

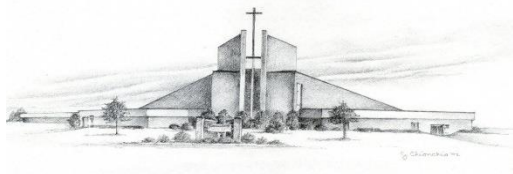
Grace English Lutheran Church
384 Oak Street, Berlin, WI 54923
*A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America*

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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



He is risen!

- April 7 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)
- April 14 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)
- April 21 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)
- April 28 - Worship Service 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"**

From the Pastor:



Dear Beloved Church Family,

In the weeks following Easter, our Epistle readings come from the First letter of John. It's a short letter, but one that is worth spending some time in and reflecting on because it contains a lot of insight for living our lives as Christians. One of the words that I noticed repeated several times in this letter (18x) is the Greek word μένω (menō) translated as abide or sometimes as remains or resides.

What does it mean for us to “abide in God”? The Greek word μένω (menō) indicates a close, intimate, and permanent relationship between the believer and God. It is very important to note that for the author of the Gospel of John and the Johannine epistles, every genuine Christian has this type of relationship with God.

In the Gospel of John 15:4-5, Jesus says, "Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

Abiding in God is about cultivating a deep and intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father, allowing God's love to transform us from the inside out. This kind of deep relationship with God doesn't just happen, it takes some intention on our part. Abiding in God is a conscious decision to surrender our will to God. We cultivate this relationship through regular prayer, reading scripture, worship, and fellowship with other believers.

When we abide in God, we find strength in our weakness. In times of trial and adversity, God's grace sustains us, God's peace calms us, and God's presence empowers us to persevere. As the psalmist declares, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

Abiding in God also brings us peace that surpasses understanding. In a world filled with turmoil and uncertainty, God's presence is our anchor, grounding us in God's unchanging truth and promises. As we abide in God, He guards our hearts and minds with His peace (Philippians 4:7).

Moreover, abiding in God gives us purpose and direction. When we align our lives with God's will, we discover the unique calling God has placed on each of us. Whether it's serving others, sharing the Gospel, or simply reflecting God's love in our daily interactions, we find fulfillment and joy in bearing fruit for God's kingdom.

Dear friends, as you abide in God, may you draw from God's strength and be filled with God's peace.

Pastor Rebekah Tarras

Holy Humor Sunday - April 7

What is Holy Humor Sunday? It has a long history in many congregations around the world. Churches in 15th century Bavaria used to celebrate the Sunday after Easter as Risus Paschalis (God's Joke, or the Easter Laugh).

Priests would deliberately include amusing stories and jokes in their sermons in an attempt to get their congregations to laugh. After the service, people would gather together to play practical jokes on one another and tell funny stories. It was their way of celebrating the resurrection of Jesus – the supreme joke God played on Satan by raising Jesus from the dead.

The observance of Risus Paschalis was officially outlawed by Pope Clement X in the 17th century. Perhaps people were having too much fun! In 1988 the Fellowship of Merry Christians began encouraging churches to resurrect some of these Christian traditions – to celebrate the grace and mercy of God through the gifts of laughter and joy. G.K. Chesterton once wrote, “Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly. He who has the faith has the fun.”

GRACE ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING
2.12.2024

President Linda called the meeting to order at 6:58pm.

Members present; Linda Reetz, Terry Wallace, Becky Olsen, Sandy Peschke, Pastor Rebekah, Craig Chovanec, Jody Ziemann, Mary Gropp and Anita Lind. Absent Bob Prellwitz.

Devotion led by Terry Wallace

No Audience

Approval of the Agenda. Linda added the Joint Parish Council meeting. Becky added the Secretary's and Treasurer's Report. Motion made by Craig to accept agenda with the revisions, seconded by Jody, motion carried.

Secretary's Report. January meeting minutes sent via email, including to the new members. Motion made by Sandy to accept the January report as written, seconded by Craig, motion carried. Becky questioned new members if emailing of the minutes, for reviewing and accuracy, was an appropriate means of communicating the report, members agreed to the emailing of minutes.

Treasurer's Report. January report, including the check detail, presented. Terry inquired about one discrepancy. Sandy will investigate the question and report her findings to members. Motion made by Terry to accept report as written, seconded by Craig, motion carried.

President's Report.

Behavior Expectations. Linda presented council members with the behavior expectations as outlined by the constitution.

