

# Grace Connections

Lutheran Church  
Champaign, Illinois

## Food for Thought

The rest of Lent, together with Holy Week, fits neatly into the month of March this year, with Easter Sunday falling on the 31st. In anticipation of Lent last month, I wrote about Lent being a time for paying attention to the world around us and our place in it through the eyes of our faith. One of the traditional ways of doing that is by focusing on our relationship with food, by doing without certain foods for the duration of the season, or by abstaining entirely from food for certain days of Lent, typically Wednesdays and Fridays.

In the spirit of that traditional practice, the adult Sunday School is using a curriculum called “Just Eating” on Sundays in Lent. The curriculum was developed by Faith In Place, a grass-roots, ecumenical environmental non-profit with “Green Teams” in congregations in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana (including Grace!). We got started on the last Sunday of February, so if you are reading this as Grace Connections comes out, there is still plenty of time to take advantage of the opportunity.

In our first session, we had a look at a couple of resources that are worthy of your attention. One is the government’s dietary guidelines, which are revised every five years to reflect the latest science. The guidelines for 2020-2025 can be found at <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov>. It’s an extensive document, but worth at least glancing through to see how your own diet compares to the recommendations. It’s also worth noticing the figures for diet-related illness. I was surprised to learn that 60% of US adults have one or more diet-related chronic diseases.

The second resource is this link from *Time* magazine: <https://time.com/8515/what-the-world-eats-hungry-planet/>. It presents photos from a project conducted almost 20 years ago comparing what families around the world eat in a week, and how much they spend on food. We started with the seventh photo there of a US family, and then compared that to other photos in the collection. Have a look. It’s quite an eye-opener.

Food is central to our lives. We cannot live without it. Yet our choices and habits around food can also reveal our priorities, conscious and unconscious. Do we prioritize convenience over our health? Do we prioritize low cost at the expense of good nutrition? Have we become addicted to unhealthy foods? What about how our food is produced? Is it good for the environment? Does it introduce harmful chemicals into our diet? And what about the economics of it all? How do our choices and habits affect our neighbors, near and far? And how might we make meaningful change in all of this to better love our neighbors and ourselves?

Those are big questions, and we will only touch on them in the coming weeks. And they are only one aspect of what self-examination in Lent might look like, because life is complicated! Blessings on your own practice in this joyful season.

+ Pastor Repp

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# God Connections

Faith, Worship, Music, Study, Prayer

## Adult Sunday School: Just Eating

We will continue the four-week curriculum created by Faith In Place entitled Just Eating: Healthy Body, Community, Planet, & Spirit. In the spirit of the Lenten discipline of self-examination, this curriculum explores how our choices related to food have implications not only for our personal lives, but also for the lives of our neighbors and all of creation. We'll meet in the Hoffmeister Room, and these sessions will also be available to join by Zoom via the Grace Meeting Link.

## Lenten Soup Suppers

Lenten Soup Suppers will continue throughout Lent on Wednesday evening. The soup supper will start at 6 p.m., followed by Lenten worship service at 7 p.m.

Look for the sign-up in the narthex for volunteers to setup/ clean up and to bring soup and bread.

## Holy Week and Easter

Join us for all of our Holy Week and Easter services:

- Palm/Passion Sunday on March 24 at 9:30 a.m.
- Maundy Thursday on March 28 at 7 p.m.
- Good Friday on March 29 at 7 p.m.
- Easter Vigil on March 30 at 7 p.m.
- Easter Sunday on March 31 at 9:30 a.m.

## Ascension Service, May 9

Due to time restrictions there will be no combined choral event between the ELCA churches here in the Champaign-Urbana area. We look forward to another event in the future. In order to encourage community between the churches, there will be a combined service on Thursday, May 9 to celebrate Ascension, which will include a combined choral anthem presented by the CU-ELCA choirs. If you have an interest in joining, please contact Nick Pierle at [music@glccu.org](mailto:music@glccu.org).

