downstairs was partitioned giving us a Bible Study/Meeting Room, a Choir Room which was named in honor of Carolyn Moorman for her many years of service as organist here at Grace, and an entry area into our Church Nursery which is located downstairs. This late summer and early fall the interior south wall of the church basement was stripped, water-proofed and re-plastered, walls were painted, ceramic tile replaced twenty year old carpeting and storage closets were added to the choir room. Funding for this project was from our Building Fund which exists through the generosity of our members who periodically contribute to that fund. The positive result of this project is obvious as you go through that space.

In addition to this remodeling, new furnishings were purchased for the Bible Study/Meeting Room which is also used for wedding bridal parties to assemble and dress as well as a place for me to meet families of a deceased sister or brother in Christ before leading them upstairs for a Funeral Service. The furnishings were made possible in large part by funding from our A.C.T.S. group. These funds are the result of the yearly A.C.T.S. rummage sales held here at Grace with the significant help of Bette Bogart and Paulette Goldsby. Added to those funds were memorial gifts given in memory of Michael Parscale and Cheryl Wolbrecht and a previously (2011) given gift for a special project from Bob and Sheila Wilimzig. If you have not been downstairs to see these improvements, let me encourage you to do so. We should have years of good service from these improvements to our facility.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters our buildings have been secured through the efforts of Robert and Carole Nichols who worked tirelessly running wiring and installing hardware to secure the various entrances to the Family Life Center downstairs and upstairs, and at the point of entry from our original church building into the bridge that leads to the Family Life Center. The funding for this project was made possible in large part from memorial gifts given in memory of Doris Parker.

It should also be recognized that this past year Parker Hall in our Family Life Center was used twice (January and November) by the C.A.L.L. which stands for "Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime", to conduct informational meetings for foster care and adoption. Our Board of Evangelism helped host these meetings.

In December, Dr. Donna Middaugh as Associate Dean of the UAMS College of Nursing, coordinated the “Camp Quality Christmas Party.” The last five years she has used Parker Hall for this special party. This event serves central Arkansas children with cancer and their families providing a festive Christmas meal, Christmas stockings and gifts specially selected for these children and their siblings. As many as thirty families have been included in this special Christmas celebration on a yearly basis. Grace also continues to serve as a site for weekly Al-Anon meetings that are held in the downstairs area of our original building. This group meets on Monday evenings.

Our “Sit and Sew” group once again sponsored our Fall Craft Show and Used Book Sale that brought members of the community into our facility while raising funds for our Seminary Scholarship Fund. Once again our Family Life Center provided the space that was needed to allow our congregation to sponsor such an event. The tireless efforts of many make this event the success that it is.

GRACE LONG-RANGE PLANNING

A couple of years ago a group of Grace members consisting of a good cross-section of ages and interests came together to look at where we are as a congregation and where we might want to be in the next five to ten years and even beyond that time. Meetings were held and the congregation was engaged in a discussion about what are needs are and what they might be in the future.

In August of 2011 we purchased an adjacent piece of property on North Lookout. The home, which was previously owned by the Callahan family, was next door to a house that we owned and had rented for several years. The Callahan house was taken down shortly after our purchase. The rental house that we had on North Lookout was taken down the following summer of 2012. Presently we have a large vacant lot on Lookout.

It was determined that our immediate needs included additional parking as well as making necessary improvements to our existing parking and asphalt surfaces, a look at our present playground area, the securing of the northwest perimeter of our property and provision for a new and covered handicap accessible entry into the lower portion of our original building. Safety for our school children and for our campus continues to be part of our thinking. Roy Andrews has been working with a committee led by Charles Stein to develop plans for the congregation’s consideration. Any work on anything suggested above requires the approval of the congregation. It would also require the

generous giving of our members to help make any plan a reality. Whether we approach this project in its totality or in various stages is also something to be determined by the congregation.

