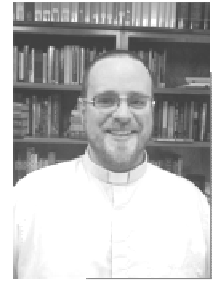


FROM THE PASTOR

This year Ash Wednesday falls on February 22, and with it the beginning of Lent. Ash Wednesday represents a call to fasting and repentance. When we receive the ashes on our foreheads we are reminded that we will someday die. We are reminded that we are frail, that our lives are fragile. During the season of Lent we are reminded that we are baptized into Jesus' death. While we will be reminded on Easter that we are also baptized into Jesus' resurrection, for the forty days of Lent our focus is on our need for repentance. Repentance is a turning away from one thing and toward another. In our religious culture repentance is closely associated with guilt. Some think that one cannot really repent unless one feels guilty first. But repentance is not primarily about guilt. One may feel guilty when they recognize that they need to turn away from something, but it is not a necessary component of turning. Instead, what is central to repentance is one's change of mind, in one's way of seeing, and the action that results from this change.



Pastor Ryan Pederson

As we approach Ash Wednesday and Lent, I want to encourage you to reflect on your life. What are some things that need to change? What are some things that need to remain the same? The point of this exercise is not for you to feel guilty for the sin in your life, but to turn away from it and toward the life that God asks us to live. I will pray for you all during this time of reflection. Please pray for me, too.

Peace, *Pr. Ryan*

BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS

Jesus emerged from his baptism in the Jordan River to receive the Holy Spirit and hear the Father identify him as "my Son, the Beloved" (Mark 1:11). It's the first day of the rest of his life, a life that will bring Jesus to the cross, to the tomb, and

to new life. Claimed and named as God's own and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Jesus is sustained in the wilderness.

Baptism immerses us, too, into our identity as beloved children of God. Claimed and

named as God's own and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are sustained in our wilderness wanderings.

The beginning of these forty days can be a tempting time, especially if we confuse our Lenten



Dean Lerud	8
Donna Stedman	9
Jan Demro	10
Ron & Bonnie Morton	14
Dot Stribling	17
Dennis Dougherty	21
Chuck Bothwell	27
Vern Dokken	27

If we missed anyone
PLEASE contact the office.



MISSION STATEMENT

God's purpose for Grace Lutheran Church is:

Welcome to Grace,
Welcome the Message.

Principle Values:
Jesus is Lord
Everyone is welcome.
All serve in different ways.

Seek and share the message.

God's love is life changing.

Continued from page 1...

commitments to give up or take on something with New Year's resolutions. Instead of practicing willingness, we can be tempted to prove our willpower. We can be tempted to resent instead of embrace the opportunity for deeper discipleship.

Breathe deep and listen to Jesus: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news." Remember, as baptized and beloved children of God we are united in Christ's death and resurrection. What good news! Each day is the first day of the rest of our lives.

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COUNCIL CLIPS:

January 10, 2012

Reports: Ladies of Grace earned over \$1000 from rummage sale. Sound system hearing devices ordered and working. Motion light for outside to curb vandalism discussed. President supposed to meet with Bishop to discuss associate member problem. Discussion on changing banks. Council officers for 2012: Frank Sommerfeldt, President; Ron Morton, Vice President; Barbara Lomelino, Secretary and Sherry Brooks, Treasurer.

Saturday, February 11, the Rio Grande Conference Assembly will be meeting here at Grace. Breakfast is at 8:30 AM followed by the business meeting at 9:00 AM. They will be voting on the new constitution and elect new officers as well as welcoming the new members of our conference. Mike Robertson will be here representing the Bishop.

Pronoun shift Society encourages us to focus on ourselves. The pronouns in the parable of the rich man indicate that he fell into this trap, too: “He talked to himself: ‘What can I do? My barn isn’t big enough for this harvest. ... I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I’ll gather in all my grain and goods, and I’ll say to myself, Self, you’ve done well!’” (Luke 12:16-19, The Message).

What a difference other pronouns would have made. The man could have asked, “What would you have me do, God?” He could have seen things as God’s, on loan to him to share with others: “This barn you’ve blessed me with, God, isn’t big enough for this harvest you’ve provided. I’ll share the extra with others, as you’ve commanded.” And instead of taking credit himself, he could have offered praise: “God, you’ve cared so well for me. Thank you, Lord!”

During Lent, as we focus on Christ’s journey to the cross, let’s also examine the journey of our lives. The first task when leaving on any adventure is packing. What have you placed in your bag? Are you weighed down with temptations, self-doubt, money worries, relationship troubles? Have you overlooked any important items? Maybe your bag feels too empty for the challenges ahead. Remember to pack mercy, grace and forgiveness.

Thanks to Easter, we know that our journey in Christ continues, even when the road becomes difficult. So as you prepare for Lent, carry with you the hope made possible by Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf.

—Based on the “Journey to Hope” sermon series, www.rethinkchurch.org/lent



- Sunday, February 19 after the service we will burn the palms for use on Ash Wednesday.
- Wednesday, February 22, Ash Wednesday. We will have two services. One at noon and one at 6:00 PM. The Choir will practice after the evening service during Lent.
- Sunday, February 26, First Sunday in Lent. We will be changing the liturgy during Lent and there will be no communion hymns. It is meant to be a time for self reflection.
- Wednesday, February 29 begins our weekly Lent Soup Suppers at 5:00 PM and Worship at 6:00 PM...Choir practice after service.

**THOSE FOR
WHOM WE PRAY**



CONGREGATION MEMBERS: Mary Mars, A.C. & Wysonda Hoehne, Gladys Hansen, Carol Heesch, Ruth Pegg.