## Faith Circle

Faith Circle meets on the third Tuesday evening of the month at 7 p.m. in the narthex. All are welcome. We begin the evening with refreshments (coffee and snacks provided by the hostess) and fellowship. The lesson leader presents the Bible study, beginning at approximately 7:30 p.m.

For our **March 19** meeting, Jo Fleming is our hostess, and Eileen Herrstrom is our lesson leader. Plan to attend and invite a friend!

Can't attend in person? Join us using the GLC's regular Zoom meeting link.

## Sunday Scripture Readings

**Third Sunday in Lent, March 3:** *Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, John 2:13-22*

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

**Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10:** *Numbers 21:4-9, Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22, Ephesians 2:1-10, John 3:14-21*

**Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 17:** *Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 51:1-12, Hebrews 5:5-10, John 12:20-33*

**Palm/Passion Sunday:** *Mark 11:1-11, Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Mark 14:1-15:47*

**Easter Sunday:** *Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Mark 16:1-8*

# Community Connections

Fellowship, Fun, Congregation News, Intercessory Prayer

## Enrich Ministry and Mission

One of the main takeaways from our conversations with Bishop Busboom in January was to focus on mission. Our mission statement is, “Grace Lutheran Church is a community of faith whose mission is to connect people to God, one another, and the world.”

The ongoing question is what that looks like. How do we enrich ministry and mission so that we are thriving, not merely surviving?

The Council would like to solicit your thoughts. (Please bear in mind that a generous gift has been bequeathed to us to be used for program and ministry.)

Here are few that the council brainstormed:

- Children summer camp for arts and music
- A new baptismal font in the center of the nave and/or sanctuary renovations.
- What might we use the “stone house” or its property for? Demolish it for green space?
- Outreach to LGBTQ+

What are your ideas? How will you share those ideas with council members? You can talk with a council member, write them down and put them in Claire’s mailbox, email the church at [office@glccu.org](mailto:office@glccu.org), snail mail them into the church, or there is a page on our website called “Enrich Ministry and Mission”: <https://glccu.org/2024/02/enrich-ministry-and-mission/>

Together we go in peace to serve the LORD!

## Purchase Easter Flowers

Purchase Easter lilies and hydrangeas to help beautify the chancel at Grace Lutheran for Easter.

You may sign up for Easter chancel flowers after the Sunday service on the following two Sundays: **March 3 and March 10.**

Purchase an Easter lily or a hydrangea for Easter with a dedication of your choice (in honor of, in memory of, or in celebration of a loved one). After the Easter service, you may take your plant home, or you may leave it at Grace for another Sunday for use in the channel. You may make a donation to the Easter flower fund even if you would prefer not to

purchase a plant. Donations may be \$15 or more. Thank you.

Prices have not yet been determined but they will be approximately the following: Easter Lily: \$15, hydrangea: \$30.

If you have questions, please contact Gloria Rainer at 217-352-6115 or [gjrain@comcast.net](mailto:gjrain@comcast.net).

## Grace Book Club Announcement

*Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder’s Meditations on Hope and Courage*

Our next Book Club selection for March is *Ladder to the Light* by Steven Charleston, who is a member of the Choctaw Nation and an Episcopal Priest. The book is filled with meditations building upon traditional imagery of Indigenous Americans to provide wisdom, blessing and hope for our world’s faith traditions, including Christianity.

We will be meeting to discuss this spiritual book on **Friday morning, March 8**, at 10 a.m. at the Fleming home.

Please contact Janet Lepp or Jo Fleming if you are interested in purchasing a book. Otherwise, they are available from your favorite bookseller or through Broadleaf Books.

## Stitch and Craft

Stitch and Craft will be meeting at 7 p.m. on **March 8 and 22** in the narthex to make our projects. You may work on whatever project you want. We also make hats for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, and baby blankets for babies born to our congregation. If you are having a baby, please tell the office when you know you are pregnant so we will have time to knit or crochet a blanket.