Giving to the work that the Lord has given us to do here is a personal matter that takes into account the collective good of the congregation even as we are called upon to recognize that all that we have is a gift from the Lord. I recognize that your means is the result of your hard work, but your ability to do so is also God's gift to you. Stewardship suggests that we are merely managers of the gifts. Certainly we use the gifts we have to support ourselves by providing for our needs and our wants. St. Paul writing to the Corinthian Christians puts forth that "each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:7-8) There are many things that St. Paul puts forth in chapters 8 and 9 of his second letter to the Corinthians about what stewardship consists of and what it flows from. You may want to take a look.

With all of that said, let me point out to you that Grace is debt free. We ended the 2013 year with expenses exceeding income by less than \$1,000. This deficit was covered by surplus funds from previous years held on account. In fact, the five previous years (2008-2012) saw income exceeding expenses over that period by a substantial amount so that we were able to pay off the note that we had on the purchase of the Lookout property in January, 2013 (over \$100,000.00) and the removal of the houses on that property in 2011 and our previous rental house in 2012. These payments were covered without asking for additional giving to capital expenditures. What a blessing that was. In that same time we gave additional funding to offset budgeted reductions in giving to Missions. We also were able, with Voters' approval in June 2011, to send a gift of \$5,000 to Immanuel Lutheran Church in Joplin, Missouri following the tornado that devastated that community. In the last two years members have also come forward to help with our Seminary Scholarship Fund. All of this giving activity is reflective of many here at Grace recognizing that we are people who "belong to the day."

Each year there are budget increases in what it takes to sustain the mission and ministry of Grace. Let me encourage you to review your level of giving to the Lord's work here at Grace while at the same time thanking all of you who so graciously do so year in and year out.

The Lord be with you – Pastor Walter

30 Years of Grace

This will be my state of the Parish report for 2014. The good news is that we essentially met our expenses for 2013. The church carries a cash surplus which we had to dip into as the year went along. However, year-end giving allowed us to repay that money. The challenge for us moving forward is that our budget increases by 3%. This is largely unavoidable due to increases in benefits and maintenance expenses on our buildings. To meet this challenge we will each need to look at our stewardship of God's gifts. Do we understand how to manage money God's way? How many of us have a written budget? (How many of you would be OK with it if the church didn't have a written budget?)

For 2014, we are developing a master plan for our church property. Some ideas include better accessibility to the lower floor of our old building, improvements in the traffic flow of our parking areas, improvements to the playground and dumpster areas and a new parking area on the empty lot the church owns. It will be exciting to see how these plans progress.

Looking at the demographics of our church, we are blessed with an influx of people, some with families and some without. The most important thing our church can offer is strengthening of faith, (Grace has been blessed with an excellent pastoral staff.) Beyond that, we need to integrate new members and provide programs they need to help them in their daily lives, personal finance, time budgeting, communication issues etc.

Challenges are all around us. We need to be diligent in our work at Grace so we will be strong when we do the work of reaching out to our families, neighbors, community and country with the good news of Christ. While I can't know God's plans, I do know he wants us to love one another and support one another and bring light to the world. "Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." 1 Timothy 4:15-16 NIV

May You Walk With the Lord In 2014

Randy Middaugh

Executive Director of Grace

Director of Parish Music

Greetings in the name of our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!

Light is a constant theme throughout the season of Epiphany, and one of the best hymn I know on that very topic is “Thy Strong Word” (LSB 578). The text was written in 1961 by the sainted Rev. Martin Franzmann (1906-1976) when he was the chairman of the department of exegetical theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The text is based on the seminary’s motto, “Anothen to Phos,” which is Greek for “Light from above.” The tune, EBENEZER (aka TON-Y-BOTEL), is by the Welsh church musician Thomas J. Williams (1868-1944).

Stanza One: Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; At Thy speaking it was done. For created light we thank Thee, While Thine ordered seasons run. Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end! This stanza begins at the beginning: in Genesis. God the Father spoke and the Word of God, Christ, created light. The word “cleave” gives such a vivid picture of the Word coming into the darkness and ripping it apart to let light come into being. We then give thanks to God for His first creation, light from darkness.