Treasurer Position Understanding. Linda presented a written document entitled Treasurer Position Understandings. Discussion held on the articles of the document. Members voiced agreement that they would abstain from voting if a conflict of interest would arise on a particular item on the agenda. Members also agreed that no action needed to be taken on the written document.

SWOT analysis document. Linda asked members to complete this document listing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Then return to her one week prior to the March meeting for her to compile responses.

Finance Committee/Investment Committee. Discussion held on forming a new Finance Committee. This committee would be separate from the Investment Committee. Motion made by Jody Ziemann to establish a Finance Committee, seconded by Mary Gropp, motion carried. Council will work to create the new committee's purpose and list of duties.

Bishop meeting Recap. Linda informed the group that herself and Terry, along with council members from First met with the Bishop. Linda stated that the discussions were general, centered around the Bishop getting to know each of the churches.

Pastor's Report. Pastor Rebekah reported visits with Rollie Bahr, Bill and Shirley Huck. Provided a list of ongoing activities, including plans for upcoming Lent services, various meetings and end of the year reports.

Committee Reports.

Fellowship and Caring. Jody reported that the group made and delivered Valentine plates to shut-ins. Ongoing and upcoming activities include; a reminder of the Meal Train for the Batenhorsts, serving at soup supper this week, starting to plan for Palm Sunday brunch, and asking families to sign up for Sunday fellowship. Next meeting is March 10th following service.

Buildings and Grounds. Bob Prellwitz provided a report. Activities include; door weather stripping replacement by Ray Bosveld, fellowship hall tile replacement after a water leak, winter snow removal and salting will continue as needed. Next meeting 2.19.24.

Christian Education. Sue Shemanski submitted the report. New members have joined the committee. Members will meet soon to plan the last day of Sunday school.

Worship and Music. Pastor reported that a Praise band from Omro will perform on 3.3.24

Mission and Outreach. Craig reported that Paige Soper spoke yesterday on the Damascus Road Project, the February mission of the month. He explained that the project is run 100% by trained volunteers. Information about the project is on their bulletin board. He also reported that 41 Ding Dong Dinners were packed and delivered yesterday following service. A few bags were delivered to the food pantry this morning. The next Ding Dong Dinner delivery will be March 10th.

Unfinished Business.

Shared Ministry Covenant. No updates.

Scholarship Guidelines. The guidelines, as presented at the annual meeting, were reviewed. Motion made by Jody to accept the scholarship guidelines as written, seconded by Anita, motion carried. Pastor requested that the scholarship fund be placed on a separate line of our treasurer's report.

New Business.

Lenten and Easter Service advertising. Following review and discussion members declined to advertise with HomeTown Broadcasting, the 'Bug' (advertising cost was \$85 for 40 broadcasts of service times)

Joint Parish Meeting. Full joint council meeting planned for Monday, March 18th at 630pm, at Grace.

Annual Synod Membership Report. Sandy and Becky will work together to complete the ELCA Annual Congregation Report, including membership, due on 3.1.24. Going forward a committee will be formed to study and review Grace's current definition of membership. The committee will report their findings and recommendations to the council for possible changes in 2024.

Closing Prayer. Pastor provided closing prayer.

Adjournment. Anita made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mary, motion carried, adjourned at 8:26pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Becky Olsen, Secretary
2.16.24**

Linda Reetz – President	920-279-7899	linda.reetz0726@gmail.com
Terry Wallace – Vice President	920-344-1523	terrywallace@charter.net
Sandy Peschke – Treasurer	920-290-1551	kspeschke1950@gmail.com
Becky Olsen – Secretary	920-290-4485	olsenfamilyshorthorns@gmail.com
Mary Gropp – Music/Worship	920-279-4054	jim_marygropp@yahoo.com
Anita Lind – Christian Education	920-290-1374	anita_lind@charter.net
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

Constitution Corner

Our congregation has a constitution, that in addition to the Bible, serves to guide our life together as a church. This constitution reflects the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news, and share the love of God in the world. Each month we plan to highlight a part of our constitution. The full constitution is found under resources on the website.

The 8th Chapter of the Constitution defines membership. "Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws."

There are four types of members:

- a. **Baptized members** are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- b. **Confirmed members** are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- c. **Voting members** are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of this congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
- d. **Associate members** are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

Bible Study Groups

Monday Bible Study

The Monday Bible study with Pastor Rebekah will resume on April 8 at 1:30 pm at First Lutheran in Poy Sippi. We are continuing our study of the book of Isaiah with chapter 21.

