

20 *April* 25

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Messenger



Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

As I write these words, work has begun in our Grace garden. Winter growth is being removed, and soil is being turned in preparation for the planting of this year's crop of vegetables. It is another sure sign of spring! Soon you will see the new growth appearing, followed closely by the reappearance of our Grace Harvest Table.

I am reminded of Mark 4:28, a verse known as the "all by itself" principle. It reads: "The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear." This verse is included in teaching that describes what happens when the good seed of the gospel is sown. In short, God makes it grow.

We can work hard to plant the seed properly, water it, weed it and care for it. But ultimately God is the One who makes it grow. If you want a living illustration of what God does in the heart of a person who seeks Him, just watch those 11,000 square feet on the north end of our property.

As we move nearer and nearer to Easter Sunday, we continue to plant the seeds of faith wherever we have opportunity. Some will fall on hard, stony soil. Some will get caught up in the thistles of life. But in others, the seed will take root and God will make it grow.

I encourage you to sow the seed faithfully, especially in this month of April with Easter just ahead. People need Jesus. Even good people need Jesus. And as you sow, invite them to come to church with you.

APRIL OUTREACH CORNER



OUTREACH BREAKFAST BREAK:

Sunday April 6th, Heather from Christianity Missionary Fellowship International will be joining us **virtually** for a Breakfast Break during the Sunday school hour. Hopefully you remember meeting Heather from her Temple Talk back in January. She is a Global Missionary currently working in the Middle East. She has much to share and can definitely use our support in prayer and otherwise. Come and hear more about Heather and her work.



IT'S GARDEN TIME AGAIN!

There are two wonderful opportunities for Grace members to get involved with gardening.

Our own Grace Garden: If you haven't had an opportunity to see how wonderful the Grace Garden is, please take time to go and check it out!! Terry Fredrich and Jerry Angst are already busy planning for this year's crops. If you are interested in planting, weeding and garden care, harvesting and washing the produce or helping to serve at the Harvest Table on Sunday mornings, please reach out to Jerry Angst 937-207-8544.

Jefferson Street Oasis Garden (JSO): I highly recommend a visit here to see firsthand the wonderful work Terry Fredrich is doing near downtown Springfield. At JSO Terry and others are teaching Springfield residents, especially those who struggle with having enough food but especially fresh produce, to grow and preserve their own food. At JSO the residents do all the work in their own individual garden plots, but you can come alongside to help teach them, provide mentorship, and build relationships while spreading the Gospel and the love of Christ. Call Terry at 937-215-9400 for more information.

APRIL OUTREACH CORNER



HOMELESS TEENS:

Springfield City School District is currently struggling with a record number of homeless teens. These are teens with no parent or guardian in their lives that just move from house to house with no permanent place to stay or help in their lives. The Outreach department at the high school is trying to help some of these students by gifting students who are really trying to make it on their own with kits to set them up with housekeeping when the students are fortunate enough to find a place to live. They are asking the churches to help come alongside by donating gift cards in \$25 increments for gas and groceries. During the

month of April, as graduation draws near, would you consider donating a gift card to one of these students to help give them a better shot at making it on their own? You can place them in Sandy Thompson's mailbox and see her with any questions.

NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH



NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

20 NALC
20 VISION

Thanks to your generous support Grace has raised \$57,060 as of 2/28/25 towards our goal of \$60,000 by the end of 2025. This leaves us with \$2,940 to

raise by year end. We are so grateful for your ongoing support in this effort and if we can continue this commitment, we could potentially exceed our goal.

You can donate through the Grace app or our website- (www.grace-nalc.org). On the website, you can find the link in the banner at the top of the home page. You also can mark your check or offering envelope for the 20/20 Vision Campaign. Any gift, no matter the size, makes an impact. Nothing is too small. Pledge cards are also available in the Narthex at the Connection Center table.