Stanza Two: Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, Dark as night an deep as death, Broke the light of Thy salvation, Breathed Thine own life-breathing breath. Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end! The world was in darkness, lost under the curse of Sin with no hope of escape. Into this darkness the Light, Christ, broke through, giving us hope, and ultimately life. We then give thanks to God for His greatest gift, His Son in our place.

Stanza Three: Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness, Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives our hopes confess. Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end! We are declared to be righteous, not because of anything in us, but because Christ

says that we are righteous. Through His death and resurrection He conquered sin and the grave and gives us eternal life through the means of grace, Word and Sacrament. As His glorious people we now show forth His glory to others by telling them of the Gospel. We then give thanks to God for the gift of forgiveness of sins and eternal life, for the sake of Christ.

Stanza Four: From the cross Thy wisdom shining Breaketh forth in conqu'ring might; From the cross forever beameth All Thy bright redeeming light. Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end! Christ conquered sin, death, and the power of the devil on the tree of the cross, and now that cross, a sign of shame and condemnation, is for us the sign of our salvation. Our proclamation of the Gospel begins and centers around the cross of Christ. We then give thanks to God for our redemption, won on the cross by our Savior.

Stanza Five: Give us lips to sing Thy glory, Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim, Throats that shout the hope that fills us, Mouths to speak Thy holy name. Alleluia, alleluia! May the light which Thou dost send Fill our sings with alleluias, Alleluias without end! There is nothing left to do in response to God's great gifts to us but sing His praises and proclaim the Good News to all people. Christ, the Light of the world, has brought us light and life through Gospel of His death and resurrection for us. May we continue to share this with all those around us.

Stanza Six: God the Father, light-creator, To Thee laud and honor be. To Thee, Light of Light begotten, Praise be sung eternally. Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to Thee. Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the holy Trinity! Amen.

Peace in Christ,

*Nathan Beethe
Director of Parish Music*

THOSE WHO SERVE in February

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Ethan Andrews

10:45 a.m. Services – Maxwell Baker

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

February 2nd – 10:45 Service – John Calvillo

February 9th – 8:15 Service – Dave Graf

February 16th – 10:45 Service – Greg Warren

February 23rd – 8:15 Service – Dave Graf

USHERS' SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Robert Wilimzig's team
Robert Jones, Robert Nichols, Paul Walter

10:45 a.m. Services – Tim Sweeney's team
Shaun Baker, Ron Krueger, Greg Warren

CANTORS' SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Paul Walter

10:45 a.m. Services – Suzanne Lambert

GREETERS' SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Sally McNabb and Brenda Parscale

10:45 a.m. Services – David, Diane, and Alex Roberts

ALTAR GUILD SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Sandy Price and Pat Funk

10:45 a.m. Services – Ken and Becky Ross

Wednesday Mid-Week Services – Suzanne Raddle & Wilma Richter

*If you are unable to serve please ask someone to fill in for you
and then call the church office.*

STEWARDSHIP BUDGET RE-CAP

2014 budget \$531,856
which is an average weekly
General Fund contribution requirement of \$10,228

Average weekly contribution through week 4	\$9,277
Budgeted needs through week 4	\$40,912
Contributions to General Fund from all sources	\$37,107

GRACE FAMILY NEWS AND NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS and GOD'S BLESSINGS...

Congratulations to Bill and Maia Bischof on the birth of their son Alexios Romanes Bischof on January 19th in Denton, Texas. Alexios' grandparents are Rudy and Sherry Bischof. Congratulations and God's blessings to the Bischof family.

Congratulations to David and Megan Witte on the birth of their son Ike Oliver on January 28th. Ike has an older brother Milo. Congratulations and God's blessings to the Witte family.

Congratulations to Paul and Julia Malbrough on the birth of their son Patrick Thomas on January 29th. Patrick's grandparents are Bob and Wendy Schmidt. Congratulations and God's blessings to Paul and Julia.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY...