New Bible Study Opportunity "James: What You Do Matters"

Join Pastor Rebekah for a five-session Bible study on the book of James beginning Thursday, April 11 at 9 am at Grace Lutheran, Berlin.

Each session will include video teaching from Margaret Feinberg along with group discussion. In addition, the study guide provides further material for personal Bible study in between sessions.

The cost of the study guide is \$20. If you are interested in participating in the study, email pastor Rebekah at pastortarras@gmail.com or call 715/897-5393.



Men's Sponsored Brat Fry

Save the Date: Wednesday, June 19, 2024

Everyone is invited for good food, fun, and games!
Details will follow closer to the date.

Grace's Rummage Sale

Grace's Annual Rummage Sale will take place Saturday, April 20, 2024 starting at 8:00 am.

We Need You! There are many ways you can help:

- **Donate, Donate, Donate** – Donations can be brought to church beginning on Monday April 8th. We will have areas marked to leave your donations.
- **Sign Up to Help** – We will need help the week prior to the sale to sort and organize the donations and arrange and set-up the fellowship hall. We will also need help on the day of the sale, both during the sale and clean-up after. Please watch the kiosk for sign-up sheets.
- **Shop, Shop, Shop** - Come and shop the day of the sale, you never know what treasures you will find! Tell your neighbors, your friends, everyone you know! The more the merrier.

If you have any questions, or if you need your donations picked up, please call Cindy Wallace @ 920-229-3772.



***** **\$2.00 bag sale begins at 12:00 Noon**

Little Dresses for Africa

WHEN: April 13, 2024
TIME: 8:30 am to 12:00 noon
WHERE: Grace Church Fellowship Hall
PURPOSE: Cut, assemble, and sew dresses from pillowcases and fabric.

If you have any pillowcases in good shape, 1/4 inch elastic, trim, buttons, or anything that you may wish to donate, please contact Grace church office at 920-361-1820.

If you would like to participate, please sign-up or let the office know so we can be certain to have enough sewing machines and supplies available.





“Power Lines” by Jason Carter is the book the Grace Book Club has chosen for April. Written by President Jimmy Carter’s grandson Jason, **“Power Lines”** is a story of South Africa that few people ever see.

As a Peace Corp Volunteer, Carter spent two years with a rural family in a former black homeland near the Swaziland border. **“Power Lines”** is Carter’s story of a community’s quest to dissolve barriers in the aftermath of Nelson Mandela’s regime-shattering election. Armed with a knowledge of both Zulu and Siswati he traveled the countryside, immersing himself in the lives of blacks and whites alike.

In the process, he found many on both sides who were eager to reach out to each other and heal wounds. Shaping his unique experiences into a powerful story, Carter demonstrates that even in a society as fragmented as South Africa, the people’s desire to come together can still triumph.

We will meet to discuss **“Power Lines”**, Tuesday, April 16th at 12:30 pm at a location to be determined. If you have already read this book, please consider joining us for discussion. If you would like to read **“Power Lines”** and join in the discussion on the 16th, please contact Cindy Wallace and she will get you a copy. We would love to have you join us.

Youth Events

Synod Youth Bowling

Gutter balls and strikes. Bring what you have to the Synod youth bowling event on Saturday, April 20th at Revs Bowl Bar & Grill in Oshkosh.

Registration is \$13.99 per person and includes two games, shoes, and lunch. Voted best bowling alley in Winnebago County, Revs will serve up a pitcher of soda and a 16” pizza for every four people.

The fun will start “rolling” at 12:00 pm and wind down at 3:00 pm. Space is limited so please RSVP by April 13th. Contact Amy Moore at amy.moore@ecsw.org or Patty Koplitz at pkoplitz@our-saviors.org or (920) 725-3956. See you on the lanes!

If you are interested in attending this event, call the office and we can register Grace members as a group and organize a carpool. Reservations are due by April 13th, so let us know by April 10th.

Summer Camp

Grace wants families to know that we will be offering partial camp scholarships to Crossways Camps this summer, up to 50% of the total cost of camp. Summer camp is available at Pine Lake Camp in Waushara County south of Waupaca, WI for children who just finished kindergarten through high school.

There is a day camp for kids age K-5 June 17-20. If families are interested, the Christian Education Committee would assist with car pooling and providing transportation. For more information go to: [www. crosswayscamps.org](http://www.crosswayscamps.org).

Call the office (920-361-1820) if your family is interested in a scholarship.