LENTEN AND EASTER SERVICES

The month of April is the “home stretch” for our congregation as we focus our eyes on the Garden of the Empty Tomb and our Easter Sunday morning celebration. The month is filled with great opportunities to worship and rejoice in the good news of the resurrection.

Thursday evening worship services will be held on April 3 and April 10, with Pastors Larry Bannick and Tom Brodbeck preaching on those dates. Each of these 7 p.m. services is preceded by a Soup Supper fellowship time at 6 p.m.

Holy Week (April 13 – 20) begins with our traditional waving of the palm branches on Palm Sunday. Limber up your arms for that morning's festivities.

Our Maundy Thursday services will be held at noon and 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 17. Both services will include Holy Communion and the somber stripping of the altar. The evening service, though, will feature four of our Grace young people receiving their First Communion. We will host a light reception in their honor following the benediction that evening.

Good Friday brings a special treat. The noon and 7 p.m. services that day (April 18) will feature a pageant style presentation of the Stations of the Cross. Written by Jon Joyce (a now deceased member of Grace) and directed by Terry Ankenman, this moving presentation will take place in our sanctuary. This will be a “don't miss!” time of worship.

Saturday is the annual Grace Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m. More than 2,000 eggs will be scattered for the children to find. Grace members are invited to fill those eggs. You can pick up and return them from the boxes in the narthex.

Easter Sunday services are held at the normal times of 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Both services are filled with music and the Gospel. There is no Sunday School that day.

As always, we are confident that Grace members will shine at what we always do well: make our guests feel welcome and loved. It looks to be a great month!



YOUNG AT HEART

Fifteen of us You At Heart enjoyed the musical "Into the Woods" at La Comedia Dinner theatre on March 28th. We also listened to the beautiful voices of the Cederville Madrigal choir at Hight Street United Methodist Church on the 30th.

Also had a great time at the USS senior Center dance on March 14th. Future events include Senior dance April 12st, Cary Blevins Art Gallery, April 27th. Also May 17th Covenant Preb. Church High School Choral Festival.

Come Join in Christian Fellowship

Roger Bentz, Sonya Ryhal

ENDOWMENT ANNOUNCES 2025 GRANTS

The Grace Endowment Team is pleased to announce it will award up to \$19,278 in grants to qualifying ministries this spring. These funds are generated by the Grace Endowment Fund and represent a percentage of the earnings from calendar year 2024.

Award requests will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- It honors and glorifies God.
- It cannot be included in the current year's ministry plan (budget)
- It will strive to diversify the distribution across ministry areas
- It will reflect God's love beyond the Grace congregation
- It will encourage the growth and health of the Grace Endowment Fund.

If you have a ministry idea that meets these criteria, you are invited to apply for a grant. Application forms are available in the Grace office. These must be submitted by April 30, 2025.

The Grace Endowment Fund was established in 1999 as a way of extending the ministry of the church. The principal is never touched, so the fund continues to grow as more and more people contribute to it. As you are planning your estate or considering how to invest your resources in a way that impacts the Kingdom of God for future generations, please consider a gift to the Endowment Fund. Contact the Grace office for more information.

MEAL-ON-CALL

GO.BE.LOVE

The World Needs You!

Here is a little background about our Meals-on-Call team...

Years ago, when Tom and I joined Grace, *Meals-on-Call* was facilitated by our precious, Ellen Whitaker, who has since moved to heaven. She was a caring facilitator who led by example through her generosity of time, meals and gratitude for those who served under her.

Grace continues to have a small, devoted group of volunteers who prepare and deliver meals to members who are in need. This includes people with recent surgeries, illnesses, new babies, and other times when requested/needed. People are asked to reach out to the office if they are interested in receiving a few meals. Sometimes, members of our team become aware and do the asking. It's all part of God's Plan.

I was recently asked to describe a meal I would provide. I like to take fruit or salad, along with a main course. At times dessert is prepared also, but not always. *Honestly, I am not a great cook, so I have a few meals I regularly turn to. (God has such a sense of humor placing me as the facilitator of our team.)* Here are two examples.