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of Mrs. Delores Robinson who died on January 9th in Nashville, TN. Delores is Jennifer Wunderlich's grandmother. Please keep Daniel, Jennifer, and Charlotte and their family in your prayers.

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of Mrs. Connie Deislinger who died on January 12th. Connie is the wife of Kevin Deislinger and daughter-in-law of Allen Deislinger. Please keep Kevin and his family in your prayers.

LITTLE ROCK MARATHON
Sunday - March 2nd

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

It is a new year. And with a new year comes the time where we take stock of the previous year and change what needs to be changed, improved or done away with altogether. Let's consider then our stewardship of the things that God, out of His divine goodness and mercy, has given to us.

St. Paul writes: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (2 Cor 9:6–15).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord of all will both supply and increase what you need to give to the church for its work in and for the world. He tells us that this work that God is doing in us will enrich and bless us in every way and through this it will produce thanksgiving to God. With this in mind, here is some practical advice to help you take stock of your giving of years past, which will help you to change what needs to be changed, improved or forgotten with altogether.

First, attend the Divine Service to receive God's gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. If you've not been faithful in attending worship to hear the preaching of God's Word, to receive forgiveness, and feast of the rich food of our Lord's body and blood for the eternal benefit of your body and soul, then repent and come to receive the gifts God freely gives. God doesn't want your money. He wants you—all of you (Matt 22:20–22).

Second, pray for the Lord's help. Your right as a Christian is to speak with your Father, the King of all creation, freely through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Go to the throne of grace and ask for strength and wisdom to follow His bidding faithfully (John 15:1–16).

Third, consider what the Church is and what the Church does. The Church is a mercy place. It inhales the mercy of the Father by the death, resurrection, and ascension of His Son through the preaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. It exhales this mercy in love toward the neighbor. You are a member of the Church, of God's family. Thus, you are not only a recipient of God's mercy, but a bearer of that mercy for the life of the world. You spread that mercy in showing mercy through the generous giving of your income to support the work of the Church in and for the world, as the Israelites did in the Old Testament (Lev 27:1–34).

Fourth, take stock of your current giving in light of the New Testament's teaching on supporting the work of the Church. Are you giving a percentage of your income, off the top and with a cheerful heart? The Lord yearns to hear a "Yes". I've said before, if you are giving the same amount this year as you gave five years ago, but you are receiving more income, maybe you need to make that adjustment. If you are making less, but need less to live on maybe you can continue a higher percentage of giving than you could when you were receiving more income or you may not be able to give as much.

Fifth, commit for the year a generous proportion of your income, God's gift to you for this body and life. All God has given us is or us to manage and be stewards of while we're here on earth. What a blessing it is that we can apportion some for His work here at Grace Lutheran Church.

***Respectfully Submitted,
Joel Junkans, Director
Board of Stewardship***

Grace Lutheran Church Endowments

Grace Lutheran Church has been blessed with generous donors who have a heart for Christian Ministry.

Our Board of Endowment oversees 3 separate endowments which currently total over \$450,000. Two of the endowments are named endowments: The Lorenz and Myra Behnke Memorial Scholarship Fund which gives scholarships to students attending Lutheran Schools including seminaries. The second named endowment is The Irvin and Sherry Clawitter Educational Endowment Fund. This fund, in addition to assisting with Scholarships to students attending Lutheran schools, can also help bring personal financial outreach programs through Grace Lutheran Church or through the Seminaries and can assist with continuing educational expenses for ordained and commissioned ministers of Grace.

We also have a General Endowment which is designed to help in many different areas of our church. Some of these areas include enriching our music program, continuing education for our staff and assisting with building projects.

We are very pleased to report that our Endowments have disbursed over \$75,000. We only disburse the income from the funds, never the principal. Most of this money has gone to scholarships for future church workers.

