

APRIL 2022 • VOLUME 21, NO. 4

Holy and Mighty

This is the time, dear friends. This is the time where the season of Lent draws us near to the good news of Easter, the good news of Jesus' resurrection that claims and frees us, that Christ is risen!

I pray that you will continue to live into the invitation to return to God. In our hearts, thoughts, actions, and speech—may we keep returning to God, for God is indeed gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

As we will remember well in these days ahead—God is the one to whom we sing praise, all glory, laud, and honor to you, redeemer, king. I hope you'll prepare to worship on Palm/Passion Sunday (April 10).

And then we'll remember Jesus' love for us, the gift of Holy Communion, and the commandment to love one another as Jesus loves us. Please gather for the Lord's Supper, to eat this bread, drink this cup, as we worship on Maundy Thursday (April 14).

Then we'll behold the cross prepared for our Savior, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us, as we proclaim the triumph of the cross on Good Friday (April 15).

Soon the signs of spring will surround us with hope for new life and the promise of Jesus' resurrection, and I pray you will share in worship as we rejoice that Jesus Christ is risen today on Easter Sunday (April 17).

This is the time where we remember God's good news that endures, even as so many other things change: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

As we celebrate Easter, I invite you to consider what newness of life is stirring within. Perhaps this is the time for you to not only return to God, but to return to faith practices, meaningful relationships, service for others, to intentionally practice living among God's faithful people.

May this Easter season ahead be a time to show up for yourself and tend to your life of faith: pray, press play on worship accessible online from home, enter the sanctuary to worship God in the company of others. May this be a time to care for others and reach out with grace and kindness, volunteer and participate in returning and renewing ministries. And may this be a time to practice generosity and give faithful financial support for the mission to which God is calling Grace Lutheran Church.

May our holy and mighty God bless you and keep you, rejoice in your returning, redeem you with the amazing love of Christ, and equip you to be sent forth to love and serve God and neighbor.

Peace,
Pastor Amanda



WEEKLY GRACE NOTES - In addition to this Grace for Today newsletter, we have additional updates and news shared through our weekly Thursday emails. Please call the office or email Carrie Fiorina cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org to add or update your email address if you do not already receive these emails.

THRIVENT QUESTIONS - On April 3, following worship, Thrivent representatives Lee Straumann and Jamie Hagen will be in the narthex if you have any questions or would like to learn more about Thrivent. Also, for current Thrivent members, please stop by with any questions you may have, including how to use Thrivent Action Teams, or Choice dollars.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK - If you are on Facebook, please join us at the public group "Grace Lutheran Church, Woodstock, IL" for community news, pictures, and event information.



FIRST COMMUNION - If you have a child who is in first grade or above and you are interested in having them receive their first Holy Communion please reach out to Jamielynn, jamielynn@wedoffphotography.com, by **April 24**. Our First Communion Sunday will be **May 1st**.

THANK YOU LAUREN - A special thank you to Lauren Kleinjan for her service and dedication in the Director of Communications position. We appreciate you!

PRAYERS—Please lift up these petitions in your prayers—To become a praying member of the Friends in Prayer, please submit name and e-mail address to dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org.

World: Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, churchwide staff & their families, Bishop Jeff Clements, synod staff & their families, those serving in military conflicts, Arusha Town Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (our companion parish)