Radio Ministry

- April 7 - In Honor of Henry and Lois Stark's 68th Wedding Anniversary
- April 14 - Open
- April 21 - Open
- April 28 - Open

Flowers

- April 7 - In Honor of Henry and Lois Stark's 68th Wedding Anniversary
- April 14 - In Honor of Anna McCarthy's 19th birthday by her family
- April 21 - In Memory of Cathy Chovanec by Craig Chovanec
- April 28 - Open

Bulletins

- April 7 - In Honor of Henry and Lois Stark's 68th Wedding Anniversary
- April 14 - Open
- April 21 - Open
- April 28 - Open

Fellowship

- April 7 - Jean Dretske & Mary Gropp
- April 14 - Open
- April 21 - Open
- April 28 - Open

Greeters

- April 7 - Sue Shemanski
- April 14 - Open
- April 21 - Open
- April 28 - Open



Mission of the Month - World Hunger

More than 820 million people – that’s about 11 per cent of people in our world today – are hungry. They can’t access the food they need to live active, healthy lives.

Working with and through our congregations in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach out to communities in need, providing relief to those who are hungry and live in poverty.

Hunger is about more than food. By connecting people with the resources they need to produce food and gain access to clean water, education, health care and sources of income; long-term, sustainable change can be accomplished.

God richly provides for daily bread, the earth can produce enough food for everyone, yet many of our sisters and brothers still go hungry.

Our gifts to ELCA World Hunger make it possible for the ELCA to respond, supporting sustainable solutions that get to the root causes of hunger and poverty.

Happy Birthday



April Birthdays

- 2 Jayce Retzlaff
- 2 Candie Strebelski
- 3 Sadie Goettl
- 4 Jon Dehn
- 6 Luke Schroeder
- 7 Carrie McCarthy
- 9 Dina Dretske
- 12 Keith Fredrick
- 14 Suzanne Cutts
- 14 Jacob Lesniak
- 14 Anna McCarthy
- 15 Kim Lehr
- 15 Amber Dutcher
- 16 Hannah Olsen
- 18 Valerie Sprague
- 18 Joby Zietlow
- 19 Jody Ziemann
- 20 Vicki Hunt
- 21 Catelyn Olsen
- 22 Chloe Dutcher
- 23 Scott Dutcher
- 25 Lori Nitzke
- 26 Walker Goffard
- 26 Scott Greenig
- 28 Sara Mildebrandt
- 28 Janice Retzlaff
- 29 Scott Schweigert
- 30 Heidi Schramer

Happy Anniversary



April Anniversaries

- 5 Frank & Lori Nitzke
- 7 Henry & Lois Stark
- 12 Ken & Sandy Peschke – 55th
- 16 Pat & Kelly Featherston – 30th
- 25 Tim & Pat Magdanz
- 27 Jeremie & Jackie Schmidt
- 29 Dave & Angie Armatoski – 15th

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



The East Central Synod publishes a weekly email. **The Wave** talks about the comings and goings with the ELCA.

Anyone can sign up to receive the weekly email. If you would like to receive the weekly email, click on the link: [The Wave](#) or call the office and we will get you signed up.

Waypost Camp is Hosting a Spring Work Weekend April 26-28, 2024.

Will you lend a hand alongside other volunteers to enhance and prepare Waypost?

Meals and lodging are provided to volunteers with fellowship available in the evenings. All skill levels are welcome!

Please RSVP online at CrosswaysCamps.org/spring-workdays or email waypost@crosswayscamps.org with additional questions.



2024

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Quilting	3 5:30 pm Crafters Group 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	4 12:40 pm Soul Food River Shores Hosts	5	6
7 8:30 am Holy Humor Service with Communion and Sunday School 6:30 pm Mutual Ministry at First Lutheran	8 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 7:00 pm Congregation Council Meeting	9 9:00 am Staff Meeting	10 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	11 9:00 am Bible Study at Grace Lutheran 12:40 pm Soul Food Grace Hosts	12	13 8:00 am Men's Breakfast At First Lutheran 8:30 am -Noon Dresses for Africa
14 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	15 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	16 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Quilting 12:30 pm Book Club	17 5:30 pm Crafters Group 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	18 9:00 am Bible Study at Grace Lutheran 12:40 pm Soul Food All Saints Hosts	19	20 8:00 am Rummage Sale 12:00 Noon Youth Bowling at Oshkosh
21 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	22 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	23 9:00 am Staff Meeting	24 6:00 pm Joyful Noise 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	25 9:00 am Bible Study at Grace Lutheran 12:40 pm Soul Food River Shores Hosts	26	27
28 8:30 am Worship with Communion - no Sunday School	29 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	30 9:00 am Staff Meeting				