For 2014 we have been contacted regarding establishing a Arnold and Lois Berner Endowment Fund. We look forward to adding this to our endowment opportunities here at Grace.

Our Board of Endowment would be happy to discuss setting up a named endowment and working with you on establishing the gifting criteria for which the endowment could be used. The minimum gift to establish a named endowment is \$25,000. Thank you for considering an endowment with Grace Lutheran Church; it is a wonderful way to leave a lasting legacy as an expression of faith.

***Board of Endowment
Grace Lutheran Church***

BOARD OF CHURCH PROPERTIES

Thanks to all board members and other church members who supported the Board of Church Properties' work.

2013 Activities

In the church basement, water leaks were repaired and renovations of painting, new tile floors, and choir room storage were completed. ECDC and Parker Hall security was enhanced with the installation of magnetic locks and keypad entry. Contracts were reviewed and new janitorial, snow removal, and lawn care contracts were issued. Windows were cleaned and exterior painting was performed. Flower beds were mulched. Church insurance was reviewed and earthquake coverage added. Routine and non-routine (such as elevator) maintenance and repairs were performed.

2014 Activities Planned

Continue to perform maintenance and repair. Work with Long Range Planning Committee to achieve church's capital improvement needs. Review church storage needs.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

The church is in need of a volunteer about a half day per week to perform routine, simple maintenance for the church and ECDC. Typical maintenance needs include changing light bulbs, checking the grounds, sweeping the ECDC and church entrances, checking the ECDC playground gravel, and other routine maintenance needs that you, Pastor, Pat, or Colleen identify during the week. If you are interested in this service opportunity or have questions contact Charles Stein at cstein30@comcast.net or 920-3371.

*Charles Stein, Director
Board of Church Properties*

CALLING ALL COOKS

(or drive-thru professionals and
gift card buyers)!

The Board of Evangelism is now using www.mealtrain.com to organize meals for families with new babies, or families experiencing bereavement, illness, etc. This website allows us to be more organized and to split the workload more evenly among our congregation (no more 6 lasagnas to the same family! no more feeling like you personally have to feed every family experiencing illness!). We need your help.

The website runs on email invitations. We set up a MealTrain for a specific event, input the requested dates, and the website emails our Grace family and allows you to choose a date and input what you'll bring. Then we can all see what's already taken care of and what's still available.

Megan Calvillo is handling the setup, and she needs email addresses of those interested in participating. If you've not received an email from Megan or MealTrain.com, then we don't have you on the list. **What should you do?** email Pat or Megan (mjcalvillo@gmail.com), OR sign the sheet on the table in the breezeway.

What if you don't have email? We still want your help! Please put your phone number on the breezeway sheet, and Megan will contact you to add you to our MealTrains. You can also call her directly at [501-772-5150](tel:501-772-5150).

Grace's family is well known for its loving care of its members—thank you all.

GRACE WOMEN IN MISSION

Support the Mission Grants of the LWML
through the Mite Box

THE LITTLE PURPLE BOX called **THE MITE BOX** has been around since 1943 and has collected over \$100 million dollars for our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. It has carried the word of Christ to the ends of the world.

The *Grace Women in Mission* would like to include all of you (men, women and children of Grace) to join us in supporting the Mission Grants for 2013-2015 totaling \$1,345,712. A list of Grant Recipients are on display in the breeze way.

The second Sunday of each month there will be a LARGE Mite Box at each entrance to drop your change in and/or SMALL Mite boxes to take home and drop your change in and bring to church on the second Sunday of the month.

If you have questions, contact Judy Rivers. Thank you for your participation.

VALENTINE PARTY

February 9th

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Parker Hall

The *Grace Women in Mission* will host a Valentine Party, **Sunday afternoon February 9th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in Parker Hall.** This event is open to all – men, women and children - to come and make Valentines for our homebound members and friends and Valentines to deliver to waiting rooms at some of the local hospitals. Supplies will be available but you can also bring some of your own...the more we have the more we can make. This is a great way to share the message of Jesus' love with others. We also invite you to bring a dozen Valentine cookies and we will bag cookies and candy to share. We look forward to seeing you Sunday afternoon February 9th!