Woodstock: Pastor Amanda Bergstrom & her family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Erik Asher (son of Stephane Fylpaa-Asher), Charlie Bell (friend of Jamielynn Wedoff), Mary Sue Boerner (friend of Paul Lockwood & Diane Baker-Lockwood), Nancy Brown, Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Jim Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Joe Evanoff, Stephane Fylpaa-Asher, Barbara Gehrke, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Stuart Given, Tom Goggin, Hal Goodman (friend of Bob & Janice Laird), Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Leonard Haulotte (brother of Laura Boal), Denise Hoover, Anne Johnson, Nicholas Karasch (nephew of Jamielynn Wedoff), Steve Kosmen (loved one of the Koehn family), Anna Larsen (sister of Al Henniges), Amanda McNally (grandniece of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Kem Moran (friend of Barb Aavang), Linda Nogan (sister of Sheila Readel), Gloria Ogle, Alan Page (friend of Joe Evanoff), Linda Page (friend of Joe Evanoff), Georgia Petersdorf (sister-in-law of Gladys Renner), Pat Peterson, Barbara Readel, Sheila Readel, Jayne Reicher (great niece of Barb & Wayne Japp), Herb & Bev Renner (brother & sister in law of Ken & Gladys Renner), Nick Resek (son of Tammy Resek-Goggin), Jessie & Sue Robertson (friends of Ron, Mary & Kimberly Koehn), Diane Rouse (cousin of Lisa Washkowiak), Nathan Ruffino, Nicholas Ruffino, Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), John Rust (Aavang family friend), Colton Sciluffo (infant son of a friend of Joy Oberman), Nathaniel Shipp (family friend of Brian Meyers), Ann Sinnett (friend of Shirley Berna), Kathy Stone, Dave Sundby (brother-in-law of Deborrah Evanoff), Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahon), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Marilyn Vanskike (friend of Cathy Meyer), Bev Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Nick Wedoff, Esther Wienke

If you wish to add a prayer request for the newsletter, please call the church office at 815-338-0554. Your prayer concern will run for one week and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* e-mail and phone teams may also be submitted by telephone to the church office or by e-mail to Gracewoodstock.org. Due to confidentiality laws, hospitals no longer notify churches or pastors when a member is hospitalized. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or is admitted to the hospital, please call the church office.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER—The deadline for the May newsletter is **April 15th**. Please send articles to Tammy Baier at tbaier@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Call the office at 815-338-0554.



Worship in April, Holy Week & Easter Sunday

It continues to be a joy to welcome and greet one another as we share in the act of worshipping God together. Whether you are worshipping weekly, visiting occasionally, newly returning to the sanctuary, or getting ready to return, welcome! If you are continuing to worship at home, welcome! We gather for worship on **Sundays at 9:00 A.M.** in the sanctuary, via YouTube livestream or the posted worship videos on our website. Thanks be to God for you and your participation in the worship life of Grace Lutheran Church.

Sunday, April 3, we gather for worship on the 5th Sunday in Lent. You are welcome to gather in the parlor from 8:30-9:00 A.M. on *April 3 & 10* for conversation about the daily Lenten devotional (printed copies still available at Grace & electronic copies included in the weekly Grace Notes email).

Palm/Passion Sunday, April 10

9:00 A.M. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

From sounds of praise singing “Hosanna” as we wave palm branches to hearing shouts of “crucify him,” we gather for worship on Palm/Passion Sunday. Join us for worship as we enter Holy Week and draw near to Easter.

Maundy Thursday, April 14

12:00 P.M. (Sanctuary) & 7:00 P.M. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

We hear Jesus’ commandment to love one another as he loved us, and we enter into the Three Days of Jesus’ death and resurrection. We confess our sins, share Holy Communion, and remember how Jesus washed the disciples’ feet as we recall the night he was betrayed.

Good Friday, April 15

12:00 P.M. (Sanctuary) & 7:00 P.M. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

We hear the story of Jesus’ death on a cross, and even on this day, we remember Jesus’ triumph through the cross. In worship we will hear the story and offer prayers for the world for whom Christ died.

Easter Sunday, April 17

7:00 A.M. (Sanctuary & Livestream) & 9:00 A.M. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Alleluia! Christ is risen! We gather to boldly proclaim that death does not have the last say, for Jesus Christ is risen today. Join us in worship to share the good news of the empty tomb and celebrate the amazing promise of Jesus’ resurrection.

Then, the joyous celebration of Jesus’ resurrection continues. See you in worship on Sunday, April 24, the second Sunday of Easter, as our Sunday school students again share in serving church through worship.

PEACE AND QUIET - Please join Deacon Judy Rooney for a time to reflect on what we all need more of, **Peace and Quiet**. We will be using our 5 senses to enhance our understanding of how to attain more peace and quiet in the midst of all the chaos in the world. These thoughts and ideas are based on the writings of Mother Teresa. We will gather in Grace Center after church on **Sunday May 1**.

SPRING CLEAN UP - We have set the date of **May 7** for our next Spring Clean Up. Please join us to pull weeds, rake, and do other sprucing up projects. We will meet at 8:00 a.m. and go until about noon. For further information contact
Tammy Baier,
tbaier@gracewoodstock.org.



