



## Tower Echoes 2020

### From the Pastor,

April Showers bring May flowers. But what does April social distancing bring? Hopefully a reduced curve in Covid-19.

In March we knew what we would not be doing in April. May is still unknown.

Rolling Hills cluster zoomed their cluster meeting. If you aren't sure what I am talking about you must be my age. Many old timers are learning new tricks. I did get into the meeting, but had no sound or video presence. Caleb Eggleston advised me what to do next meeting.

The Nebraska Synod Assembly has been cancelled. Summer Camp is still wait and see. The Graduating Senior breakfast is on hold. Who knows about Memorial Day celebrations.

And what about worship? We will be not holding in person worship until we are told it is safe. We are on Facebook and YouTube. I am pre-recording Wednesday Devotions. I intend to stream live at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings unless I am assisting St. Paul Lutheran Church radio worship at 10 a.m. Streaming live at least can give a sense of both Hope and Grace members worshipping together at the same time. Both churches are contemplating streaming their worship services even when we begin worshipping in person again. Even our worship is moving into the 21st century.

Kids for Christ has been meeting every Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. on Facebook Live. Parents and Grandparents are appreciating the show. Eleta Eisenhower puts a lot of effort into the planning of the program. Thank you to Eleta for her hard work and love she has for children. Eleta & David were the ones responsible for the Holy Week Cross display outside at the front of the church. It was a way to add visuals to our proclamation that Christ is alive and well and ruling from Heaven.

Oh, I almost forgot something. Christ Is Risen! Alleluia! Christ Is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! The Easter message is a soft message this year. But it is our proclamation. It is true this year and last year and next year. I miss you. I miss hugging the children. I miss communion. I am grateful to Paul and Jane and Erin forming a "we can still do worship" committee and pulling me further into the 21st century. We can still do worship. I can still study and write sermons. I still can do what I was called to do. And so can our church as we still live our lives proclaiming that Christ Is Risen! Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor Jim

# ***Return to Worship May 17th Alleluia!***

(Subject to change based on circumstances)

## **Guidelines for Attending Church**

That is a weird title. Do any of our members not know how to attend church? And yet we will have to do things much differently than we did our last worship on March 15. I will list the changes in no particular order.

1. If you do not feel comfortable being around people or coming to church – please stay home.  
We are planning to share the worship on Facebook also.
2. Stay 6 feet apart from non-family members. Please begin filling the church from front to back, as we will dismiss from back to front in order to prevent people from passing by people sitting on the end of the pews.
  - a. Space yourself in the pews so as not to sit next to, behind, in front of anyone less than 6 feet. Family members may sit together. Two pews separation should do the trick. Grace Lutheran will have pews taped off as guidelines.
  - b. When entering the church pick up your own bulletin and communion card. There will be a plate to place your communion card in when you leave the church.
  - c. There will be a plate available for offerings on the table with the bulletins.
  - d. Do not linger in the church to visit. The weather should be nice enough to visit and keep social distancing on the lawn following worship. There will not be fellowship in the church basement for the time being at Grace Lutheran.
3. No touching. Wave or nod your head as you say good morning or when you pass the peace.
4. Communion will be done with wafer and juice communion sets. Pick a set up when you pick up your bulletin. They will be in a baggie for disposal into trash cans at the back of the church and SE office, to dispose of on your way out. This will hopefully keep grape juice droplets from staining the pew cushions. Little boxes of raisins will be available for the children. Congregation members will not come forward to receive communion. Pastor will direct congregation when to open their communion set and we will receive together. There will be a learning curve to discover the best way to do this for each congregation. These communion sets are on back order and will not be shipped before May 15.
5. Pastor will probably not greet you as you leave but will be outside to visit, with social distancing.
6. Yes, you may wear a mask. You may not be able to sit in “your” pew. This will feel uncomfortable. Pastor and Church Council don't like it either, but we must worship safely so we can live to serve God.

## **WELCOME BACK TO CHURCH! Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!**



Church Season: The Church Season is presently in the Church Season of Easter. We will spend four more Sunday's celebrating the Resurrection of Our Lord. The season of Sunday after Pentecost begins May 31 with Pentecost.

Church Festival Days: May 1—Philip & James Apostles

May 14—Matthew, Apostle

May 21—Ascension of Our Lord

May 31—The Day of Pentecost

Visit of Mary to Elizabeth

U.S. Holidays May 1 – May Day

May 5—Cinco de Mayo

May 10 – Mother's Day

May 16 - Armed Forces Day

May 25 – Memorial Day (observed)

"Thanks to everyone who has been watching Kids for Christ Live! on Wednesdays at 4:30. We will broadcast again on May 6th. Normally, the last Kids for Christ event for the school year would be the first week of May, but we may schedule more Facebook events if it looks as though #QuarantineLife will continue to be an issue. Watch the church Facebook page for more updates!"