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE
COFFEE HOST SIGN UP

Volunteers Needed to Serve - Please take a minute and sign up for the Sunday on which you wish to serve. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the Parlor.

The schedule for **February, 2013** is:

February 2 nd	Bette Bogart
February 9 th	Ginny and Jeff Ralston
February 16 th	Sammye Sue and Raymond Harrill
February 23 rd	Grace Youth Group

The schedule for **March, 2013** is:

March 2 nd	Debbie Penny
March 9 th	_____
March 16 th	_____
March 23 rd	_____
March 30 th	_____

Thank You!!! We appreciate your help!!

FELLOWSHIP CLUB

February 18th – 12:00 noon
Parker Hall

The Fellowship Club will meet on **Tuesday, February 18th, at 12:00 noon** in Parker Hall for a delicious lunch served by our ACTS friends. Join us for fun, food, and fellowship. Call the church office for more information.

NOON DEVOTIONS WITH PASTOR

Noon Devotions with Pastor is **Thursday, February 13th, at 12:00 noon in Parker Hall**. Bring a sandwich and join us as Pastor Walter leads us in a Bible study. Drinks, chips, and dessert are provided. **Bring a friend and join us ...this is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship!!**

SIT AND SEW

Bring your project and join the **Sit and Sew** group on **Tuesday, February 4th, at 12:00 noon** in the downstairs classroom in the church. For details call Carole Nichols or Sammye Sue Harrill.

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Our *Young Adult Bible Study* group continues to meet every other Monday. Their meetings this month are February 3rd and February 17th.

Please call or e-mail Vicar David Witte for information as to where they will meet each time. Contact Vicar Witte at drwitte@gmail.com or 630-738-3835.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM/PUBLIC RELATIONS

The **Board of Evangelism** uses various ways to reach out in our community and to encourage our members to reach out. Following are some of the projects that our board current sponsors or supports:

Our newest project is sponsoring the Meal Train to use an online website to organize meals for families with new babies, or families experiencing bereavement, illness, etc. This is one way to show our Grace family's loving care for its members. Megan Calvillo is the coordinator.

We are continuing to host The CALL (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime) Information Meetings a couple of times a year here at Grace. We also sponsor a booth at the Disney Extravaganza which will be held May 31st this year. These are ways to support and connect children in foster care with Christian forever families. Justine and Shaun Baker are coordinating these activities.

Grace continues to support the foster care program of Department of Children and Family Services-East Office. We collect items they need for the children coming into their office which include: breakfast type foods (pop tarts, breakfast bars), peanut butter crackers, microwaveable pasta meals, diapers of various sizes, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and soap. If you can help provide any of these items, please place them in the box for DCFS which is on the church breezeway.

The Public Relations portion of our board schedules advertising in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette for Lent, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas and New Year's Eve. We are also active in the neighborhood through our membership in the Hillcrest Merchant's Association and the Hillcrest Resident's Association. We are a sponsor of various activities in the Hillcrest area throughout the year.

Our Grace Greeters are recruited and trained under the direction of our board and the leadership of Dorris Deislinger. She is always looking for greeters for our worship services. If interested, please give Dorris a call.

In March some of our board members will be attending the Lutheran Laymen's League Conference at First Lutheran to hear the guest speaker Mr. Andrew Fitzgerald from the Lutheran Hour Ministries as he shares outreach tools for our mission as "fishers of men."

If you would like more information or would like to be a part of any of these activities, please contact me in the church office.

Pat Funk
Board of Evangelism and Public Relations

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES AT GRACE

Our nursery, downstairs in the church, is also available to take care of the infants and toddlers during Sunday School/Bible Class time.

