

Grace English Lutheran Church,

384 Oak Street, Berlin, WI 54923

*A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America*

Rebekah Tarras, Pastor

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Jessica Fritz – Worship and Music Coordinator

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THIS NEWSLETTER PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR

Sunday Worship:

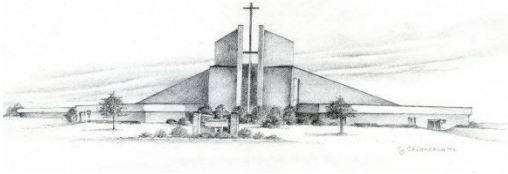
8:30 AM

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Hometown Broadcasting

WRPN AM 1600 at 12:00 PM

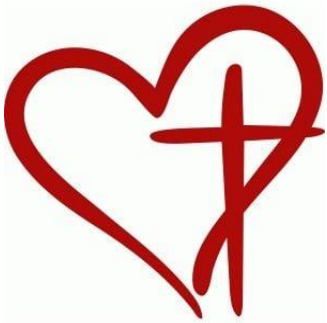


Worship Services

Facebook: www.facebook.com/gelcberlin

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLbOerRk5PMk1QWI9qtZ5_g

- February 5 - Worship at 8:30 am (In person and online)
- February 12 - Worship at 8:30 am (In person and online)
- February 19 - Worship at 8:30 am (In person and online)
- February 22 - Ash Wednesday Worship at 6:30 pm (In person and online)
- February 26 - Worship at 8:30 am (In person and online)



**Grace Lutheran's Mission: We Gather to Worship, Grow, Care, and Share
"All Are Welcome In This Place"**

Something New for The Season of Lent

From Pastor Intern Kathy



As an employed church musician at my home church, I recognized how the church seasons, and the typical agenda items just keep moving right along. The lenten season is fast approaching, and our typical personal lenten practices fall into place much easier than thinking about trying something new. I am enjoying my preparation for the lenten series that has been selected for our season ahead. It has given me inspiration for changing my typical lenten practices of abstaining to try something new instead.

My thoughts have been centering more around adding spiritual practices to my daily routine. The lenten series has inspired me to place a centered focus on love. Love of others and love of self. Rather than deprive myself of things for these 40 days, I am adding things that will build up my spiritual life and open my senses to a stronger relationship with God.

I love my spiritual practices classes in seminary. All students and faculty are required to take these classes every semester. A specific book is read centered on a specific topic and the class time is group reflection around the ups and downs of our daily lives. We remain with our small groups of 10 for a whole year, and the students are purposely assigned from differing class levels.

My favorite topic was a semester of learning how to rest. I developed a spiritual practice of dedicating my Fridays for my sabbatical day. I have continued this practice ever since, and I use that day for playing guitar and singing, coloring with my pencils, watching a movie and spending quality time with friends and family. Though guilt frequently comes into play when the impending priorities are skipped for a day, the benefits of this day of rest that refresh my mind and spirit are held as the highest priority. I place myself “first” on that day. A sabbatical day may even be felt as a “fast” from the hustle and bustle that some people thrive upon.

So, anyone can apply a spiritual practice into their daily lives, it is not just for Pastors, seminarians, and their teachers. There are dozens of books that cover this topic when searching for ideas, but many of them are as simple as adding a new daily devotional centered on a theme you want to focus more on, like love, hope, or forgiveness as a few examples. Perhaps reading a biblical Psalm or a few Proverbs verses a day.

You might commit to finding a spiritual blog and share media posts from it, or even create some of your own spiritual posts of your thoughts on your favorite bible verses. Other ideas might be finding a spiritual book to read for inspiration. Adding fellowship time with church members and friends. Establish a family night with everyone eating around a table and playing a game. Signing up as a volunteer for a church ministry that you may not have ever tried before.

Move outside your comfort zone and try something new. Add a new spiritual practice to your routine for 40 days and sense the difference it makes in your lenten journey.