Meal #1

Homemade chicken noodle soup

Crackers

Fresh fruit or blueberry muffins

Meal #2

Ham, green beans, and potatoes

Orange slices

Corn bread or biscuits

Thankfully, we have a small budget line for volunteers to turn in their receipts and receive reimbursement. Seldom do our volunteers do that, but it is there and encouraged. To help things run smoothly, I generally sign up for the first meal. I find out allergies, preferences, etc., and set up the schedule for delivery. This allows me to find the home and guide our volunteers to where they need to go. There are months we do not have any requests, but when we do, it is generally for a week of meals. I will send an e-mail or phone call to our team members to see who is available to provide a meal and a schedule is made up.

And that, my friends, is the basis for our team. Does it tug at your heart as a serving area you would be interested in joining? If so, please know we have a spot just for you! You may contact me by e-mailing at deb.oneal2nd@yahoo.com, or text me at 937-408-1578. I will respond asap.

"God not only knows where He is taking you, but He also knows how to get you there." (Susan Gesell)

Deb O'Neal, Meals-on-Call facilitator

APRIL CALENDER 2025

Tuesday, April 1

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
11:30 am Staff Meeting
6:00 pm Long Range Team
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

Wednesday, April 2

6:00 pm Culture Crew
7:00 pm 1st Comm.
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, April 3

11:00 am Adult Bible Study
1:00 pm Quilters
6:00 pm Soup Supper
7:00 pm Worship

Friday, April 4

8:00 pm Community Group

Saturday, April 5

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
9:30 am Soccer Shots

Sunday, April 6

Breakfast Break
8:00 am Worship
9:15 am Sunday School
10:45 am Worship
8:00 pm Community Group

Monday, April 7

6:15 pm Soccer Shots
6:30 pm Griefshare
6:30 pm WOG

Tuesday, April 8

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
11:30 am Staff Meeting
2:00 pm Joy Guild
6:00 pm Exec. Com
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

Wednesday, April 9

10:00 am Hope Guild
1:30 pm Charity Guild
7:00 pm 1st Comm.
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, April 10

9:00 am Community Group
11:00 am Adult Bible Study
1:00 pm Quilters
6:00 pm Soup Supper
7:00 pm Worship

Friday, April 11

8:00 pm Community Group

Saturday, April 12

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
9:30 am Soccer Shots
10-12 Good Friday Play Rehearsal
12-3 pm Community Group

Sunday, April 13

8:00 am Worship
9:15 am Sunday School
10:45 am Worship/Baptism
8:00 pm Community Group

Monday, April 14

6:15 pm Soccer Shots
6:30 pm Griefshare
6:30 pm WOG
7:00 pm Agape Guild

Tuesday, April 15

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
11:30 am Staff Meeting
7:00 pm Council
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

Wednesday, April 16

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, April 17

11:00 am Adult Bible Study
12:00 pm Worship
7:00 pm Worship
8:00 pm 1st Comm Recept

Friday, April 18

12:00 pm Worship
7:00 pm Worship
8:00 pm Community Group

Saturday, April 19

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
9:30 am Soccer Shots
10:00 am Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 20

8:00 am Worship
9:15 am Sunday School
10:45 am Worship
8:00 pm Community Group

Monday, April 21

GRACE OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, April 22

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
11:30 am Staff Meeting
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

Wednesday, April 23

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, April 24

11:00 am Adult Bible Study

Friday, April 25

8:00 pm Community Group

Saturday, April 26

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
9:30 am Soccer Shots

Sunday, April 27

8:00 am Worship
9:15 am Sunday School
10:45 am Worship
8:00 pm Community Group

Monday, April 28

11:30 am Community Group

Tuesday, April 29

8:00 am Men's Bible Study
8:30 am Community Group
11:30 am Staff Meeting
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

Wednesday, April 30

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir



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