ADULT BIBLE CLASS - Pastor Walter's Bible Class meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in Parker Hall. Pastor is leading a study of *"The Augsburg Confession and Its Apology"* – **The Lutheran Confessions Series**. They are finishing the last two sections of this study: *"Civil Government: A Gift From God"* and *"The Return of Christ."* A study of *The Epistle to the Hebrews* will begin after the current study.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES for children ages 3 through 6th grade are held in the lower level of the Family Life Center. Parents are invited to join us for the opening service at 9:45 each Sunday. Contact Colleen Moorman or Nathan Beethe. LCEF K.I.D.S. Saving Stamps are available from Ame Andrews during Sunday School opening time.

JUNIOR YOUTH class meets at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday in their classroom downstairs in the church. Joel Junkans leads the class each Sunday morning.

SENIOR YOUTH class meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in their classroom downstairs in the church. Dave Roberts leads the class each Sunday morning.

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY group meets every other Monday at 7:00 p.m. Their meetings this month are February 3rd and February 17th. Contact Vicar David Witte at drwitte@gmail.com for additional information.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY class meets each Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. at St. Vincent Hospital in the 4th floor conference room (off the main elevator). Pastor Walter leads this Bible Study. All men of Grace are encouraged to attend.

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets each Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. in the downstairs classroom in the church. They are studying *God's Word for Today* on the book of *Joshua*. Contact Joan Ann Olsen for more information.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND GOD'S BLESSINGS to Grace Family Members in the month of February:

- 3 - Bob Bryant, Matt Duncan
- 4 - Jonas Calvillo
- 5 - Robert Jones
- 6 - Mary Catherine Allen, Ralph Olsen
- 7 - Ame Andrews
- 8 - William Thomas Allaben II, Samuel Duncan,
Austin Hill, Kurt Shrader
- 9 - John Tyler Lambert
- 10 - Carole Nichols, Matthew Faulkner
- 11 - Larry Sullivan
- 12 - Larry Jones, Mallory Stewart, Riley Wood, Tyson Wood,
Daniel Wunderlich
- 13 - Dalton Arnold, Brenda Parscale, Wendy Schmidt
- 14 - Harley Cannon
- 16 - Jesse Bischof, Aidan Sutterfield, Aaron Walter
- 17 - Noah Whitney
- 18 - Hannah Mainard, Molly Beethe
- 19 - Michael Geater, Michael Gipson, Sammye Sue Harrill
- 20 - Riley Middaugh
- 21 - Kay Jenkins, Wilma Richter
- 22 - Alex Roberts
- 23 - Anna Lane
- 24 - Annalia Buchanan, Robert Wilimzig
- 26 - Matthew Warren, Linnea Weed
- 27 - Frederick Zweifel
- 28 - Stephen Douglas

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to these couples in February:

- 10 - Doris and Carroll Holzhauer
- 14 - Jackie and David Cossey, Carole and Robert Nichols
- 19 - Abby and Charlie Buchanan
- 21 - Sherry and Irvin Clawitter
- 25 - Russlynn and Ron Krueger, Nancy and Jim Wade

We apologize if we have missed your birthday or anniversary; please let us know in the church office so we can update our records. Thank you!!



ECDC News & Notes

Almost February – and another year rolls around. It was 14 years ago this month we moved into Parker Hall! What a wonderful facility it continues to be – providing so many opportunities for our congregation, our little school, and our community! We are truly blessed!!

A year ago we were just starting to look at and make changes to facility security. So much was accomplished during 2013 – the new remote lock and keypad access was designed, purchased, installed and became operational. And the transition for the staff and parents has been smooth. Many thanks to Bob Nichols (and Carole!) for all the work with making the system possible!!! In addition, the glass on the ECDC entrance doors was upgraded for additional security as well. We pray that these measures are never tested, but thankful we have been blessed with the resources to put them in place!