Blessings, peace, and wisdom on your journey.

Intern Pastor Kathy

**REGULAR GRACE ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING – FELLOWSHIP HALL
Monday, December 12, 2022**

Present: Bill Bartlett, Cindy Wallace, Becky Guden, Tricia Prellwitz, Sue Shemanski, Matt Dretske, Craig Chovanec and Jody Ziemann, Intern Kathy Cartwright and Pastor Rebekah Tarras. Linda Reetz was absent

President Bill Bartlett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and Pastor Rebekah led us in opening devotion.

The November Council minutes were presented. Tricia Prellwitz made a motion to accept the minutes; Jody Ziemann seconded. Motion approved.

Ministry Reports:

Pastor Rebekah's report listed her activities in November which included 1 funeral and various home visits; preparing for Advent; working with staff; participating at the Berlin Community Thanksgiving service and working with Intern Kathy.

November Treasurer's report was handed out by Cindy Wallace. Craig Chovanec made a motion to accept this report as presented; Matt Dretske seconded. Motion approved. The November Check Detail was reviewed; Matt Dretske made a motion to approve all checks as written; Sue Shemanski seconded. Motion approved.

Bill Bartlett presented the November investments spreadsheet on all funds and noted that all funds had a gain and prays that will continue to be back to the balance we were at a year ago.

Buildings & Grounds Committee Report was presented by Matt Dretske for November noting that entryway heaters are turned back on; snowblower has been checked and is ready for use; still waiting for electrician to check Emergency Light by south doors and presented a list of projects that were completed in 2022.

Sue Shemanski advised the Christian Education Committee had a successful Advent wreath and supper night with 35 participating and the youth participating in the December 11 service went well. February 21 is set for the Fat Tuesday Pancake supper night and they are working on the details; Christmas treat bags will again be handed out at the Christmas Eve service; and Vacation Bible School is being planned for July which will be open to the community.

The Fellowship & Caring Committee report was given by Jody Ziemann. She noted that the Ding Dong dinner has been handed over to the Mission & Outreach committee; plates of Christmas cookies were delivered to members; a Valentine's project will be created; and their committee will work with the Christian Ed committee on the Fat Tuesday supper to provide Bingo.

Tricia Prellwitz discussed that the Worship & Music Committee is working on the Choir and Praise Team Schedule for next year. They also suggest that we use the Holden Evening Service for our Wednesday Lenten Services, which was well received.

Craig Chovanec of Mission & Outreach Committee advised December mission is ELCA Good Gifts and have planned the 2023 Mission schedule. They have also set aside the second Saturday in January, February and March to be the Ding Dong Dinner days and will start asking for help to assemble and deliver the bags. Not using cloth bags in the past was discussed and a lower cost bag will be explored.

No concerns from the audience.

Old Business:

Bill Bartlett reminded the officers of the upcoming Joint Council meeting, next Monday, December 19, 6:30 p.m. at First Lutheran. Also, the Executive Committee will meet Tuesday, January 3, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. instead of meeting on the first Monday.

Saturday, January 7, 9:00 a.m. has been set aside to taking down the Christmas decorations at church.

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 29, 2023 immediately following the service. All committees were reminded to have their year-end summaries of activities and their budget proposals to the office by the end of this month to have them added to the Annual Report and Budget.

New Business:

Bill Bartlett presented a quote from Intuit on upgrading the current QuickBooks software in the office. Intuit advised that the first year would be \$450 and subsequent years would be \$960 with all records now being saved 'in the cloud'; and would include any updates and customer service since our current version is no longer supported. After discussion, council decided to look for other quotes. Sue Shemanski made a motion to update our QuickBooks software at the best price available; Craig Chovanec seconded. Motion approved.