BIBLE PRESENTATION - We are looking for any 3rd Grade (or older) church members who have not yet received a Bible. If you have a child in 3rd Grade (or older) who you would like to receive a Bible please contact Kristy Nellesen before
April 1st

fleming9126@sbcglobal.net
Bibles will be presented to the children during service on **Sunday, April 10, 2022**.

SUNDAY SCHOOL -

Our one and only March gathering was both our traditional and action lesson in one. The children were asked to invite a friend. Three new friends joined us and Sunday School teachers taught in many different formats from crafts, discussions, to physically carrying a person around. The lesson was about the four friends story out of the book of Luke. Yes, it is a miracle that Jesus helped a disabled man walk again, but it is because of the sheer determination of his friends that it became possible. All age levels were easily able to explain the story after their lesson at the large group meaning.

Mark your calendar for these upcoming exciting opportunities to gather, learn and have fun:

April 10- Sunday School lesson (Story of Easter) and 3rd Graders will receive their bibles.

April 24- our action day will be once again by popular demand to serve the church (sign up will take place on April 17)

April 30- First Holy Communion class will take place at 9:00 am in the sanctuary

May 1- at 9:00 am first graders will participate in their first communion.

YSJ "YOUTH STANDING WITH JESUS!"

Roadside Clean Up- It's ROADSIDE CLEANUP time! Mark your calendar for **Saturday, April 23rd** at 10am to care for our stretch of Kishwaukee Valley Road.

Mobile Food Pantry- YSJ is committed to helping distribute food to over 500 community members in need on the first Monday of each month 3-5:30pm. Future pantry dates are **April 4, May 2, and June 13**. Please join in whenever you can! RSVP's are preferred by the Thursday prior to our service date!

Wednesday Drop In Nights - Join the fun from 7:30- 8:30pm **April 6, 13, 20, & 27** See you there!

Through the Month of April- YSJ is learning about different types of community and global outreach and how young adults can be of service to their church.

SUMMER CAMP at LOMC July 24–29th— Does hiking, canoeing, team building, a service project and worship around a campfire sound GREAT to you? Please contact Carrie Fiorina in the church office for registration information if you were unable to attend the parent meeting in January. YSJ has room for a few more campers! :)

UKRAINE CRISIS - Please pray for those in Ukraine, Russia and neighboring countries that have been affected by the crisis in Ukraine. May God's healing presence give them peace and hope in their time of need. If you would like to give support, here are a few partners in ministry actively responding:

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) - www.elca.org

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) - www.lwr.org

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) - www.lirs.org/ukraine-crisis

If you would like to give support through Grace, please write a note in the memo to indicate where you'd like your gift to go: for example: "Ukraine- LDR" or "Ukraine- LWR".

FAITH CIRCLE - Faith Circle is a group for women that meets the third Monday of the month, August to May, at 6:30 p.m. in the Church Parlor. New members are welcome. Our next meetings will be **April 18** and **May 16**.

We enjoy fellowship and then participate in an informal Bible study using the GATHER magazine, an E.L.C.A. publication. A subscription is optional but recommended at \$19.95 for one year.

Faith Circle also is called upon for special services at church, and we donate to Christmas Family Sharing and other fundraisers.

Contact person is Marylee Steinwehe, mnsteinwehe@gmail.com.

GRACE SEWING CIRCLE UPDATE - Another donation of 109 quilts has just been sent to Lutheran World Relief. Our local nursing homes have also received donations from our group this month of 508 items (consisting of lap quilts & blankets, various bag items and pillows.) We continue to remain busily sewing at home, but we are also meeting from **9-noon** on the **1st & 3rd Tuesdays** of the month in Grace Center. **Please join us as we would love to have you!** Sewing knowledge is not a requirement as we have non-sewing projects, but we could also use those of you who sew. We have kits made up for home sewing if you prefer to help in that manner. We can always use **sheets, fabric, batting, pillow stuffing, yarn** or **Thrivent Action Team** funds. **Many thanks to those of you who have donated items and money to our group! You are awesome!** Questions? Please contact Tammy Hansing (815) 338-5387 or Faith Watkins (815) 451-2592.