## Music at Grace: ISU Concert Choir

Andy Bruhn is bringing his Illinois State University Concert Choir to Grace on **Thursday, March 21.**

They are on a two day tour and will be having their evening meal here at Grace before they present the concert at 7 p.m. Please come and enjoy an hour of varied music; there is no charge and it will be enjoyable to touch base with Andy again.

## Thank You!

Thank you to our Grace family for your prayers and encouragement during the past year after our house fire. We would like you to know that we are now living in the new house and deeply appreciate your support. *From the Herrstroms.*

## January Treasurer's Report

Monthly Report	CURRENT MONTH	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME	\$22,207.13	\$22,207.13
EXPENSES	\$21,696.42	\$21,696.42
NET	<b>\$510.71</b>	<b>\$510.71</b>

January income exceeded giving by a small amount (monthly budgeted \$24,000). January expenses were a little less than budgeted (monthly budgeted \$25,271.30).

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Peterson  
Treasurer

## Grace Meeting Zoom Link

See your email for the Grace Meeting Zoom link.

## Web Pages and Access

See your email for the list of webpages and how to access them.

## Prayer Requests

We have two formal ways of praying for one another at Grace. One is in the Sunday morning worship service, where we pray for people by name in the Prayers of Intercession. They will also be listed in the emailed and printed versions of GraceNotes, but not in the web version.

Please send prayer requests for the Sunday-morning prayers to Alex at [office@glccu.org](mailto:office@glccu.org).

## Using GLC Facilities

Our facilities are available for use by members and by outside groups. If you would like to use any part of the facility, please fill out a Facilities Use Request, found on the web site, and contact Alex in the office to ensure that it is on the calendar, so that the space is ready for you and that you are aware of how to adjust the appropriate thermostat.



# World Connections

Service, Advocacy, Ecumenism, Learning

## GLC Food Pantry Monthly Update

Thank you for your continued support of the GLC Food Pantry! You may donate online or bring non-expired food items, empty egg cartons, or clean plastic bags to the church.

In February, the food pantry served 264 families, reaching 937 individuals in our community:

- 2/1: 72 families (241 individuals, 3 new)
- 2/8: 72 families (259 individuals, 4 new)
- 2/15: 53 families (188 individuals, 2 new)
- 2/22: 67 families (249 individuals, 5 new)
- 2/29: 42 families (208 individuals, 4 new)

## Social Ministry Lenten Project

Flowers are often a symbol of love or gratitude. This Lenten season, the Social Ministry Committee is sponsoring a project that reflects God's infinite love to those in need. We will partner with Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) to help children in their foster care and adoption programs. These children often arrive at the LSSI office hungry and in soiled clothing and diapers.

We would like to assist to feed and clothe these children at this critical time.

Due to limited space, we have been asked to provide gift cards to Walmart, Target, and fast food restaurants. LSSI will then use our gifts to meet the basic needs of children in their care.

Please look for the Social Ministry "flower pots" in the narthex to "plant" your donations.

Thank you. If you have any questions, please contact Tina Fehrenbacher.

## Refugee Center Gala

The annual Refugee Center Gala is scheduled for Saturday, April 6, at the I Hotel and Illinois Conference Center. Doors open for this event at 5:30. Tickets are \$90 per person or \$700 for a table of eight. Tickets will be available at <http://therefugeecenter-cu.org>. For more information, call 217-344-8455. If anyone is interested in banding together as a group to purchase a table of eight for the event, please contact Linda Laugges at [lllballmom@aol.com](mailto:lllballmom@aol.com).



