

GIFT of GRACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

GRACE NOTES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 18, 2023

A WORD FROM PT

We have a tough and tricky task in bearing witness to our Lord Jesus Christ. No one said it would be easy. And we need every bit of wisdom that by prayer and listening closely to God's Word we can glean.

The world in general is always at odds with the wisdom of God. In the words of Luther's Small Catechism we are up against the devil, *the world*, and our sinful self. In our own land there have been better times. Our culture is now more stridently at odds with the truths of God's Word than any time before in our country's history.

Part of bearing witness to the faith is to speak truthfully. And whereas we do not

always have to be confrontive, we fail to bear faithful witness if we speak the lie, that is, echo words that we know not to be true. Enough repeating of a falsehood lends it credibility and misleads others, especially our children.

The difficult task is not only not giving in to the lie and at times confronting it, that is hard enough; but it is the fine art of *speaking the truth in love*. That is the admonition of Ephesians 4:15. It is easier to speak truth as a club to beat someone we dislike. Or conversely, it is easier to speak words that make people feel better and confuse that with being loving. The truth at the appropriate time and place is al-

ways commensurate with what is good for us. Falsehood never is. It may make a person feel better, but it does not serve what is best for them.

One of the things hampering our being the faithful witnesses we are called to be is we have been conditioned to think the finest witness is being one of the nicest and kindest persons around. But when these good attributes become ultimate, we will certainly fail in being faithful witnesses. The job is much harder than that. We will not always be regarded as nice and kind by the world. But by the help of God, we can speak in their best interest, with truth and love.

SINCE YOU ASKED...

What good purpose is there in signing oneself (making the sign of the cross with the hand over one's head and breast)?

This gesture's main purpose is to remind us of our baptism where the sign of the

cross was first made on our foreheads. The cross is a powerful symbol which reminds us of the depths of God's love for us – He loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for us. In Holy Baptism we have been joined to Christ. Every time we sign ourselves we

declare that we belong to Christ and that we desire to live for Him. We give visible expression that we serve the One, True God who has revealed Himself to us in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, 1/19
9:30am Prayer Gathering
10am LCMC Ministerium at Olivet Lutheran Church

Friday, 1/20
7am Men's Breakfast Bible Study

Saturday, 1/21
9am "Final Victory" Symposium at Faith Lutheran Church in La Crosse

Sunday, 1/22 3rd Sun after Epiphany
8am Choir Practice
9am Divine Service of the Word
10:15am Fellowship
10:45am Adult Class
12pm Worship Team



Making Disciples for Life

LCMS (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) (LCMS.org)

- we are in the process of becoming an official member congregation of the LCMS pending adoption of a new and approved Constitution.

THIS AND THAT...

This week there is the **Prayer Gathering** on Thursday at 9:30am, and the **Men's Breakfast Bible Study** on Friday at 7am.

The **Adult Ed Class** meets on Sunday Mornings at 10:45am. We are finishing up a study on the Lutheran Liturgy.

Give consideration to joining a District symposium entitled **"Final Victory"** to be held Saturday, January 21 from

9am till noon at Faith Lutheran Church in La Crosse. Learn of the witness we can make to our loved ones by how we plan for our funeral.

The continued **livestreaming** is for those who cannot otherwise attend in person! It is a good outreach tool and a way for shut-ins to connect.

Don't forget non-perishable **Food Donations** for the Food Basket!

The Duesenbergs are scheduled to clean the church the week of February 19. And the Warners are scheduled for the week of March 19..

The January **Designated Benevolence** is for Didi and Serafina Panzo, missionaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

To speak the *truth in love* we need to study and be well steeped in the Word of Truth, the Holy Scriptures.

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LUTHERAN CHURCH

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. - Eph 2:8

HUMOR DEPARTMENT

Celebrations

Birthdays

Jan 13 Carol Peterson
Jan 21 Elyse Schoonover
Jan 26 Marge Wagen
Jan 27 Ann Fisher

Anniversaries

Bulletin Announcements

The Prayer and Fasting Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water."
The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get

rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.

Our youth basketball team is back in action Wednesday at 8pm in the recreation hall. Come out and watch us kill Christ the King.

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been

canceled due to a conflict.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "Hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

Don't let worry kill you off. Let the Church help.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

tbd (to be determined)

1/22 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

Asst Minister: Tom Rislow
Reader: Naomi Rislow
Crucifer: Elyse Schoonover
Acolyte: Jed Roll
Ushers: Paula Betlach
Counters: Paula B/Mary B
Comm Asst: Jeremy Schoonover
Accompanist: Leslie Duesenberg
Fellowship: Jessica S/Leslie D
Livestreamer: Jeremy Schoonover

Acolyte: Asher Roll
Ushers: Paula Betlach
Counters: Jarrod R/David B
Comm Asst: Mike Meunier
Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: Cyndi Molstad
Livestreamer: Cole Warner

Accompanist: Leslie Duesenberg
Fellowship: Heidi Traver
Livestreamer: Jarrod Roll

1/29 4th Sunday after the Epiphany

Asst Minister: Mike Meunier
Reader: Connie Meunier
Crucifer: Stella Roll

2/5 5th Sunday After the Epiphany

Asst Minister: Karri Bjornstad
Reader: Mike Meunier
Crucifer: Benjamin Roll
Acolyte: Drew Staff
Ushers: David Bjornstad
Counters: Tom R/Mary B
Comm Asst: Tom Rislow

2/12 6th Sunday after the Epiphany

Asst Minister: Jeremy Schoonover
Reader: Craig Bartos
Crucifer: Dawson Staff
Acolyte: Elyse Schoonover
Ushers: Jeremy Schoonover
Counters: Connie M/Naomi R
Comm Asst: Jarrod Roll
Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: tbd
Livestreamer: Jeremy Schoonover

Gift of Grace Lutheran Church
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Services held at 9am at:
642 Western Avenue
A block north and then
a block west of King Furniture