SUNDAY BOOK CLUB – Meets in person in the Parlor and on zoom, **Sundays at 10:00 a.m.** We are reading together the fiction book “June Bug” by Chris Fabry and have lively discussions. Since masks are no longer required we have treats! New members are always welcome, just stop in the Parlor after services or Call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063 for the link to join in via zoom.

MEN OF GRACE - An informal gathering of men of all ages is rebooting monthly at 3 Brothers Restaurant. Our next meet-up is **Wednesday April 13, at 7AM**. Come share your stories, good and bad, over breakfast and coffee. We're so informal, there isn't even anyone you can contact for questions. Just show up.

SENIOR PINOCHLE CLUB - Come join us on **April 13 & 27** in room 102 from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00p.m. Since masks are no longer required, we have treats! For more information call Shirley Busse 815-338-9063.

COUNCIL RETREAT UPDATE- Members of the church council met on Saturday, February 26, to review and process the various congregational listening sessions that happened in late January and early February. Over all the sessions, most comments could be categorized into the following themes:

Worship and Music

Relationships

Education and Youth

Outreach

Communication

Discussion revolved around things that we are doing, things that we could be doing, and things that we would like to do in the future.

Prioritizing staffing positions is a first step in strengthening these programs and ministries. In view of that, the council will be restructuring the Director of Youth Education, Director of Worship and Music, and Communications positions with a goal of filling these positions as soon as possible.

Additionally, we will also be looking at ways the council can facilitate the creation or restoration of ministries led and supported by congregation members in the areas of relationships and outreach. As Grace continues to move forward in Christ, we welcome the participation and input of all members of our Christian community.



EGG HUNT - We are so excited to offer our Easter Egg Hunt this year. Children are invited to meet on Easter, **April 17th**, after the 9:00 a.m. service by the playground (back of the church). If there are poor weather conditions, it will be moved inside.



We are in need of individually wrapped candy for those eggs. Please place those donations in the



June 4-5
at Grace

SUMMER KICKOFF - Whether you'll choose to camp out on the church grounds or return to your home for the evening, we hope you will mark your calendars for **June 4-5**, as we look forward to a summer kickoff on the church grounds.

Presence Light Sponsors:

April 3rd:

- In memory of Laine Berlin & Carrie Vought, given by Jack & Jane Berlin.

April 10th:

- In memory of Mary's mother, Linda Holman, given by Mary & Jerry Johnson

April 17th:

- On the occasion of our anniversary, given by Bill & Nancy Kreznor

April 24th:

- In honor of our grandson, Jakob's golden birthday, given by Ken & Kathy Zank

Bulletin Sponsors:

April 10th:

- To the glory of God, given by Diane Schulz.
- In honor of Jerry's 85th birthday, given by Mary Johnson

April 17th:

- To the glory of God and for peace in the world, given by Don & Marylee Steinwehe

April 24th:

- In honor of our grandson, Jakob's golden birthday, given by Ken & Kathy Zank.
- In honor of family, given by Diane Schulz

eGIVING OPTIONS- In addition to weekly offering envelopes, Grace has additional electronic giving options available. Please give in the way that is most convenient for you and let us know if you have any questions.

Give Online at our website: gracewoodstock.org

Give by Text by texting **877-698-3604**

- Enter the 10-digit number (877-698-3604) and the amount you wish donate, then press send, and follow the prompts to complete your donation.

Give through Vanco Mobile App by downloading the app

- Go to the App Store or Google Play and search "**Vanco Mobile**" to quickly find and download the app for free.
- Search "**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**" to select Grace in Woodstock, IL, then select Give to select an amount, General Operating Fund, and frequency, and the app will prompt you through completing your donation.

Give through automatic withdrawal program. To participate, please complete an enrollment form and return to the church office to schedule pre-authorized electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your bank account. You can change, stop, or temporarily hold your giving by contacting Grace's church office 4 business days in advance of a scheduled contribution.

*Please contact the church office (815-338-0554)
if you have any questions.*

**Visit the Grace website for the most up-to-date information for all
that is happening at Grace! gracewoodstock.org**

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

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