A proposed Sick Leave Policy was handed out, which would apply to Pastor and would have to be approved by both councils. This would include Disability Family and Compassion Leave policies. Also, a proposed Sick Leave Policy was reviewed for Salaried Employees. After discussion, the council will review both policies and advise at the next council meeting on any changes.

Intern Kathy led us in Closing Prayer.

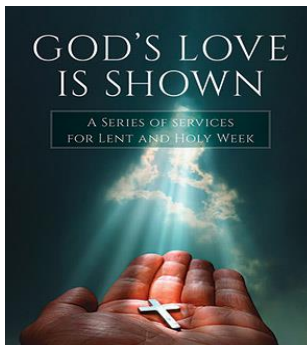
Cindy Wallace made a motion to adjourn; Matt Dretske seconded. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Guden
Council Secretary

Church Council

Heidi Schramer – President	920-361-4097	schramer@charter.net
DeAnna Lueptow – Vice President	920-229-4857	delueptow@gmail.com
Cindy Wallace – Treasurer	920-229-3772	cindy_wallace@charter.net
Becky Olsen – Secretary	920-290-4485	olsenfamilyshorthorns@gmail.com
Lisa Lee – Music/Worship	920-572-9010	lisajlee2000@yahoo.com
Sue Shemanski – Christian Education	920-361-4506	shemanski5@yahoo.com
Jody Ziemann – Fellowship/Caring	920-361-1326	lajirafa@hotmail.com
Craig Chovanec – Missions/Outreach	920-361-3727	craigfchovanec@centurytel.net
Bob Prellwitz – Building/Grounds	920-361-0669	goodrich@vbe.com

Midweek Lent Worship Services Begin on February 22



The Lent season begins with Ash Wednesday on February 22. The midweek worship services will be 1:30 pm at First Lutheran, Poy Sippi and 6:30 pm at Grace Lutheran, Berlin.

The theme this year will be “God’s Love is Shown.” The sermon series will delve into the rich and diverse aspects of our Lord’s love for us shown most clearly in the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. Each service focuses specifically on a meaningful descriptor of God’s love and applies that description to the words and actions of our Lord who is God’s love incarnate come down to save us.



Weekly classes continue through February 15.
Classes will not meet during the season of Lent and will resume after Easter on April 12.



Pastor Rebekah will be offering a class to study and prepare for First Communion to 5th grade students and older who have not yet received their first communion. The class will be held on Saturday, March 11 from 9 am to noon at Grace Lutheran.

First Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, March 19 in worship both at Grace and First. Please sign up by March 1, to ensure we have enough supplies for each student. Register by calling the church office or emailing pastortarras@gmail.com



MARDI GRAS

FAMILY CELEBRATION



TUESDAY
21ST
February
5:30 pm

GRACE LUTHERAN
384 Oak Street Berlin, WI

CRAFTS
PANCAKE
DINNER
LENTEN LESSON

Come join us for a family friendly evening to learn about Jesus' lenten journey and spend time with the entire family.

Mission of the Month ELCA World Hunger



More than 820 million people - that's about 11 percent of people in our world today - are hungry.

As members of the ELCA, we are called to respond. We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.

Working with and through our congregations in the United States, Lutheran churches around the world, and other partners, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need. From health clinics to microloans, community meals to advocacy, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty.

ELCA reaches more places more effectively than we could ever do alone. In addition to funding relief and development projects that assist our sisters and brothers in need, we engage members of the ELCA in education and advocacy to help change the systems that perpetuate poverty.

Through this comprehensive approach, we work to address hunger from all angles — both domestically and globally.

Maggie The Church Mouse

FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE...but the greatest of these is Love.

I'm tucked into one of the chairs in front of the office, reading this Bible verse printed on the little cross on the table beside me. What a perfect verse to highlight in this cozy spot where visitors and members alike enter into the warmth and shelter of Grace. Especially during the month when we celebrate Valentine's Day, it's a good reminder that our goal should be to do everything from day to day in a spirit of love. I don't know about you, but for this meager little church mouse, that sounds like a tremendous challenge! Maybe if I take a trek around the church, I might get some ideas on how to be a more loving part of Grace.