FAMILY MEMBERS: Linda LaFond, Mary Ellen Bennefield, Butch Pierce, Corey Schiavoni, Billie Smith, Katy Schulle.

CONGREGATION FRIENDS: George Garcia, Steve Schluender, Mary June Sinnema, Daniel Steinberg, Margie Watson, Vern Alt, Thada Hart, Penny Bridger, Tara Carnesi, Jean Nelson, Julie Scott, Molly Martinez, Virginia Cavazos.

THOSE WHO SERVE: Edwardo Mujica, Jacqueline Salazar, James Sanchez, Randy Cavazos.

PRAYER CHAIN 2012

Irene Dear	423.3164	Laura Hamre (W)	425.6695
Sarah Kennedy	455.5623	Barbara Lomelino Cell	357.1490
Marvel Devine	428.5846	Jeanna Lute	423.1873
Edna Gross	423.0890	Phyllis McKee	425.5776
Elaine Krueger	428.2895	Sherry Brooks	797-2615
Marie Sankey (W)	364.2792	Ruth Pegg	423.2056

(W) Indicates our Winter Texans. When they return north, call the next one on the list.

WELCA

4th—Women of the ELCA Valley Conference. **8:30 Coffee, 9:00 Meeting.**

Love of Christ Lutheran—Weslaco

9th—Business Meeting 9:00 AM. Hostess: Marie Sankey. Lunch out at Collette's

16th—Bible Study, 9:00 AM. Leader—Edna Gross, Hostess—Laura Hamre

23rd—Prayer Shawl, 9:00 AM

CHOIR PRACTICE

6:00 PM on Wednesdays

NOTE: DURING LENT we will practice after the service

BIBLE STUDY

7:00 PM on Wednesdays NO BIBLE STUDY DURING LENT

MEN'S BREAKFAST


8:00 AM on the **2nd and 4th** Wednesday's at Tila's. All men invited.

BREAKFAST FOR ANYONE

8:00 am on the **1st, 3rd and 5th** Wednesday's at Lonnie's Down Home.



- Graham Crackers
- Instant Potatoes
- Pancake Mix and Syrup
- Dish & Laundry detergent
- Toothpaste



FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

••••• DIRECTIONS •••••

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.

gain as or ear van an for give
gave her on it one other he an a

B _ _ _ _ W _ _ _ h each
ot _ _ _ _ d _ _ _ _ give
_ _ _ e an _ _ _ _ if _ _ _ y
of you h _ _ _ _ grie _ _ _ ce
a _ _ _ _ st some _ _ _ _ .
For _ _ _ _ as t _ _ _ L _ _ _ d
for _ _ _ _ you.”

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13, NIV

FORGIVENESS

Game

Try this twist on musical chairs.

What you need:

- 28 large index cards
- Black marker
- Two teams of people
- Radio or CD player

What you do:

1. On index cards, write out *forgiveness*, one letter per card. Make two sets (two F’s, two O’s, etc.).
2. Mix up the cards and form them face up in a circle on the floor. (You’ll have six blanks mixed in.)
3. Have teams mix themselves up and stand in a circle around the cards. Ask an extra person to turn the music on and off.
4. As the music plays, teams walk around the circle. When the music stops, players each pick up the card nearest them.
5. Team members take their cards to a designated area and try to spell forgiveness. Any double letters or blanks go back to the “music person,” who reorganizes remaining cards, spacing them evenly into a fresh circle.
6. Play continues until one team spells *forgiveness*.

During Jesus’ time in the wilderness after his baptism, Satan tempted him to do three things. Which of the following was not one of the temptations?

- A. To change water into wine so wedding guests would know he was God’s Son
- B. To throw himself down from the top of the temple, expecting angels to save him
- C. To turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger
- D. To worship Satan in order to gain all the world’s kingdoms



Answer: A (See Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13.)

**GRACE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
ELCA**

Pastor Ryan Pederson
1001 E Jackson
Harlingen TX 78550

Tel: 956.423.0314

Fax: 956.423.0314

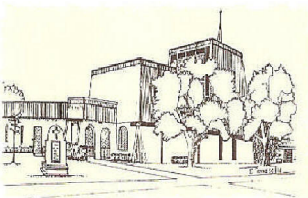
E-mail:

secretaryatgrace@gelelca.org

pastor@gelelca.org

Deadline for the February Newsletter is Wednesday, January 25th. Please get all information to Bonnie Morton., Publisher. bonnie@mortonscorner.com; call 245.4104, home 622.4401 or leave in the office. THANKS . The February Newsletter will be ready by email January 27th and in the Narthex on Sunday, January 29th.

We're on the Web
<http://www.gelelca.org>



DECEMBER

Offerings: \$11,769.10

First 4 Sundays only

Attendance: 786 All Sundays

2012 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dokken	Vern	956.425.0445
Galloway	Jim	956.425.5521
Lomelino	Barbara	956.357.1490
Lute	Mike	956.423.1873
Morton	Ronald	956.622.4401
Palmer	Butch	956.425.1680
Sommerfeldt	Frank	956.425.5776
Underly	Jan	956.399.1603



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

FEBRUARY SERVICE SCHEDULE

	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26
Ushers	Vern Dokken/ Laura Hamre	Vern Dokken/ Laura Hamre	Vern Dokken/ Laura Hamre	Vern Dokken/ Laura Hamre
Liturgical Assistant	Anne Poulos	Anne Poulos	Anne Poulos	Anne Poulos
Lector	Jack Hamre	Jack Hamre	Jack Hamre	Jack Hamre
Acolyte	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth