

Grace MESSENGER



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

FEBRUARY



Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

Some years the calendar creates a unique alignment of days and activities. Take this year, for example. Ash Wednesday – one of the somber and sorrowful days of the Christian calendar is on February 14th. Valentines' Day, a day we celebrate the love we have for that special someone. If you go out to eat that night, you might well see ashen crosses on the foreheads of your fellow diners.

However, is there a more fitting day for Ash Wednesday than the recognized day of love? After all, Jesus Himself said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Isn't that the essence of the Lenten season?

Romans 5:8 adds: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

It is common in popular culture toward to say that Jesus is all about love. Close, but not fully true. The way of Jesus is sacrificial love – a love goes as far as necessary to ensure the best outcome for someone else. It's not a mere feeling. It is a commitment to action. Jesus loves you. He really loves you. Remember that on Valentines' Day!

February Outreach Corner

MEETING FOR THIS YEAR'S TRIP TO LAUREL MISSION:



I am praying that you enjoyed our January Outreach Breakfast Break and sermon message from Nathan Boggs, director of Laurel Mission in SE KY. If you would be interested in learning more and possibly joining us for our trip this year, please attend a meeting on Tuesday February 6, 2024, at 6:30 pm in the Grace Fellowship Hall. See sign up sheet in the narthex as well.

Thank you CarePortal team and Grace Lutheran Church. Thanks to our efforts we were able to meet 28 requests in 2023, serving 60 children with a total economic impact of \$25,998. If you would like to join the Grace CarePortal team, please contact Sandy Thompson. If you would like to donate to our CarePortal fund to help us meet the needs of children in our community, see the link in the Narthex or on the Grace website.

St John's Food Pantry: February is one of our months to serve at St John's Food Pantry on Wednesday mornings. If you are interested in helping to distribute food, please contact Judy Fredrich at 937-925-1177. They could also use fruit, soup, Ramen Noodles, Cereal, bread, toilet paper, soap, laundry detergent, toothpaste, etc. PLEASE PLACE IN ST JOHN'S GROCERY CART BY 2/25/24



SMI Haiti: During the month of February, we will be collecting money for the annual Rice and Beans Fundraiser for Haitian children led by Living Water Lutheran Church in

Centerville OH. Haiti continues to be in a grave state of unrest and gang control and so many innocent people cannot meet even their basic needs. Would you consider a donation for Rice and Beans to help feed the school children? Make a check out to Grace with SMI Haiti in the memo line. Or would you go one step further and consider sponsoring a child? For \$35/month you would support a child to attend school. This includes tuition, uniform, books, supplies and up to 4 meals per week. See the Narthex display for more information or go directly to the SMI Haiti website: <https://www.smihaiti.org/donate> where can choose a specific child to sponsor.



Lenten Services begin February 14

Although it seems as though the Advent season just concluded, we are ready to enter into pre-Easter season of Lent. Whereas Advent is a time of joyful anticipation, the mood of Lent is far more reflective and somber. In it we consider how our own sinfulness made the death of Jesus necessary. That mood is, of course, transformed to joy on Easter Sunday.

Our theme for this year's Lenten season is "The Way," inspired by the words of Jesus in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth and the life." Our message throughout will be focused on what it means to follow Jesus on the way to the cross.

To supplement the season, you are invited to participate in a modified "Stations of the Cross" activity. Fourteen different stations for reflection and prayer will be established throughout the Grace building, each with a different component of the Lenten story. "Unlike the traditional format, our journey won't stop at the cross but continue on to the empty tomb," says Pastor Tom Brodbeck. "The journey to the cross isn't complete without the empty tomb." Journey guidebooks will be available in the narthex starting with Ash Wednesday on February 14.

We will worship at noon and 7 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, and then again at 7 p.m. each Thursday from February 22 through March 21. During Holy Week, we will worship at noon and 7 p.m. on both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Lenten Prayer Breakfast

Pastor Brodbeck and the Grace Prayer Support Team invite you to a time of prayer and fellowship designed to prepare us for the upcoming Lenten season on Saturday, February 10 at 9 a.m. The event will be held in the Grace Fellowship Hall and is open to the entire congregation.

Prayers and music will be woven together. The prayers will be led by various members of the congregation and will be offered for a number of topics. A potluck-style breakfast will be available. Please bring your favorite breakfast item to share and enjoy.

1st Communion

Our 5th graders will have the opportunity to participate in First Communion at the Maundy Thursday Service on March 28th at 7:00 PM. After the service, we will celebrate with the children, family and friends in the Fellowship Hall. There will be instructional meetings with Pastor Brodbeck on Wednesdays, March 6th, 13th and 20th. If your child is in 5th grade or older and would like to participate, please let Leslie McKinney or Pastor Brodbeck know.

Young At Heart



We braved the cold of 5° to see a trio of flutists, followed by fellowship in the reception room was great! January 26th, we ventured to LaComedia Dinner Theatre to see a 50's/60's musical by the Marvelous Wonderettes, wonderful fellowship was had by all.

February 11th we will attend the Sanctuary Series at the High Street Methodist Church at 3pm to see The Champion City Jazz Band. On February 13th we'll be celebrating in style Fat Tuesday (before Lent) with a pancake breakfast. Meet us at Ridgewood café at

9:30am. We hope to reserve the outside room (with heat) and will have surprise trinkets. February 23rd back to LaComedia to see "Guys and Dolls". We hope you can join us, for fun and fellowship. The dust will wait.

Roger Bentz

Sonya Ryhal



Anchored In the Lord with Sacred Jazz Notes in February Worship

Our sacred jazz notes and melody prayer lyrics in January included the sermon theme of Pastor Tom from our holidays, "Hark!" and "Seek ye first the kingdom of GOD!" (Matthew 6:10). We honored the peaceful dream and words of Martin Luther King, Jr, with peace ballad lyrics for nations at war and peace in our hearts that gave us strength to love. We continue in worship with biblical lyrics on February 18th with improvisational ensemble vocals inspired and composed from scriptures. King David inspires us with Psalm 27:1 and 11. Join us in worship with meditations of the melodies and promises of Isaiah 40:31. The styles of soft Negro spiritual ballads and classical sonata phrases will celebrate the joy of the Lord!

Tanya Walker

From the Desk of the Executive Director:

An update on our NALC 20/20 Vision Capital Campaign: through January 12, 2024

- We have \$19,000 in pledges towards the campaign.
- \$9,180 of these pledges have already been given.
- We have had additional donations made without a pledge totaling \$10,025.
- This brings our total donations through 1/12/24 to \$19,205 dollars, Praise God!!!
- Adding that to the \$20,000 the Council put in previously, that makes our total to date \$39,205. Thank you, Grace Family.
- If we collect all of the pledged dollars that would put us at \$49,025.
- That would leave \$10,975 additional donations and/or pledges to meet our goal of \$60,000 by the end of 2025. And we have plenty of time in which to make that a reality.

Thank you so much for your generosity! Grace Council's prayer now is that we can not only meet but surpass our original goal of \$60,000 thanks to your generosity.

The NALC update on the progress of the 20/20 Vision Campaign also came out in January. They have \$2.1 million in commitments towards their overall goal of \$5 million just 18 months into their three-year initiative. They have already begun utilizing the money and in 2023 were able to hire five area assistants to the Bishop, a call process coordinator and a seminary recruiter. They have also strengthened their efforts in congregational renewal conferences, established a centralized church office, expanded the number of mission starts they support and increased the number of NALC global workers. All of this is strengthening their witness to the Gospel Message of Jesus through out the world. Thanks for playing an important role in helping make this campaign strong.

Sandy Thompson

Letter from Jane Kreider

Dear Grace Friends,

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for all of your very beautiful and thoughtful cards. Wishing me a "Happy Birthday", and then the next week... "Get Well" wishes during my bout with covid!

You are the "Best Medicine" anyone could ever receive!

Thankfully, Jane Kreider

Children's Valentine Celebration



Children's Ministry



Christmas was an exciting time for the children of Grace. We had 15 children participate in the Stable procession. It was wonderful to see so many children walking down the aisle with a statue from the manger. Later, we had 12 children play hand chimes for the congregation. Thanks be to God for growing our Children's Ministry!

Kairos



Free Kairos Prison Ministry Info Sharing Seminar

Discover the many ways you can share
the love of God with the incarcerated

WHEN & WHERE

Sunday, March 3, 2024
2:00pm to 4:00pm
Discover Church
2900 Martin Road Dublin Oh

LEARN

- Why Kairos is important to all of us
- Why your cookies are so important
- 3 ways to help without ever setting foot in a prison

Featuring various testimonials, musical
entertainment, light hors'd'oeuvres and
a raffle

Reservations (requested) and questions
can be directed to Mike Myers at
Mm138630.com or 614-583-8204





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