

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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THIS NEWSLETTER PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR

Sunday Worship:

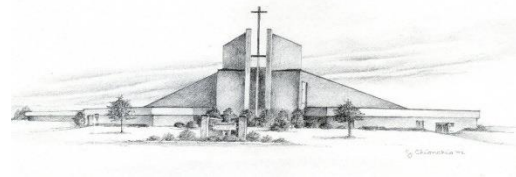
8:30 AM

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



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|-------|----|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| March | 1 | - | Wednesday Lent Service at 6:30 pm | (In person and online) |
| March | 5 | - | Worship at 8:30 am | (In person and online) |
| March | 8 | - | Wednesday Lent Service at 6:30 pm | (In person and online) |
| March | 12 | - | Worship at 8:30 am | (In person and online) |
| March | 15 | - | Wednesday Lent Service at 6:30 pm | (In person and online) |
| March | 19 | - | Worship at 8:30 am | (In person and online) |
| March | 22 | - | Wednesday Lent Service at 6:30 pm | (In person and online) |
| March | 26 | - | Worship at 8:30 am | (In person and online) |
| March | 29 | - | Wednesday Lent Service at 6:30 pm | (In person and online) |

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

From Pastor Rebekah:



My social media was blowing up with reports and discussions about an event that happened in Kentucky early in February at Asbury University. Some called it a revival, others an awakening. Regardless of what you call it, I find it beautiful and inspiring.

So, what happened? On February 8, following a chapel service, students spontaneously stayed in the auditorium for prayer and singing that continuing through the night and as of my writing this article, has continued for two weeks sparking similar movements on other college campuses and getting the attention of people around the world.

I'll admit I was curious about the message that seemed to spark this response, so I found a recording of the chapel sermon on YouTube. It was based on a reading from Romans 12:9-21. These 13 verses include 30 different commands. They are overwhelming. But the preacher reminded the audience that we cannot do these commands or actions by our own merit. They are only possible as an expression of love.

"Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor." – Romans 12:9-10

The preacher spoke about how many people don't know true love having experienced abuse, perverted, hypocritical love. But that is not the love of God. God's love is perfect love, agape love, gentle and kind. God is love. Until we have tasted and seen the love of Jesus, we can't truly love others. You cannot love until you are loved by Jesus. First John 4:19 tells us "We love because God first loved us." God sent His only Son to die for the sins of every person. There was only one reason for God to experience that kind of heartache: God's love for us. God's love is unconditional, extravagant, and everlasting. And it's for everyone. Love for others is only possible when we know and experience God's love for us in Jesus. Then and only then can we become love in action.

So, what is the source of your love? Some of us need to taste and see and experience the love of God. How do we do that? We can get to know God's love by reading the Bible. If you are not reading the Bible regularly today is a good day to start. Try reading one of the gospels. (Mark is the shortest.) Or if that is overwhelming try reading Philippians or 1 John. Check out the YouVersion Bible App and pick a reading plan about God's love. As you read, let the words soak in, reflect on them, meditate on them. What do they reveal about God's love? Prayer is another way to experience God's love. Talk with God about what you are reading. Ask God to reveal his love for you.

Worship is also an important way of experiencing God's love. Some of us need to taste and see, sit in the love of God. Our mid-week Lent series this year is all about the love of God. If you haven't heard the messages, I encourage you to go back and watch them on YouTube or Facebook. Make worship a priority for the rest of the Lent season so you can know more deeply God's love for you.

We need to know God's love for us, experience God's love poured out for us. Then and only then are we able to share love with the world around us. When you see yourself the way God sees you, you can love others the way God loves you. The world desperately needs this kind of love. The world needs a bunch of Christians who've experienced the love of God pouring it out on others. The world doesn't need more judgment or condemnation, the world needs love. True love. Love that transforms lives.

Pastor Rebekah

**REGULAR GRACE ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING – FELLOWSHIP HALL
Monday, January 9, 2023**

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

President Bill Bartlett called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. and Linda Reetz led us in opening prayer.

The December Council minutes were presented. Cindy Wallace made a motion to accept the minutes; Jody Ziemann seconded. Motion approved.

Ministry Reports:

Pastor Rebekah's report listed her and Intern Kathy's activities in December which included home visits; preparing for Cantata and Christmas services; various meetings and end of year reports.

Cindy Wallace presented the December Treasurer's Report. Sue Shemanski made a motion to accept this report as presented; Matt Dretske seconded. Motion approved. The December Check Detail was reviewed; Jody Ziemann made a motion to approve all checks as written; Sue Shemanski seconded. Motion approved.

Bill Bartlett reviewed the December investments spreadsheet on all funds. With the markets still being volatile, there was a loss and Bill stated that for 2022, funds were at an overall loss of 8.3%, which is below the average.

