

The Grapevine

NEWSLETTER OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, NALC

Our Mission: "Sharing God's Love Through Grace"

♣ **March 2024** ♣

Blessed be the
God and Father
of our
Lord Jesus Christ!

By his great mercy
he has given us a

new birth
into a
living hope

through the
resurrection
of Jesus Christ
from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3, NRSV



Happy Easter - March 31, 2024

Grace Lutheran Church



Office: 740/246-6576 Web: www.gracethornville.org

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Fax: 740/246-6284

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Grace.Thornville

Worship: Sundays 8:00 and 10:30a.m.

Our Staff

Pastor:	Tom Jacobson 740-242-2192
Office Manager:	Beth Gilgien 740-398-4502
Accompanist:	Sue Ellen Simmons 740-605-1530
Choir Director:	Diane Christensen 740-215-2396
Handbell Choir:	Becky Winegardner 740-467-3164
Men of Grace:	John Ulmer 740-281-7672
Church Council President:	Carl Lahman 614-329-8639
Council Vice President:	Matt Sheridan 740-405-6873
Council Secretary:	Diane Christensen 740-215-2396
Director of Inreach:	Linda Keaser 740-403-4197
Director of Outreach:	Vicki Jones 740-403-7311
Director of Upreach:	Casey Sigler 740-279-5405
Financial Secretary:	Jackie Combs 740-246-4751
Treasurer:	Rick Rockwell 740-624-2241
Bd of Women President:	Cherl Haggengjos 740-342-2276
Safety/Security Team:	Jim Lewis 740-503-0476
Sacristan:	Meg O'Reilly 740-644-3504
Facilities:	David Rodenbaugh 740-215-6099

*Please call the church office with regard to any of the following:
Hospitalizations; Baptisms; Confirmation; Weddings;
First Communion; Spiritual Counseling; Prayer Concerns*

The Ten Commandments: The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods before me.

Exodus 20:3 ESV



What exactly is a “god”? In the history of our Western civilization, people used to worship all kinds of different gods, deities who were said to have control over aspects of creation. In ancient Greece, for example, people worshipped Zeus, the king of the gods, who they believed reigned from Mount Olympus. They also worshipped gods such as Ares (the god of war), Aphrodite (the goddess of love), Poseidon (the god of the ocean), or Hermes (the messenger of the gods). The equivalent of these gods in ancient Rome were Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Neptune, and Mercury, respectively. Many planets in our solar system are named after these Roman gods. For many of us, who are of German and Scandinavian descent, our ancestors worshipped a different pantheon (group of gods). Ancient Norse people prayed to the likes of Thor, Odin, Freya, Njord, and Tyr. Even today, many people adhere to religions like Hinduism, which encourage people to worship many different gods.

In our time and in our part of the world, the temptation to worship these many different gods described above is minimal. We look at ancient Greek, Norse, and Roman gods as an interesting part of human history, but something that has long since been thrown in the wastebasket. Not many of us are pressured to enter temples dedicated to Zeus, Jupiter, or Odin and worship. So, we might be tempted to think that this first of the Ten Commandments is easy for us to obey.

But not so fast! In his *Large Catechism* from the year 1529, Martin Luther had this to say about this First Commandment:

A god is that to which we look for all good and in which we find refuge in every time of need. To have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe him with our whole heart. As I have often said, the trust and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust are right, then your God is the true God. On the other hand, if your trust is false and wrong, then you have not the true God. For these two belong together, faith and God. That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself is, I say, really your God.

We might not worship ancient Greek, Norse, and Roman gods, but we are always tempted to trust in other things with our whole heart, and in that sense Luther expands the definition of “god.” Martin Luther made a list of things that we as humans tend to lift up as gods: wealth, great learning, wisdom, power, prestige, family, and honor. I am sure we could easily add to that list.

All these things mentioned above are not necessarily bad. They are a part of our lives as we continue our pilgrimage on earth. But we need to remember that those things that we desire are, just like we are, a part of creation, not the creator. God calls upon us in this First Commandment to recognize Him as the creator of all things, who alone is worthy of worship and praise. All the other things that we are tempted to put our faith in can fail at any moment. But God’s love for us is the only sure thing on which we can rely.

Our failure to obey this commandment is the root of all sin. From the beginning, the Bible is filled with stories of people who neglect the will of God and seek their security in other things. All of us fall short of this commandment, as we fail to “love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and

might.” For that reason, God has sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world to be our Savior. The Holy Spirit calls us through that message of gospel (good news) to trust in God as the source of all things and even of our salvation. As we are tempted to be unfaithful to God, we need always to hear God’s Word for us, calling upon us to be faithful. As we do, our perspective toward everything around us changes. The manner in which we handle the things of this world changes. We recognize the things of creation as having their source in God, and so we are filled with thanksgiving for those gifts around us.

In some ways, this first commandment sets the tone for all commandments that follow. At the conclusion of his words about the First Commandment in the *Large Catechism*, Martin Luther said this:

We had to explain it at length since it is the most important. For, as I said before, where the heart is right with God and this commandment is kept, fulfillment of all the others will follow of its own accord.