February is all about valentines, ground hogs, dinosaurs, Presidents, shapes, and colors – that seems like a lot for a short month, but we are all about being busy! And, this year we're having a mini-Winter Olympics, too – gotta stay in touch with the times! Of course we will celebrate Valentine's Day in our own special way with pajama parties and dances! Our kids will be making Valentine's Day cards for special friends in our church and the community – so if you know someone who needs a "little-pick-me-up", let me know and we'll make sure they get one of our special cards. We'll also have a Staff Development Day February 17th – our focus this year will be completing a First Aid/CPR/AED Class and of course spending some time getting things spruced up for Spring and being ready for our Better Beginnings "inspections" scheduled in just a few months (please keep the staff in your prayers as we prepare)!

Jesus Time will find us learning of God's love. In John 13:34 we find Jesus' words "love one another as I have loved you." He not only told us—He showed us in many ways! We'll re-hear several of our favorite Bible stories. Zacchaeus who was a wee little man (and we are HIS wee little people). Jesus cared enough for him to come to his house, and He cares for and comes into our hearts! (Luke 19:1-10). We'll also learn the parable of the "Good Samaritan" (Luke 10: 25-37) – we all need to be reminded about "being a good friend"; and about some of Jesus miracles— one of our favorites is Jesus feeding over 5,000 people with just 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. As we wrap up the month the Lord's Prayer will be our focus as we learn how Jesus taught us to pray.

Oops I'm out of room – Just remember with God in our lives every day is filled



with HIS LOVE – that’s better than any valentine! God’s continued blessings to each of you — **Colleen**

KrogerPlus Cards

Keep every swipe of your card benefitting ECDC?!

JANUARY is the month to RE-SIGN-UP your KrogerPlus Card for ECDC so you can continue “Swiping for ECDC”.

- **Go to [krogercommunityrewards.com](https://www.krogercommunityrewards.com).**
- **sign-in to your account.**
- **re-designate ECDC (NPO #80368).**
- **Your Done – Thanks for continuing your support!**

OR

if you would like to begin this no-extra-cost way of supporting ECDC— Here’s how:

- Go to [krogercommunityrewards.com](https://www.krogercommunityrewards.com) and register your current Kroger Plus Card. (If you do not have a Kroger Plus card, you can pick one up at the Customer Service Desk at any Kroger.)
- Click on Sign In/Register
- If you are a new online Kroger customer—click on SIGN UP in the ‘New Customer?’ box.
- Sign up for a Kroger Rewards Account by entering zip code, clicking on favorite store, entering your email address and creating a password, agreeing to the terms and conditions.
- You will then get a message to check your email inbox and click on the link within the body of the email.
- Click on My Account and use your email address and password to proceed to the next step.
- Click on Edit Kroger Community Rewards information and input your Kroger Plus card number. (If you use your phone number at the register? Call 800-576-4377, select option 4 to get your Kroger Plus card number.)
- Update or confirm your information.
- Enter NPO number (for ECDC it is 80368) or name of organization, select “ECDC” from list and click on confirm.
- To verify you are enrolled correctly, you will see your organization’s name on the right side of your information page.
- Then just swipe your card each time you shop to benefit ECDC!

If you need help with this or have questions, please give Colleen a call (663-0755) or email (ecdc@gracelutheranlr.org).

Does the bottom of your Kroger receipt say this?



If “YES” – thank you for swiping for ECDC!

If “NO” – we can show you show you how.

Call Colleen – 663-0755 or Catherine Manchester – 821-4140 for details.

General Mills
“Box Tops for Education”
used by Christ Lutheran School

Campbell’s Labels
used by ECDC &
Christ Lutheran School

Here’s how these work:

- Remove “Box Tops for Education” labels from General Mills containers (ie Cheerios, Betty Crocker), and/or ENTIRE LABEL WITH UPC CODE from Campbell’s products (ie soup, juices).
- Collection boxes may be found on the bookcase next to the breezeway or the entry area of ECDC.
- “Box Tops for Education” provide monetary support for the CLS Band, “Campbell’s Labels” are turned into credit toward

purchasing supplies and equipment for both ECDC and Christ Lutheran School.