Buildings & Grounds Committee Report was presented by Matt Dretske for December noting the Emergency light by the south doors was still in need of repair, an electrician had been contacted but has not responded; also the East door frame by the kitchen will be in need of repair and best to contact a door company. A service contract to cover heating and cooling units was discussed and will be passed on to the committee to solicit.

Sue Shemanski advised the Christian Education Committee has yet to meet and they will discuss the Vacation Bible School scheduled for July; and they are starting to prepare for the Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper in February.

The Fellowship & Caring Committee report was given by Jody Ziemann. She noted that when there is no host for Fellowship on a Sunday, the committee will fill in; Committee has offered to help with the Ding Dong Dinner project; Valentines and cookies will be prepared and delivered to the shut-ins in February; and committee will help with Fat Tuesday if needed.

Tricia Prellwitz presented the Worship & Music Committee report listing the Choir and Joyful Noise schedules for January; Lenten services will use the Holden Evening Prayer Service; other ideas for 2023 discussed were hosting a guest painter which he does a painting while listening and focusing on that Sunday's gospel; Capella groups to lead worship; Christian Rock Service; and the Polka Service for end of August. Tricia is working with a company on material samples to replace the cushioned kneelers and upholstery on the two chairs, which a congregation member has graciously donated funds for this project.

Craig Chovanec of Mission & Outreach Committee advised the January mission is Lutheran World Relief. He also talked about the upcoming Ding Dong Dinner project his committee has headed but is in need of volunteers. This project will be the second Saturday of the month for January, February and March. January's dinner will be a pasta meal.

No concerns from the audience.

Old Business:

Bill Bartlett reminded the Grace Executive Council that the next Joint Parish Council Meeting will be Monday, March 20, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at Grace Fellowship Hall. Information should be passed on to the new council members.

Council reviewed the Leave Policy for both Rostered Leaders and Part-time Salaried Staff with a few changes made from last month and had been approved by the Joint Parish Council. Sue Shemanski made a motion to approve the Leave Policy for Rostered Leaders as presented; Cindy Williams seconded. Motion approved. Linda Reetz made a motion to approve the Leave Policy for Part-Time Salaried Staff; Jody Ziemann seconded. Motion approved.

New Business:

The 2023 Budget was presented and reviewed. After discussion, Linda Reetz made a motion to approve the 2023 Budget that will be presented at the Annual Meeting; Matt Dretske seconded. Motion approved.

The Endowment Committee has submitted their recommendations for disbursement in 2023 totaling \$3,301, which will be divided between the Outreach Project of Ding Dong Dinner, Berlin School District Needy Family Fund and Scholarships for students that are Grace members. Linda Reetz made a motion to approve the Endowment Committee disbursements for 2023; Sue Shemanski seconded. Motion approved.

A resolution to Grace's Constitution will be presented at the Annual Meeting to establish a specific Scholarship Fund separate from the Endowment Committee. Details will be given at the meeting to create this new Fund and congregation will vote whether to establish this new Fund or not.

In other concerns brought to the council was the Audit Report after their review of the 2022 accounting procedures and this report will be in the Annual Report.

Pastor Rebekah led us in a Closing Prayer. Linda Reetz made a motion to adjourn; Tricia Prellwitz seconded. Motion approved. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Becky Guden
Council Secretary

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	olsenfamlyshorthorns@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	bobprellwitz@yahoo.com

Where Do My Offerings Go?

In the past few weeks, I've had a few conversations with individuals who tell me they don't know where they should designate their offering so they didn't write anything down on their envelope and we can just decide what to do with it.

I'll admit, at first, I was confused. In my mind you are giving to God through the church. I have my tithe set up automatically through the online giving option of each congregation and it goes to the general fund. The general fund is used for all the general expenses of the church and our ministry – utilities that provide water, heat and lights, worship and communion supplies, Sunday school supplies, office supplies to make and print bulletins, newsletters and more, plus it covers staff salaries, benevolence, and all of the other expenses that are occurred in maintaining a facility and supporting the ministry of the church. I don't feel the need to make any designations because I trust that my giving will be used as needed to carry out the mission of the church.

However, the more I reflected on this topic, I realized that I do occasionally make additional offerings that are designated for a purpose. I have designated offerings beyond my tithe to the monthly missions, ding dong dinners, soul food and other projects. I consider these designations to be above and beyond my regular giving. I give them when I sense God encouraging me to give to these special needs.

I would encourage you to make your tithe or offerings to the general fund because that is what supports the general ministry of the church. When you feel called to do so, go ahead and make designated gifts but don't feel that your gifts need to be designated. If you have any questions about where your offering goes, please feel free to talk to me, someone in the office or one of the council members.