Thomas E. Jacobson

Pr. Tom Jacobson



January’s Vital Signs
Average Worship Attendance - 114
8:00am - 27 10:30am - 87

Worship In March

Sundays 8:00 and 10:30am
Holy Communion Celebrated Every Sunday

Sunday, March 3 - 3 Lent

Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22

Wednesday, Mar. 6 - Trust Psalm: Psalm 63
Soup Supper at 6:00pm; Worship 7:00pm

Sunday, March 10 - 4 Lent

Numbers 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10 John 3:14-21

Wednesday, Mar. 13 - Lament Psalm: Psalm 130
Soup Supper at 6:00pm; Worship 7:00pm

Sunday, March 17- 5 Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10 John 12:20-33

Wednesday, Mar. 20 - Praise Psalm: Psalm 148
Soup Supper at 6:00pm; Worship 7:00pm

Sunday, March 24 - Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11 Mark 15:1-39

Thursday, Mar. 28 - Maundy Thursday
Soup Supper at 6:00pm; Worship 7:00pm

Friday, Mar. 29 - Good Friday
Community Worship 12:00pm; Worship 7:00pm

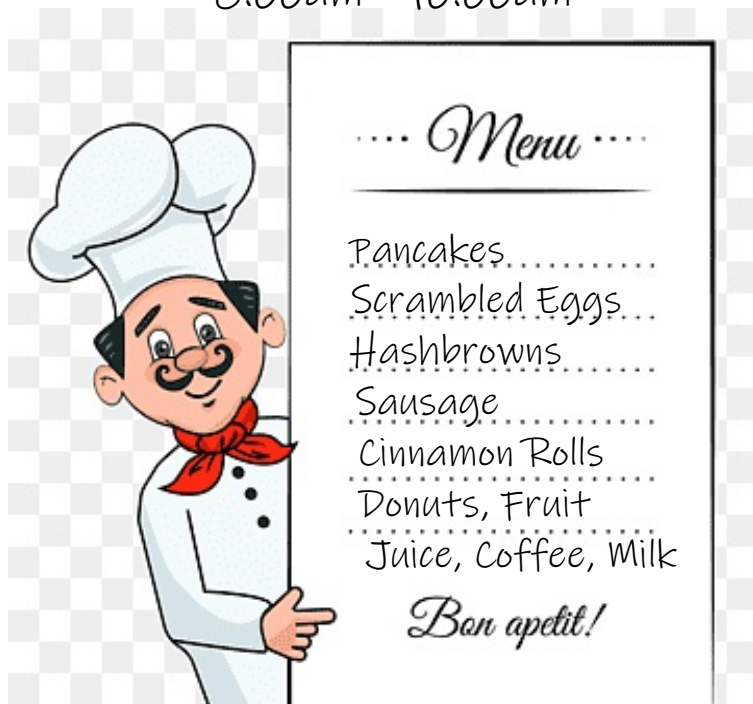
Saturday, Mar. 30 - Holy Saturday
Easter Vigil Worship 7:00pm

Sunday, March 31 - EASTER

Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Acts 10:34-43 John 20:1-18



Easter Breakfast - Sunday, March 31
8:00am - 10:00am



Cost: donation only.

Sponsored by our Youth.

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes
February 13, 2024

Present: Pastor Tom Jacobson, Carl Lahman (President), Matt Sheridan (Vice President), Diane Christensen (Secretary), Rick Rockwell (Treasurer), Linda Keaser (Inreach Coordinator), Vicki Jones (Outreach Coordinator), Casey Sigler (Upreach Coordinator)

Guests: Mike Keaser - photographer; Kevin Howell, Tracy Combs - Wichert Insurance Company

1. Call to Order: President Carl Lahman.

•Opening Devotion/Prayer: Carl Lahman.

•Devotion from: Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty at www.LCRLfreedom.org

2. Old Business Presentations

•Photo Directory

•Mike Keaser, cousin of Carl Keaser, has graciously agreed to take pictures for a new church photo directory. Mike is currently on staff for LifeWise and does photos for LifeWise and special events. He discussed the process with council.

•Mike will provide the photos digitally to the church and Beth Gilgien will format and print the directories

•Photographing schedule:

•3/13 and 3/20, 5:30 - 7:00, Wednesdays before and during Lenten Soup suppers

•3/17 and 4/7, 9:00 -10:30 and 11:45 - 12:30, Sundays between and after services

•Further information to come.

•Children & Youth Safety Policy

•Kevin Howell (principal) and Tracy Combs (risk manager), representing Wichert Insurance Company, led

the council in a discussion about the need for a comprehensive abuse policy and about the draft policy that Grace put together. They discussed the need for additional items to be included in the draft policy, and practicalities for insurance coverage and training.

- Carl Lahman will be working with Kevin and Tracy on the needed wording updates.
- Once the draft policy has been completed, Kevin and Tracy have agreed to meet with staff and ministry leaders that will be affected the most. At that time, they can go over the policy and answer questions to see if any tweaking needs to be made.

3. Pastor's Report/Items for discussion - Pastor Tom

- Worship:
 - Did blessing of prayer shawls on Transfiguration Sunday (February 11)
 - Have resumed children's messages on some Sundays
 - Will be using LBW (Green book) Setting 1 through Lent and will switch to Setting 2 with Easter
 - Possibility of moving the announcements in worship to after the creed and before the prayers?
 - Discussed....will try
- Confirmation class continues to go well
 - Will be done with this year's unit sometime in April
- Monthly newsletter articles about the Ten Commandments have begun
- Starting with February 2024, will be writing monthly newsletter articles on the Ten Commandments
- "My Fifty-Two Favorite Hymns" devotional articles have begun and are available on my blog, usually one per week: <https://theelectronicconventicle.weebly.com/>
- Continuing shut in and hospital visitation with Tom Rodgers
- Lenten "March Madness Hymn Bracket"
 - About 150 hymns were nominated in total - top 64 are in the bracket