## Sunday Worship Support

	March 3	March 10	March 17	March 24	March 31
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Eileen Herrstrom	Claire Vail	Kathy Bowersox	Jo Fleming	Helen Repp
<b>Reader</b>	Tina Fehrenbacher	Marlys Scarbrough	Janet Lepp	Elizabeth Mazurak	Shirley Traugott
<b>Deacons</b>	Jim Anderson and Susan Monte	Gail Hug	Nancy Marshall	Dan Lepp	Kathy and Van Bowersox
<b>Greeters</b>	Dorsey family	Sue and Michelle Kozlowski	Loven family	Elizabeth Mazurak and Carolyn Pater	Brian and Amy Nicely
<b>Ushers</b>	Doug and Karen Krusa	Brian and Amy Nicely	Dave and Carol Larson	Jim and Jo Fleming	Bilger-Meyer family
<b>Livestreamer</b>	Kevin Vail	Jim Anderson	Dave Brown	Kevin Vail	Michael Miller
<b>Coffee Hour</b>	Carol Shupp	Leanne Wichus and Mary Jo Erickson	Tina Fehrenbacher	Claire Vail	Easter
<b>Flowers</b>	<i>No flowers in Lent</i>	<i>No flowers in Lent</i>	<i>No flowers in Lent</i>	<i>No flowers in Lent</i>	<i>Easter lilies and hydrangeas</i>
<b>Dedication</b>	—	—	—	—	<i>Listed in the Easter bulletin</i>

# March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>25</b> <i>World Hunger Sunday</i> 9:30 am Worship ( Hybrid)- In Person & Live Stream 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 12 pm Women's AA	<b>26</b> 10 am Food for Seniors 6:30 pm Wood Carving Group 7 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>27</b> 6 am Food for Seniors 2:30 pm Piano Tuning	<b>28</b> 6 pm Lenten Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Mid-week Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>29</b> 10 am Food Pantry	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 9:30 am Worship ( Hybrid)- In Person & Live Stream 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 10:45 am Property Committee 12 pm Women's AA	<b>4</b> 6:30 pm Wood Carving Group 7 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b> 3:30 pm Mutual Ministry Meeting 4:30 pm Executive Committee 6:30 pm Sweet Adelines	<b>6</b> 6 pm Lenten Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Mid-week Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b> 10 am Food Pantry	<b>8</b> 7 pm Stitch and Craft	<b>9</b> 10 am Setup for guitar service
<b>10</b> <i>Grace Food Pantry Sunday</i> 9:30 am Worship ( Hybrid)- In Person & Live Stream 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 12 pm Women's AA	<b>11</b> 10 am Food for Seniors 6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Wood Carving Group 7 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b> 6 am Food for Seniors 6 pm Adult Children of Alcoholics 6:30 pm Sweet Adelines 7 pm Council	<b>13</b> 6 pm Lenten Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Mid-week Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>14</b> 10 am Food Pantry 6 pm Community Choices	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 9:30 am Worship ( Hybrid)- In Person & Live Stream 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 12 pm Women's AA	<b>18</b> 6:30 pm Wood Carving Group 7 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b> 9 am Piano Tuning 6 pm Adult Children of Alcoholics 6:30 pm Sweet Adelines 7 pm Faith Circle	<b>20</b> <i>Newsletter Copy Deadline</i> 7 am Food Pantry Truck Delivery 10 am Comrades of Art 2 pm Hymn Selection Committee 3 pm Worship and Music Committee Meeting 6 pm Lenten Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Mid-week Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>21</b> 10 am Food Pantry 4 pm ISU Choir Concert 6 pm Parish Life Committee	<b>22</b> 7 pm Stitch and Craft	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> <i>World Hunger Sunday</i> 9:30 am Worship ( Hybrid)- In Person & Live Stream 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 12 pm Women's AA	<b>25</b> 10 am Food for Seniors 6:30 pm Wood Carving Group 7 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>26</b> 6 am Food for Seniors 6 pm Adult Children of Alcoholics 6:30 pm Sweet Adelines 7 pm Social Ministry Committee	<b>27</b> 6 pm Lenten Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Mid-week Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>28</b> 10 am Food Pantry	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9:30 am Worship ( Hybrid)- In Person & Live Stream 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 12 pm Women's AA	<b>1</b> 6:30 pm Wood Carving Group	<b>2</b> 4:30 pm Executive Committee 6 pm Adult Children of Alcoholics 6:30 pm Sweet Adelines	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 10 am Food Pantry	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>