Eleta & Erin

## ***MAY BIRTHDAYS***

May 4th Sharley Thompson

May 6th Travis Armknecht

Aiden Weber

Allison Brinkman

May 8th Carol Armknecht

May 9th Daymon Francois

Aleisha McDonald

May 12th Isabell Gerking

May 13th Alta Bohling

May 15th Carl Purcell

May 17th Samantha Francois

May 22nd Trevor Bailey

May 23rd Galen Grotrian

May 27th Steve Schulte

Mike Rolf

May 28th Eunice Weber

Carol Wiebke

May 29th Luetta Bruns

Blakely Kuhl

May 30th Bryce Cropp

Holly Kuhl

Henry Rolf

## **May Anniversaries**

5/6 - Mike & Erin Rolf

5/7 - Chuck & Kristy Ebeler

5/7 - Kyle & Ashley Wellensiek

5/24 - Steve & Jodell Bridgmon

5/27 - Dean & Jody Wellensiek

5/27 - Ryan & Amy Beethe

5/29 - Jack & Shelley Moles





# May 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 	2
3 Graduation Breakfast has been postponed Nebraska Synod Assembly has been cancelled	4	5	6 Kids for Christ Live @ 4:30 pm	7	8	9
10 	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 8:30 am Worship w/ Communion	18	19 Piecemakers Blanket Making Church Council 7:00 p.m.	20	21	22	23
24 8:30 am Worship	25 	26	27	28	29	30
31 8:30 am Worship Day of Pentecost Wear Red						

## Grace Lutheran Church Council    21 April 2020

Grace Lutheran Church Council met 21 April 2020. The meeting was called to order by Paul Wilken. Pastor Jim Helgren started the meeting with a prayer. Council members present were: Paul Wilken, Amber Beard, Richard Roesener, Robin Eggleston, Caleb Eggleston, and Gene Ekhoﬀ. Also in attendance were Pastor Jim Helgren & Diane Wilken

Richard Roesener made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 2020 meeting. Gene Ekhoﬀ seconded. Motion carried.

The financial report was reviewed. The account balances as of 31 March 2020 are:

Current: \$8,715.24

Memorial: \$13,853.68

Improvement: \$7,366.21

Luther League: \$4,163.74

Small Business Loan did not go through on the first funding, but will be resubmitted after additional funds are available. Nothing has been heard from FEMA request. Richard Roesener made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Gene Ekhoﬀ seconded. Motion carried.

### Pastor Helgren's Monthly Report:

Pastor Helgren provided services through Facebook. The service will be pre-recorded. Ringing of the bell was requested and will occur for the recordings.

Kids for Christ has been going live weekly on Facebook as well, and well received! Over 100 participants logged in to see the program.

Blankets have been set up to tie in the basement. Several members have come to participate.

Holy week decorations were aesthetically pleasing and well received by the members. This was graciously donated, in time and money.

Concerns were raised about songs' licenses being broadcasted during the pandemic. CCLI offers licensure to cover apprehensions. According to our attendance, the church would have to pay just over \$100 annually. Gene Ekhoﬀ made a motion to pay for the licensing to make sure we are covered. Richard Roesener seconded. Motion carried.

Communion was discussed. A prepackaged option with grape juice and the wafer, with several alternatives available at different price points. Robin Eggleston made a motion to purchase some for a trial when we are able to present/accept communion again. Richard Roesener seconded. Motion carried.

Indian Oaks donations that were to be received as Lenten offering will still occur, but will accrue accordingly as the pandemic subsides.

### Committee Reports:

Property committee: Council – Gene Ekhoﬀ

Painting, window repair, flashing – painting of the repaired bell tower looks excellent; windows need some repair on the east & west sides which includes vinyl sill on one window, caulking, and painting (painting is an additional \$125) around windows on east side of church. The new trees are successfully showing growth.

Worship, Evangelism, Music & Fellowship: Council – Richard Roesener

The sound system was not needed during the recording process.

Discussion will continue in regards to recording & presenting after the pandemic diminishes.



Parish Ed & Young People: Council –  
Nothing to report

Stewardship & Memorial: Council –  
Nothing to report

**Old Business:**

Spring Cleaning – Parsonage  
Power washing parsonage siding & fence  
Garage door has been repaired  
SBA Loan/FEMA – noted above  
Facebook/stream Services – noted above

**New Business:**

Services – noted above  
Plans for Graduation Breakfast and Blanket Reception  
Graduates may receive blanket just prior to beginning their first collegiate year  
New Entryway Floor mat  
Nothing has been purchased, but some options have been located.  
Rock will be smoothed out for the church on the south side, but the parking curbs may need to be replaced.

Next Meeting will be 19 May 2020 at 7:00 pm

Meeting was adjourned by Paul Wilken, and the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Amber Beard

**Grace Lutheran Church Council  
SPECIAL MEETING 11 APRIL 2020**

Grace Lutheran Church Council met 11 April 2020.

The meeting was called to order by Paul Wilken. Pastor Jim Helgren started the meeting with a prayer. Council members present were: Paul Wilken, Amber Beard, Richard Roesener, Robin Eggleston, and Gene Ekhoft. Also in attendance was Jim Helgren and Diane Wilken. Absent Caleb Eggleston.

Meeting was called together to discuss the Small Business Administration Grant/Funding and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) to assist during the fiscal hardships due to the COVID Pandemic. This money will permit emergency funds to be used to fulfill the duties necessary to run the church, reallocating for staffing costs. A Local Disaster Declaration was created to request these necessary funds for the expenditure of emergency funds from all available sources, the invoking of the mutual aid agreements. A motion was made by Robin Eggleston to appoint Diane Wilken as the agent to authorize these funds for Grace Lutheran Church. Amber Beard seconded and motion was approved.

The progress of the balcony wall was discussed with enthusiasm. The results have been exemplary thus far.

Next meeting will be 21 April 2020.

Meeting was adjourned by Paul Wilken, and the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Amber L. Beard.



## Grace Lutheran Church

306 N. First St.  
P.O. Box 96  
Cook, NE 68329

Address  
Correction  
Requested



Church Office: 402-864-4201  
Pastor Jim Helgren: 402-864-2113

Church Email: [grace68329@gmail.com](mailto:grace68329@gmail.com)