A look at the kiosk shows me there's a need for greeters. What a great way to show love for my church family, welcoming them to the place where we all gather in worship and fellowship each Sunday. I could do that!

In fact, there are lots of openings on the kiosk sign-up sheets: I could contribute some of my mouse-made treats for fellowship, Soul Food, or Blood Drives. I could place flowers on the altar from my bountiful stash of dried wildflowers, perhaps in honor of my mouse pal. Or I could sponsor a Radio Ministry so my friends who can't easily journey to Grace can still listen to the services.

I could also inquire about helping at the Technology Desk. You may think that's no place for a mouse, but I do enjoy learning new things and I know they would appreciate more help. So I could certainly give it a try.

I'm not especially eager to be out in the cold, but I could even step outside my comfort zone and offer to scatter sidewalk salt for the guys who shovel and blow snow. My tail would probably work well as a spreader, and the hard-working crew needs any help it can get.

Now there are certain things a mouse just can't do – like reading scripture or singing in the choir. And I know there are things that some people are unable to do, too. But I'm realizing there are various ways for all of us to support our church home in return for all it provides to each of us. It brings me joy to help make my church home a place of love.

We come to Grace to practice **FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE...**but the greatest of these is Love.



It's Time to Start Saving

The Christmas holiday is over, we've spent all of January undecorating the house and safely putting things away for next year, but now it's February and what are we going to do with ourselves?

How about joining a February Purge Challenge? It's very simple, starting on February 1st you get rid of one item, on February 2nd you get rid of two items, on February 3rd, three items and so on throughout the month. For each item you decide to part with you have three options – donate it, sell it, or trash it.

It's an easy game at first. Anyone can purge a few items, right? But it grows considerably more challenging by week two, when you're forced to get rid of more than a dozen items per day. And it keeps getting more difficult as the month progresses. If, however you stick with it for the month you will have cleared out 406 items you no longer need!

Alright so you have decided to participate, and you have picked out some stuff to get rid of but now what? You don't really want to throw the stuff away, and it's way too much of a hassle to sell them, so what are you going to do??????

Why not donate it to Grace's Annual Rummage Sale. The Annual Grace Rummage Sale will be held in April, and we would be happy to accept your donations. Purged items can be dropped off at Grace. There will be an area designated for your donations.

Happy Purging!

Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31, 2023

Did you know.....Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have accumulated Choice Dollars from January thru December 2022, have until **March 31, 2023** to direct them to a non-profit of their choice. Don't miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to **Grace Lutheran Church of Berlin**. If you have questions about Choice Dollars, contact your Thrivent agent of the office staff at Grace.

In 2022, Grace received **\$7,922.00** in Choice Dollars from our members.

February is Bakeless Bake Sale Time

Each February the Women of Grace hold their annual Bakeless Bake Sale. Letters will be mailed soon. Included with this letter you will find two envelopes.:

The first envelope will be designated for the Bakeless Bake Sale. This sale is one of the two fundraisers we hold each year. All monies contributed will go toward the many projects the women support.

The second envelope will be designated for the Women's Annual Thankoffering in November. Thankofferings received will be donated to two area community groups. You can put this envelope with your regular giving envelopes and save it until November, or you can return it at the same time you return your Bakeless Bake Sale envelope.

Thank you for supporting the Women of Grace



Book Club News



The February Grace Book Club choice is **“Sheep Tales: The Bible According to the Animals Who Were There”** by Ken Davis. The Bible has had a life-changing impact on people for thousands of years. Biblical narratives and character studies have inspired, encouraged, challenged, and warned millions for generations. But what if these stories were rewritten from the unique vantage point of the animals who were also there?

In **“Sheep Tales”** the animals have their say. You will meet Gayla, one of the nicest sheep you could know, Edgar, a crusty bitter raven, Arvid, the platypus, Dandy the Lion, Glubber the whale and other furry, feathery and creepy-crawly creatures made and loved by God. This is a fun and inventive story for all ages.

We will meet to discuss this title on Tuesday, February 14th at 1:30 pm in the Church Library. If you are interested in reading this book, please contact Cindy Wallace. If you have already read this title, please consider joining us on the 14th. We would love to have you.

Radio Ministry

February 5 - Open
February 12 - Open
February 19 - Open
February 26 - Sponsored by the Goettl Family

Bulletins

February 5 - In Memory of Stan Shemanski by Sue Shemanski and Family
February 12 - Open
February 19 - In Memory of Tim Lueptow
February 26 - Sponsored by the Goettl Family

Flowers

February 5 - In Honor of Thomas's 15th Birthday by the McCarthy Family
February 12 - Open
February 19 - In Honor of Sydney Renik's Birthday by Sue Shemanski
February 26 - Sponsored by Gene Hess

Fellowship

February 5 - Tricia Prellwitz
February 12 - Penny Bahn
February 19 - Sue Shemanski
February 26 - Tammy Goettl

Greeters

February 5 - Bob & Tricia Prellwitz
February 12 - Sue Bartlett
February 19 - Open
February 26 - Open

Ding Dong Dinners

In the months of January, February, and March, we are collecting monetary donations for our Ding Dong Dinner outreach project. We will fill 50 bags each month with a dinner and randomly drop them off in the community.

The first delivery was on January 14. It was well received by randomly selected residents of Berlin. Any help will be greatly appreciated for the next delivery on February 12. Contact Craig Chovanec for more information.

Anyone able to apply for a Thrivent Action card to help with the expenses would also be welcomed!



February Birthdays

- 1 Luke Johnson
- 2 Alissa Gies
Douglas Kline
- 3 Kathleen Krentz
- 5 Matthew Dretske
Thomas McCarthy
- 7 Alexander Konen
- 8 Amber Rozek
- 9 Cary Eckstein
- 10 Brian Retzlaff
- 12 Brandon O'Brien
- 14 Mark Labbus
Jagger Borland
- 19 Brooke Fredrick
Mara Ferron
Mark Goffard
Susan Shemanski
Sydney Renik
- 21 Sophia Falk
- 22 Kaitlyn Eastberg
- 23 Emily Carpenter
- 24 Curtis Olson
- 28 Edward Carpenter
Connor Emerson
Lois Mattice

Communion at the Rail

The option of going forward to the communion rail will be offered in worship on the first Sunday of each month.

For those who prefer to commune in their seats or have difficulty going up front, individual communion elements will still be available.



February Anniversaries

- 14 Roy & Beverly Chadwick
- 14 Kristin Koch & Tim Seaman
- 20 Steven & Connie Smits – 30th
- 23 Scott & Karen Schweigert

If any birthdays or anniversaries were missed, please let the office staff know.



There will be a blood drive at Grace Church on February 28, 2023 from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm.

Call Nancy at 920-361-3679 to make an appointment.

February

2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 5:30 pm Crafters Group 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	2 Soul Food River Shore Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	3	4
5 8:30 am Worship with Communion at the rail and Sunday School	6 7:00 pm Church Council Meting	7 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Sewing	8 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	9 Soul Food Grace Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	10	11 8:00 am Men's Breakfast at Grace Lutheran
12 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School 1:00 pm Pack and Deliver Ding Dong Dinners	13 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 7:00 pm Council Meeting	14 9:00 am Staff Meeting	15 5:30 pm Crafters Group 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	16 Soul Food All Saints Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	17	18
19 8:30 am Worship with Communion and No Sunday School	20 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	21 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Sewing 5:30 pm Mardi Gras	22 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday	23 Soul Food River Shore Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	24	25
26 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	27 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	28 9:00 am Staff Meeting				