- We will vote each week through Lent; ballots will be available by the sign up sheets in gathering space and can be deposited in the wooden ballot box or emailed to me: pastor@gracethornville.org
- 64 bracket is now available on church Facebook page
- Attended the NALC annual clergy retreat, in Orlando, from January 15-18
 - Good experience, and I lead one of the breakout sessions
- Lenten evening worship and soup suppers will happen again this year
 - Theme of Lenten series will be on the different types of Psalms in the Bible
- Problem with water softener in parsonage is not resolved
 - I spoke too soon last time! - Will call Courson's to help.
- This summer, will plan on a series "My Neighbor's Faith" during adult education hour on Sundays
- Spiritual book discussion group
 - Will soon pick another book to begin reading
- Last year, I did not use all my time off (of four Sundays, my fault)
 - This year, I hope to do so, though we are not planning a longer family trip
 - Weekends of April 7 and 28 I have been requested as speaker at different events in Minnesota (at Minkota and Eastern South Dakota NALC gathering and at the Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church in Minneapolis); Pr. Theresa can cover those Sundays
 - Remaining time off will be in the summer with family

4. Inreach Ministry Report - Linda Keaser (Inreach Ministry Team Coordinator)

- WNALC
 - Women's Bible study circles continue to meet the second Tuesday of each month at 11:30 am and the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at Grace unless otherwise announced.

- Wanda Hupp, coordinator for the Lenten “Soup Suppers”, has placed a sign-up sheet in the Congregational Corner of the Gathering Space for soup and dessert donations. Suppers are at 6 pm and the Lenten worship services are at 7 pm.
- The women’s group is hosting an “Irish Spud Luncheon” following the 10:30 service on Sunday, March 17th for the congregation (baked potatoes, fixings, and desserts).
- Ladies “Spring Luncheon” will be Saturday, May 18th.
- Monday Bible Study
 - Beginning on Ash Wednesday, the study will move to Wednesdays at 4 pm before the “Soup Suppers”. All are welcome. No meetings during Holy Week or on Monday, April 1st. Study will resume Mondays beginning on April 8th at 4 pm and meet weekly.
- Adventures in Faith (Sunday School)
 - Classes meet 9:15 am-10:15 am for 3 year olds – adult. Classes continue to collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. Tab collection containers are in the Gathering Space and church Kitchen.
- Tuesday’s Table and Men’s Monthly Breakfast
 - Tuesday’s Table will not meet in February or March during Lent, but will resume on Tuesday, April 23rd at Clay’s Café in Hebron.
 - Men’s Monthly Breakfast meets on the third Saturday, 8 am at Nana and Papa’s in Thornport for fellowship, prayer, and lite Bible study.
- Congregational Photo Directory
 - Plans are underway for a new photo directory. Mike Keaser will be our photographer. See beginning of meeting minutes under “Old Business Presentations” for dates and times.
- Youth Report by Casey Sigler**
 - The Superbowl Bake Sale, held on Sunday Feb 11th, was a huge success raising \$450.00 to purchase Easter Bags for the kids of the Thornville Food Pantry. Thank you to

- Jim Roshon, Joanne Maxwell, Amber Feyh, Jessica Rockey and Theresa Jacobson for donating baked goods.
- On Saturday, Feb 10th, the two youth groups had a combined Lock-in with 6 kids in attendance. They made Easter cards for our shut-ins which will be given out by our Pastor within the next couple of weeks. A big Thank You to Daria Carr for making and donating crocheted cross bookmarks to also give our shut-ins.
 - On Easter Sunday, the Youth will once again hold the annual Easter breakfast during the 8 am service and Sunday School hour. Menu to be announced soon.
 - On Saturday, April 6th, Kfrogs, KFC and anyone else interested in some adventure are invited to join us for a day of hiking in the Hocking Hills down at Old Man’s Cave. More details to come.
 - On Sunday, May 5th, the Youth will hold a spaghetti dinner to raise money to purchase a new outdoor nativity scene for the church.

5. Outreach Ministry Report – Vicki Jones (Outreach Ministry Team Coordinator)

- Met with Kendra Lawrence from LifeWise. She said all was going well and she appreciates the support from Grace.
- Dartball season has recently ended with Grace finishing in 5th place in the league.
- The Northern Local School District Superintendent approved a flyer advertising the Blessing Box to be sent home in the Backpack Ministry bags. The flyer will be included in the bags this week.
- Backpack Ministry is going well. Most recent number of bags going home was 49.
- It is good to see the Blessing Box is being used. It has been restocked a few times already. Discussed possibility of adding “Blessing Box” on the side of the box facing the street to make it more noticeable.

6. Upreach Ministry Report - Casey Sigler (Upreach Ministry Team Coordinator)

- Lent begins February 14th with Ash Wednesday
- Will have Lenten Soup Supper followed by Lenten Worship every Wednesday throughout Lent season
- Worship bags for children have been refurbished and updated with Grace Lutheran tags attached
- Discussed utilizing the TV in gathering space for announcements and activities etc.
- Continue to need volunteers for greeters, lectors, communion assistants and acolytes

7. Treasurer's Report - Rick Rockwell, Treasurer

- Reports distributed.

8. Facilities Report - Dave Rodenbaugh, Facilities Coordinator

- Freezing Pipes
 - Due to the extreme cold days, several areas needed better circulation to prevent pipes from freezing. This required moving some ceiling panels in the men's bathroom; moving the kitchen refrigerator away from the wall so that the attic doors could be opened; and opening the cabinet doors under the sink in the sacristy.
 - The elevator control room needed to have the door opened in order for the elevator pump to work properly. Elevator maintenance also had to be called to replace a fuse.
 - Purchased a small heater and a temperature controller for the elevator pump. In the future, we should not need to keep the control room open during extreme cold days.
- Changed the water filter in the basement furnace room.
- Replaced a couple of the door stops with magnetic door stoppers.
- Reattached a grill on the sacristy door.

- We are experimenting with a foaming soap dispenser in the women's restroom (in the basement) in hopes of eliminating the yellow dripping soap.
- Fixed parsonage outdoor vinyl gate on north side fence. Wind broke off the vertical edge. Reinforced vertical edge by cutting a ½ vinyl sheet into "L"s and putting them on the inside and outside, top and bottom. Gate will now open and close properly.

9. Old Business, continued

- Banner for parades
 - Matt Sheridan presented two options for the design. Discussion... Small edits requested
 - Many thanks to Matt's student who did the designs!

10. New Business

- None

11. Closing Prayer - Pastor Jacobson

12. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted, Diane Christensen (Council Secretary)

The **Monday Bible Study** group will meet at 4 pm each Wednesday before the "Soup Supper & Lenten services" in the Noah's Club classroom. We will not meet during Holy Week or on Monday, April 1, but will resume study weekly on Monday's beginning April 8th. All are welcome! Questions, contact Carl Keaser 740-403-4197



+ Presenting our 2024 Church Council +

Council President: Carl Lahman

My wife (Jeni) and I have been members at Grace since September 2020, which is also how long we have lived in Thornville. We moved here from Heath, where we lived for two years. Prior to that we lived in Columbus, where we raised two children.

I am retired from DeVry University (formerly DeVry Institute of Technology), where I taught classes in the Computer Information Systems (CIS) program. During my 28 years there I also served as Chair and later as Dean of the CIS department. I have a BSBA from Bowling Green State University and an MBA from The University of Utah; I also served four years in the USAF.

Being a Lutheran most of my married life, I have served on numerous committees, ministries and councils: including council president, assisting minister, stewardship and chair of the call committee. My first year at Grace I had the privilege again to serve as chair of the call committee. I have also served two years as Facilities Coordinator and one year as Council Secretary. Currently, I am involved with the adult choir, Lifewise Academy, Backpack Ministry, and wherever else I can help out. My interests include running, biking, playing cards, reading, and playing with my miniature schnauzer.



Council Vice President: Matt Sheridan

My wife (Lindsay) and I have been members of Grace Lutheran since 2016 when she was expecting our first child. Ava is now six years old and has a sister Emma (age four). We have lived in Thornville for twelve of the last thirteen years with a one-year break when a job took me to the Marysville area. Prior to that, I was born and lived in Lancaster, while Lindsay was born and raised in Pickerington.



I am currently superintendent of Mid-East Career and Technology Centers, the vocational school that serves both high school and adult students in thirteen school districts in Muskingum, Guernsey, Noble, and half of Perry County (residents of Northern Local and Crooksville Exempted Village School Districts). Prior to my current job, I was superintendent of the Crooksville School District, superintendent at Triad Local Schools, elementary principal at Thornville Elementary, assistant principal at Sheridan Middle School, and a high school teacher at Sheridan High School. Lindsay is a first grade teacher at Thornville Elementary. I have an undergraduate degree in business from Miami U., and two Masters Degrees from Bowling Green State University (MBA and Master of Business Education). I am currently enrolled at Seton Hall, where I have completed all of the classwork for my Educational Doctorate, but still need to complete my dissertation to finish the degree. I currently serve on the Perry County Board of Developmental Disabilities and have served for the past several years. I have also enjoyed coaching my daughters' Sheridan youth soccer teams for the past two years.

Prior to being elected as Vice President, I served as the Outreach Coordinator for the church. Before coming to Grace, I was a member at the Lancaster Vineyard Church, but I grew up attending the First Presbyterian Church in Lancaster. I enjoy spending time with my three girls, bike riding, reading, and traveling, especially to Disney, Hilton Head, and Punta Cana.

Council Secretary: Diane Christensen

I have been attending Grace since the winter of 2001 and became a member shortly thereafter. Having newly moved to Somerset, I started looking around for a church at that time and one visit to Grace ended my search!



I grew up on a dairy (then beef, then hog, as my parents got older) farm in Pennsylvania and taught music in public schools in upstate New York, Colorado and Ohio for the first half of my career. I got my Masters in Library Science while living in Akron in the late 90s and moved to the library at that time, but have always continued with church music. I finished my education career as the district librarian for Northern Local Schools in 2020 and am now happily retired.

I was raised in a United Church of Christ and have been a youth director in a Methodist Church and a choir director for a Reformed Church and 4 different Lutheran Churches. While working on my conducting Masters in Colorado, I had the opportunity to be the choir director at my first Lutheran Church and that allowed me to really delve into what the different denominations believe and how they worship. I chose to become a Lutheran due to that time of study. I have been involved with the music ministry at Grace in various capacities the whole time I have been here. I am currently the choir director and I also ring with the Grace Notes. My other interests include quilting, gardening, reading, hiking, traveling, and my beloved pets.

Council Treasurer: Rick Rockwell

My wife (Lillie) and I have been members at Grace since September 2005. We were originally from the Zanesville area and returned to the family farm in Mount Perry at the end of my 20 year US Air Force career. We have three grown children living in Raleigh, NC, Tucson, AZ, and Indianapolis, IN, and two grandchildren.



Since 2005, I have been a consultant on defense department contracts. I graduated from Maysville High School, then received a BS from The Ohio State University, and an MS from the Air Force Institute of Technology. We have lived in Dayton, OH, Lancaster, CA, Montgomery, AL, Los Angeles, CA, Monterey, CA, Warrenton, VA, and near Munich in Germany.

I was raised Nazarene but have been a Lutheran all my married life. I have served on numerous committees, ministries and councils: including council president, assisting minister, VBS, and building committee. I am a member of the adult choir and the Men of Grace. My interests include racquetball, playing cards, reading, chess, skiing, farming and playing with my miniature golden doodle.

Inreach Coordinator: Linda Keaser

My husband (Carl) and I have been members of Grace since 2010. We both grew up in Newark, Ohio in the same church (St. Paul's Lutheran Church), graduated from Newark Senior High School and worked for State Farm Insurance before our retirement in 2001. After retirement we moved north of Glenford on family "farm" land. We have two daughters and five grandchildren.



Growing up I was always active in Sunday School, Luther League, LOMA church camp, and choir. I have served as Sunday School superintendent/teacher and Christian Education director, as well as on Evangelism, Social Ministry, and women's group committees. I served four terms on council at St. Paul's and two terms as Inreach Coordinator at Grace. I look forward with love and joy in my heart for this opportunity to be able to serve!

Outreach Coordinator: Vicki Jones

Growing up in Somerset, I was previously a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. In 1990, I became a member of Grace. My husband (Richard) and I were married here in 1995. All three of our boys (Ryan, Kyle and Trevor) were baptized here at Grace.



I have been a nurse for 28 years. I have always enjoyed taking care of people (physically and emotionally). I love to make people smile! I enjoy spending time with our family, including our three granddaughters: Alexa, MaKenna and Fallon. Other interests include helping with Manna Monday, volunteering at Licking County Aging Program, spending time with friends, traveling, reading, baking and spending time outside.

Upreach Coordinator: Casey Sigler

I was born and raised in the great community of Thornville Ohio, graduating from Sheridan High and have been a member of Grace Lutheran Church my entire life. I was baptized, confirmed and married at Grace. I grew up attending the Sunday School program, VBS and in high school was a member of Luther League (High School Youth Group). I was blessed to be able to attend two National Youth Gatherings with our Church as a high school student.



Growing up in Grace has been an absolute blessing. I have been involved with the acolyte program for over 35 years when I myself became an acolyte. I have taught Sunday school for the last 18 years, retiring from that position just this year to take on the role of Upreach Leader. This is my first time serving on church council. Myself along with Kelly Tolliver and Sally Wilke started the Kfrogs youth group back in 2010-2011 and I have enjoyed being a part of leading that group. I have been involved in many activities in our church including VBS, Party in the Parking Lot, Noah's Club, Fourth of July Float and have served as a greeter.

My husband Jim and I live in Logan and have been there for the 28 years that we have been together. We have three children, Seth who lives in Akron and is an OB/GYN, Kayleann who lives in Lancaster and is a Deputy at the Fairfield County Jail and Josie who is in high school and very active in basketball and tennis. I am currently working at Hopewell Health Centers as an LPN in Logan and have been there for over five years.

I am excited to serve as Upreach Leader to be able to serve the Lord, our church and to grow my faith. My interests include family history, antiques, attending my kid's sporting events, watching movies, traveling and spending time with family.

Pastor Tom Jacobson

I grew up in rural Canby, Minnesota, not far from the South Dakota border. After high school graduation in 1998, I attended and graduated from Augustana University in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, having studied German and theology in preparation for seminary and ordained ministry.



During the summers between my college years, I worked at Lutheran church camps in Minnesota, Montana, and North Dakota. After college graduation, I attended Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. For my year of pastoral internship (third year of seminary), I was assigned to an international site in Germany, shared between the "Wittenberg Center" (an English-speaking continuing education ministry for those interested in Martin Luther and the Reformation) and the St. Thomas Church (*Thomaskirche*), which is the historic home of the great Lutheran musician Johann Sebastian Bach.

Upon return to the United States for my final year of seminary, I met Theresa, and she and I were married in 2008. After seminary graduation in 2006, I accepted a call to serve Samhold and United Lutheran Churches in Gonvick, Minnesota. We left there in 2010, and I began work on my Ph.D. degree in church history, also at Luther Seminary, focusing on Norwegian-American Lutheran history.

In 2012, while still working on my degree, Theresa received a call to serve Grace and Our Savior's Lutheran Churches in Menno, South Dakota. We lived there for ten years, during which time I finished my Ph.D. and began teaching online for the Institute of Lutheran Theology. In 2015, I also began serving Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Lindy, Nebraska on a part time basis. At the beginning of 2022, we moved to Thornville, Ohio, where I began serving as the pastor of Grace Lutheran Church.

A big part of the last twelve years has been the birth of our three children: Henrik (2011), Helena (2014), and Antonia (2018). Our whole family is glad to be a part of Grace Lutheran and the Thornville community. I enjoy spending time with family, Star Trek, Star Wars, The Lord of the Rings, history, reading, and walking, in that order of priority.

EXCITING NEWS! Our church leadership has determined it is time for our new pictorial church directory.

Our dates for photography will be:

- March 13
- March 17
- March 20
- April 7

Photos will not be done with a photo company so there will be no pressure to buy family photos. More details will be forthcoming.



From Martin Luther's Small Catechism The Lord's Prayer



The Fifth Petition

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our heavenly Father would not hold our sins against us and deny our prayers because of them. We know we have not earned, nor do we deserve, those things for which we pray.

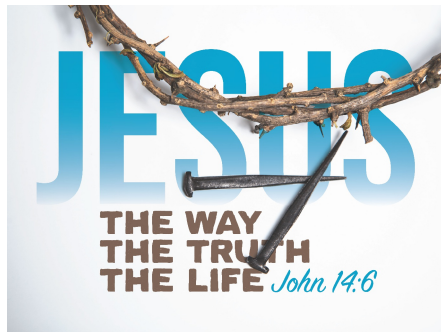
But we ask that he would grant us all things through grace, even though we sin every day and deserve nothing but punishment. And so we, too, will heartily forgive, and gladly do good to those who sin against us..



Thank You to all of those who supported the youth's Super Bowl Bake Sale!! The youth were able to raise \$595.75 to purchase Easter Bags for the kids of the Thornville Food Pantry. A special Thank You to Jim Roshon, Joanne Maxwell, Amber Feyh, Jessica Rockey, Daria Carr and Theresa Jacobson for donating homemade items.

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ On Easter Sunday, March 31st, the Youth will once again hold the annual Easter breakfast during the 8 am service and Sunday School hour.
- ◆ A day of hiking in the Hocking Hills down at Old Man's Cave is planned for Saturday, April 6th. Kfogs, KFC and everyone else interested in some adventure are invited to join us for. More details to come.
- ◆ On Sunday, May 5th, the Youth will hold a spaghetti dinner to raise money to purchase a new outdoor nativity scene for the church.



Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

Three Amazing Communities

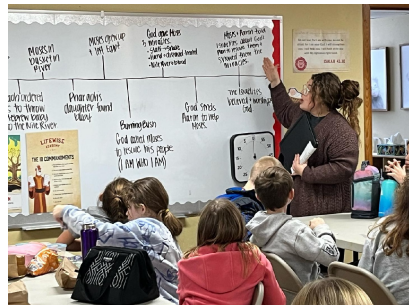
LifeWise Academy is so excited to share how far we have come since we opened our doors in September. Our communities have shown overwhelming support to share the good news of the Gospel to our NLSD students.

The LifeWise students have learned about "Who is God?" and "What is the Bible?"

They have become eager to memorize verses and lead prayer before lunch! Some of them have told us they are finished reading their Action Bibles they received for Christmas. They are excited to learn about Jesus and lives are being changed! Our student enrollment rate is 40% in our district!

Hot Lunch

We are going to serve hot lunch once a month for the LifeWise students. If your church, or small group is interested in serving in that way please contact us! Or, if you are a parent or business owner and want to help us with this let us know, and we can get you involved. Your support, prayers, encouraging words, and generous donations are what make this program possible. Thank you for partnering with us! Praising God for all He does through this program!



Thornville Community VBS
 Grace Lutheran Church (Gr 1-6)
 Thornville United Methodist Church (Ages 4-5, Pre-K)
 June 10-14, 2024
 9am-12pm



Join us as we take kids deep into an amazing undersea adventure where they'll experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God!

All kids will begin each day at Grace, then Pre-K kiddos will travel to TUMC for their own, specially-designed VBS! Everyone will gather back at Grace for singing and fun before being dismissed at 12pm.

Pre-registration opens Friday, April 26 and closes Wednesday, May 29. A link will be provided before April 26. Paper forms will be available at Grace just outside the office. *Pre-registration enables one friend request.*

Rather not pre-register? That's okay! Adults may register children starting Monday, June 10, at 8:30am at Grace.

Adults and 7th-12th grade youth: We need many hands to serve during this fun week! Crew leaders, assistant crew leaders, teachers and assistants, kitchen helpers, security, registration helpers and more are needed.

Can't attend during VBS week? Perhaps you could help create scenery and organize items or decorate our space ahead of time. Get with Pr Theresa, Lillie Rockwell or Beth Raab to volunteer.

Program Director: Annabelle Currence, TUMC

"My Fifty-Two Favorite Hymns"

For this coming year, Pr. Tom will be providing a weekly devotional reflection on his list of fifty-two of his favorite hymns, one for each week of the year, which will be posted on his blog. The hymns chosen correspond roughly to the unfolding church calendar. Hymns provide us with a window into the time and circumstances in which they were written, but they also help us in our own life of prayer as they express the faith of the Church with grace and beauty. The first few posts are live on his blog. You can access these weekly reflections at the following link, which will also be provided in the weekly email reminder about worship for the coming Sunday: <https://theelectronicconventicle.weebly.com>

- Week 1: Prepare the Royal Highway
- Week 2: Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending
- Week 3: My Heart Is Filled with Wonder
 - 4. I've Found Now the Fairest of Roses
 - 5. Of the Father's Love Begotten
 - 6. The Only Son from Heaven
 - 7. I Walk in Danger
 - 8. Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain
 - 9. Glory Be to Jesus
 - 10. Near the Cross
 - 11. Ah, Holy Jesus

Lawn Crosses in Time for Easter! Another batch of white PVC lawn crosses are in the process of being made, and they should be available in time for pickup by Easter. Feel free to check with your family, friends and neighbors if they would like to have one, in addition to your own. There is no cost for them, and they should last for many years outside.



LUCKY YOU!

You are invited to a
St. Patrick's Day
"Irish Spud Lunch"

SUNDAY	March 17, 2024 After Worship (11:45am)	In the Fellowship Hall 	Menu: Baked Potatoes w/ variety of toppings, Salad, Drinks, Dessert
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Sponsored by Grace Lutheran Women
 Please RSVP so we order enough food



"Irish Spud Lunch"

Name _____

Number Attending _____ Return to Kaye Smith or Pastor Theresa



SHUT-INS

In celebration of Easter, consider sending greetings to our homebound and nursing home members! The women of the church have appointed a Shut-In Committee that takes care of purchasing gifts, and distributing them, to our shut-ins.

Deb Winegardner
Chapel Grove Inn
1400 Chapel Way
Heath, OH 43056

John Cooperrider
Fairview Assisted Living
5550 St. Rt. 37 E.
New Lexington, OH 43764

Kathy Aberegg
Crossroad Manor
500 C Eldridge Place
Hebron OH 43025

Sue Cottrill
13687 Rosewood Rd. NE
Thornville OH 43076

Carol Cormican
5406 Davis Drive SE
Newark OH 43056

Margaret Winegardner
112 Foster Dr.
Thornville OH 43076

Irene Forsythe
9975 Twp. Rd. 37 NW
Thornville, OH 43076

Pat K'Miller
11397 Bruno Road
Thornville, OH 43076

Keith Stought
2297 Musser Rd NE
Baltimore OH 43105

John Lutz
10425 Lake Rd. NE
Millersport OH 43046

Martha Sandagata
40 S. Main St.
PO Box 572
Thornville OH 43076



Please save the dates for this year's:

North American Lutheran Church OHIO MISSION REGION ANNUAL CONVOCATION AND MISSION EVENT

The dates are **May 3 and 4, 2024.**

The place is **Saint John Lutheran Church in Grove City.**

Who's invited? Every pastor and member of our North American Lutheran Church congregations in Ohio!

This annual gathering brings together members and pastors not just to transact the business we do together in our Region (the state of Ohio) and our five mission districts (Northwest, Northeast, Southeast, North Central, and Southwest Ohio), but also is a time to worship together, fellowship, learn, pray, and plan together.

This year the focus of mission event on Friday, May 4, will be on senior adult ministry, from ministering to seniors and their families to empowering senior adults to share the Gospel of Jesus with others.

Our keynote speaker will be Pastor Brad Hales, pastor of Reformation Lutheran Church in Culpepper, Virginia. Pastor Hales, a native of northwest Ohio, is director of church planting and aging ministries for the North American Lutheran Church. He is also the author of the recently-published *Reviving the Aging Church: A Practical Guide*. Pastor Hales has practical experience, having been used by the Holy Spirit to shepherd the spiritual and numerical growth of the congregation he serves through ministries to and with senior adults. On Friday, he'll provide practical advice based on his experiences. There will be a Q-and-A session and an opportunity to brainstorm, share, and pray with others from throughout Ohio. Every congregation will benefit from this special day!

On Saturday, May 5, we'll focus on evangelism and church planting, hear reports from the North American Lutheran Church, our region, and our districts, and elect members of our district and regional executive councils. We will also worship together. This event is always worth attending, an inspiring time. More detailed registration information will be provided in a few weeks.

EASTER STORY COOKIES

You need: 1 cup whole pecans zipper plastic bag
 1 tsp. vinegar wooden spoon
 3 egg whites tape
 pinch salt Bible
 1 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

Place pecans in zipper plastic bag and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested he was beaten by Roman soldiers. Read John 19: 1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross he was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19: 28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to him. Read Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16.

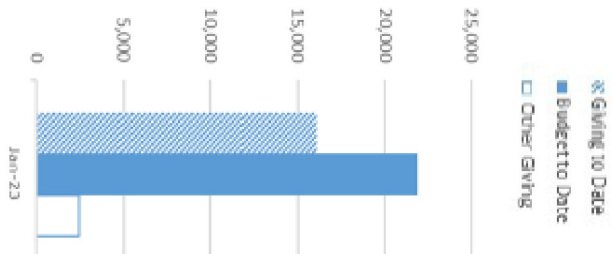
Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the white color represents purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.

Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto wax paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven

Grace Lutheran Church - Thornville OH Consolidated Fund Activity Report for January 2024

Account #	Account Name	Beg Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers/IE's	End Balance
31100.000	General Fund	86,643	16,132	22,818	305	80,261
32200.000	Improvement Fund	10,155	0	0	0	10,155
33000.000	Mission Fund	16,039	805	200	0	16,644
33200.000	Local Good Samaritan Fund	3,479	0	0	0	3,479
34000.000	Endowment Osma Lawyer	10,000	0	0	0	10,000
34000.100	Endowment Fund	28,532	0	0	0	28,532
35000.000	Capital Campaign Fund	31,663	20	0	0	31,683
35100.000	Adventures In Faith Fund	325	0	0	0	325
35200.000	Varner Scholarship Fund	3,173	0	0	0	3,173
36000.000	Library Fund	108	0	0	0	108
36100.000	Parment Fund	1,017	0	0	0	1,017
36200.000	Handbell Fund	303	300	89	0	514
36300.000	Flower Fund	1,024	200	430	0	794
37400.000	Choir Fund	2,478	0	0	0	2,478
39000.000	Backpack Ministry Fund	20,031	1,165	2,066	0	19,130
39100.000	Memorial Fund	20,504	0	0	0	20,504
39200.000	GLCW Fund	445	0	0	0	445
39250.000	KFC Youth Fund	10,329	0	0	0	10,329
	KFRONGs Fund	9,421	0	305	(305)	8,812
	Total	\$255,669	\$18,622	\$25,908	\$0	\$248,383



General Fund Budget
va Actuals

21,866
(5,734)

21,866
952

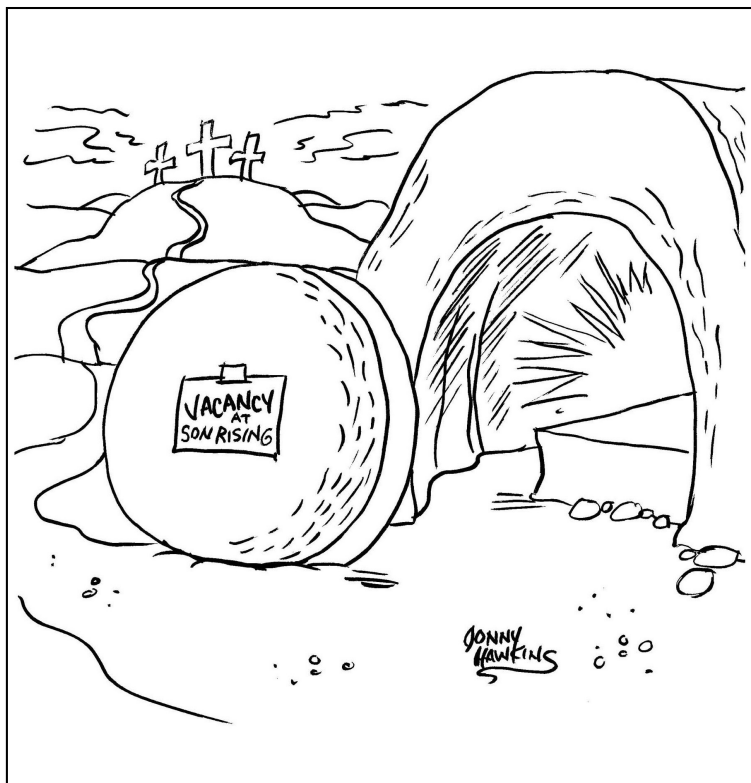
Net
0
(6,687)

OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.

GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

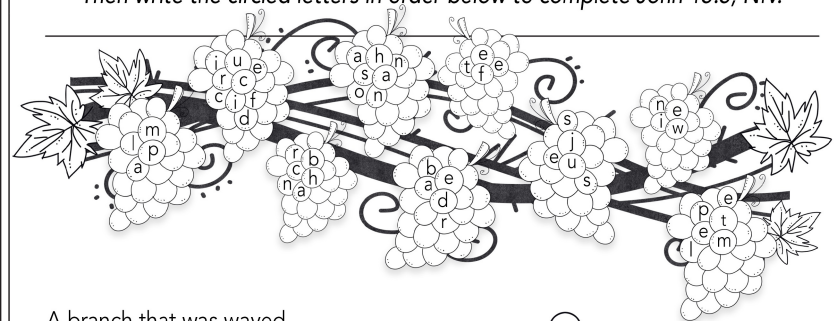
HE IS RISEN!



A LASTING LESSON

Before dying on the cross, Jesus teaches the disciples an important lesson.

Directions: Use the clues to unscramble the letters in each grape cluster. Then write the circled letters in order below to complete John 15:5, NIV.



- A branch that was waved _ _ _ _ ○
- How Jesus was put to death _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _
- A stick attached to the vine _ _ _ _ _ ○ _
- People shouted this to Jesus _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _
- Jesus washed these _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _
- This was broken and eaten _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _
- The Messiah _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _
- A drink from grapes _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _
- Jesus drove the money changers from here _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _

"I am the vine; you are the branches.

If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear _____ ;
apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5, NIV

Answer: palm, crucified, branch, hosanna, felt, bread, Jesus, wine, temple, much fruit

*Grace Lutheran Church
Thornville, Ohio*

Purpose

To invite All to discover, live and share God's gift of new life through Jesus Christ.

Mission Statement

Sharing God's Love through Grace.

Vision

We Are A Community Developing Faithful Followers Of Jesus By Experiencing God's Grace Through Friendship, Spiritual Growth and Service.



Core Values

1. That the Gospel calls us to unconditional regard for all people.
2. That Prayer is necessary for our relationship with God, one another, and the world.
3. That Scripture provides the foundation for our lives of faith.
4. That the authority for our ministry is founded in Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, which is the Body of Christ on earth. An elected Parish Council provides administrative authority; our called pastor(s) provides the spiritual authority of the Office of Word and Sacrament Ministry.
5. That each member is uniquely gifted by God for ministry and is expected to mature in discipleship of Jesus Christ.
6. That any ministry based on our Purpose, Mission, Vision and Core Values is valid for our congregation, and may, at any time, evolve or end.

"Phishing" Scams - In our sinful world, there is unfortunately no shortage of people who seek to deceive and take advantage of others. Often, such scammers will send emails or texts to church members pretending to be the pastor and then asking for money or gift cards. If you receive one of these emails or other communications, ignore them. Pastor Tom or other NALC church leaders will never contact you in such a manner. If you do receive such an email or text, please inform the church office.

**Grace Lutheran Church
65 E. Columbus St.; PO Box 284
Thornville OH 43076**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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www.gracethornville.org
office@gracethornville.org

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