Pastor Rebekah

Maggie The Church Mouse

Dazzling sunshine, melting snow, a slight breeze far gentler than the hair-raising winds of winter...what a day for my first walk outside! I'm not the only one of God's creatures prancing about: squirrels are leaping in broad arcs across every yard, and – my goodness! A pair of rabbits just hopped right over me!

Skirting the corner of a neighborhood flower bed, I am stunned to see some fingers of green poking up through the soil. They're daffodils, a sure sign of spring! You should see my smile, stretching all the way from one ear to the other. I'm rejoicing at every springtime surprise before my eyes as I turn tail and head back to Grace.

But wait! Stopping in my tracks, I am reminded that this is the season of Lent. My church family is in the midst of a time of solemn reflection and repentance. Is it all right to be feeling joyous this many days before we get to Easter?

Back inside the sanctuary, I curl up in a warm pool of sunshine and absorb the comfort of being in this glorious place I call my home. The crosses in the altar area capture my attention, and I am reminded of what Jesus endured for all of us, made possible by the perfect love of God the Father. I know the answer to the question I'm asking: of course God would want me to celebrate the beauty of his reawakening creation. Likewise he would want me and my church family to celebrate with great joy the other Grace events in the month of March.

On March 5th we will celebrate the 90th anniversary of Grace English Lutheran Church, a milestone that represents a lot of helping hands and hearts at work for nearly a century! (Probably a long string of past church mice, too!) Then, on every Wednesday evening in March, we'll be able to enjoy a tasty soup supper followed by a meaningful Lenten service. What could be a better way to draw closer to God than to break bread and share His word alongside fellow members of our church family?

So – let's share the fullness of life in the season of Lent. Although we are called to feel the agony of Jesus' journey to the cross, and to ponder our own shortcomings and challenges, we are also commanded to give thanks for our multitude of blessings – life and love, family and friends, blue sky and sunshine and daffodils!



March Book Club News:



For March, the Grace Book Club is reading **“The Stranger in the Lifeboat”** by Mitch Albom. What would happen if we cried out to God for help and someone claiming to be God actually appeared before us? In this novel, a group of shipwrecked passengers must face that challenge when a strange man they pull from the water says he can save them all, but only if they believe in him. Paced like a thriller, yet full of the author's signature life wisdom, this is a uniquely uplifting story that suggests that answers to our prayers may be found where we least expect them.

We will meet to discuss “The Stranger in the Lifeboat” on Tuesday, March 14th at 1:00 PM at a location still to be determined. 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

- March 5 - In Honor of her granddaughter Paige Soper's Birthday
by Barb Tollakson
March 12 - In Honor of Tony's Birthday by the Goettl Family
March 19 - Open
March 26 - In Memory of Henry Grams by the Grams Family

Bulletins

- March 5 - In Honor of Grace Lutheran's 90th Anniversary
March 12 - In Honor of Tony's Birthday by the Goettl Family
March 19 - In Honor of their grandson's birthdays by Bill & Sue Bartlett
March 26 - Open

Flowers

- March 5 - Open
March 12 - Open
March 19 - Open
March 26 - Open

Fellowship

- March 5 - Fellowship & Caring – 90th Anniversary of Grace Lutheran
March 12 - Pam Marks
March 19 - Open
March 26 - Open

Greeters

- March 5 - Open
March 12 - Open
March 19 - Open
March 26 - Open

Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31, 2023

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars® from 2022 have until **March 31, 2023**, to direct them. Don't miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to Grace Lutheran. Go to [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](https://thrivent.com/thriventchoice) to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

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

LENTEN MISSION

LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICAN GIRLS

DATE: March 11th, 2023
TIME: 9am to 12:00 noon
PLACE: Grace Fellowship Hall



*We're not just sending dresses,
we're* **Sending HOPE**

PURPOSE: Cut, assemble,
and sew dresses from pillowcases
and fabric.



If you have pillowcases in good shape, ¼ inch elastic, trim, buttons, or anything that you may wish to donate please contact Jean Dretske at 920 361-2402.

If you can cut, sew on a button, iron, or sew please come on Saturday March 11th at 9 am. Treats will be provided.

Mission of the Month – Turkey Disaster



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF RESPONSE

We are delivering aid and support to children, women and men devastated by the earthquakes in Türkiye (Turkey). According to the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) and recent UN Flash Appeal, more than 9.1 million people have been affected in 11 provinces in Türkiye and more than 47,000 buildings have been destroyed or damaged since the initial earthquake struck on February 6, 2023.

We are grateful for the thousands of Lutherans across the United States whose care and generosity have made it possible for us to respond immediately. At this time, financial gifts are the number one need to assist families affected by the earthquakes.

Grace Lutheran's mission of the month is Lutheran World Relief specifically providing aid to Turkey following the earthquakes.

The most urgent needs are: • Food • Warm bedding and winter clothes • Lighting for camps to improve safety especially for women and children • Hygiene kits • Toilets and bathing facilities • Psychosocial first aid and mental health services • Child friendly spaces

Our response in Turkey includes:

Shipping LWR Quilts, Baby Care Kits and Personal Care Kits. • Airlifting urgently needed supplies including tents, tarps, winter clothing and solar lights. An initial shipment arrived in Türkiye on February 20. • Coordinating with partners to distribute ready-to-eat food and hot meals, sleeping bags, sleeping mats and winter clothing. • Conducting rapid needs assessments in affected area



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.



Serving starts at 5:45pm

<u>Date</u>	<u>Servers</u>	<u>Soups</u>
March 1 st	Women of Grace	Corn Chowder & Chicken Rice
March 8 th	Christian Education	Cheeseburger & Potato
March 15 th	Men of Grace	Chicken Pot Pie & Hamburger
March 22 nd	Fellowship & Caring	Chili & Cream of Broccoli
March 29 th	Choir	Beef Vegetable Barley & Outback Onion

Check the kiosk for the soup recipes and to sign up to make a soup and/or dessert.



- Scholarship forms are available in the office
- Scholarships are available to new and existing college and technical school students
- Scholarship applications are due back to the office by April 1, 2023.



Joyful Noise Choir leads worship once a month. Thank you to the dedicated members for sharing their talent and for the time spent in practicing.

Fellowship Hall was Buzzing with Many Helping Hands Preparing Gifts for Others after Worship on February 12, 2023



Fellowship and Caring Committee made, packed, and delivered a handmade card (thanks Jody) and Valentine cookies to the shut-ins and others who needed a little “love”.

The Mission Committee and others packing Ding Dong Dinner bags.



Fifty bags packed and ready for delivery. Thank you Craig and Linda for organizing and to all who helped in any way.



Mardi Gras Family Celebration

March 21, 2023





March Birthdays

- 3 Dona Eury
- 5 Paul Gravunder
Becky Retzlaff
- 6 Heather Hermanson
Lauren Murkley
- 7 Bronson Paulsen
- 8 Beverly Chadwick
Chris Krebs
- 9 Meg Roggow
- 10 Linda Bourassa
- 13 Ryan Gravunder
- 15 Ellen Lehr
Pam Marks
McKala Nitzke
- 16 Susan Calabresa
- 17 Luke Dretske
Kenneth Peschke
- 20 Jen Retzlaff
Michael Moe
- 21 William Carpenter
Tony Goettl
- 22 Sydney Lee
Stephanie Malson
- 24 Brian Zamzow
- 25 Kathy Fredrick
- 26 Ryan Dobbs
Kaitlynn Retzlaff
James Gropp
- 28 Steven Koscher
Kelly Zabel



March Anniversaries

- 18 William & Fay McMonigal
- 23 Don & Connie Koscher
- 26 Matt & Sydney Renik

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



When members of our congregation experience difficulties, how can Grace help? One way we have helped in the past was through our Good Samaritan Fund.

This account was established many years ago and used to help members when they experienced difficulties in their lives. Assistance was given at the current Pastor's discretion, and all was kept confidential.

At a recent meeting council members discussed reviving this account and making it a viable resource for our members. Currently the amount in this fund is only a couple hundred dollars and we would like to see it grow.

As a caring, compassionate congregation, let's work together to make this happen.



It's Time to Clean Your Closets!

Grace Women's Annual Rummage Sale is scheduled for Saturday, April 22nd and we need your stuff! Donations can be dropped off at Church beginning Monday, April 10th. We will have areas designated, please place your donations only in those areas.

We will accept all kinds of stuff, but we will not accept appliances or computers. If you need your items picked up please let the church office know. Watch the kiosk for complete details.



March

2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service 7:00 pm Choir Practice	2 12:45 pm Soul Food Grace Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	3	4
5 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	6 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	7 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Quilters	8 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service 7:00 pm Choir Practice	9 12:45 pm Soul Food All Saints Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	10	11 8:00 am Men's Breakfast at First Lutheran 9:00 am – Noon Mission Dress Workshop 9:00 – Noon First Communion Class
12 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	13 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 7:00 pm Congregation Council Meeting	14 9:00 am Staff Meeting	15 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service 7:00 pm Choir Practice	16 12:45 pm Soul Food River Shore Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	17	18 8:45 – 12:00 LWR National Quilting Day at First Lutheran
19 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	20 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 6:30 pm Joint Parish Council Meeting at Grace	21 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Quilters	22 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service 7:00 pm Choir Practice	23 12:45 pm No Soul Food 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	24	25
26 8:30 am Worship with Communion - no Sunday School 12:00 Noon Intern Committee Meeting	27 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	28 9:00 am Staff Meeting	29 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Lent Service 7:00 pm Choir Practice	30 12:45 pm Soul Food Grace Hosts 6:30 pm Bible Study at Grace Lutheran	31	