



Tower Echoes 2024

From the Pastor,

I sometimes find it challenging to find inspiration to write this article because I have to write about the upcoming month while still focused on the worship and projects of the month I am still in.

I need to write “Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!” But it is Holy Week and our tradition avoids exclaiming Alleluia during the worship. My Palm Sunday sermon was sort of upbeat, but my Passion Sunday sermon did not end very upbeat. I ended with the question, “What kind of father is God to just stand by and watch His Son die such a painful death?”

The answer to that question took a whole week to answer. The answer came March 31 when the Church gathers to exclaim “CHRIST IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!!” Holy week is even more of a downer than is penitent Lent. We move from Palm Sunday towards a funeral. Does anyone really enjoy a funeral? Even when people try to put the fun back into funeral by calling it a celebration of life service or ceremony, does anyone really look forward to attending? Death is death. Gone is gone.

God gives the funeral a different meaning. God declares Easter morning that everyone was wrong about their vision of Jesus. He is God’s Son and He had to die in order to live. Jesus had to be raised from the dead in order to conquer your sin, your death, and the power of the devil over you. Easter celebrates God claiming you as His own. Now this Easter season will you claim your place in God’s Kingdom given to you through the actions of God the Father through Jesus.

If so, then exclaim **“JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!!**

Pastor Jim

Church Seasons: The Church Season of Sundays of Easter begin March 31 with the Resurrection of our Lord. The color is white and Alleluia’s return to the Sunday liturgy. Flowers will once again grace the altar. It is a season of joy and celebration of God overcoming our sin and its consequences through the cross.

Festival Days: April 1 Annunciation of Our Lord
(transferred from March 25)
April 25 Mark, Evangelist

US Holidays: April 1 April Fool’s Day
April 15 Tax Day
April 22 Earth Day

Jewish Holidays

April 22 Passover Begins

Tanzania Vision Trip

Carl and Sarah Purcell will share their Tanzania Vision Trip experiences on Sunday, April 7. Join them in the basement during fellowship to learn about the special relationship the Nebraska Synod has with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Northern Diocese.

Fourth graders Sheridan Thompson and Charlotte Wellensiek completed their First Communion training and received their first communion on Maundy Thursday, March 28th.

PEOPLE'S CITY MISSION HELP CENTER TOUR, APRIL 18TH.

The Stewardship Committee invites you to join in a tour of the People's City Mission Help Center, 6800 P Street, Lincoln, NE on April 18. The Center serves 80% of the impoverished and homeless population of Lincoln.

Prior to the tour we will eat together at Pizza Ranch, 8420 Lexington Ave. Lunch will be at your own expense.

We will meet in the church parking lot to carpool, therefore some will need to be prepared to drive. We will leave Cook at 10:30. You may invite others.

You **must RSVP** to Cheryl Grundman at 402-873-2468 (text or call) by Sunday evening April 14.

Adult Education

"Liturgy and the Natural World" led by LSTC faculty member Rev. Dr. Benjamin M. Stewart is an inspiring 4-part series on nature and liturgy. See the poster on the bulletin board in the narthex, beginning on Wednesday, April 10th from 7-8:30 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church basement. Open to both churches. Bring your own snacks.

BASKETS OF PROMISE

The Women of Grace are again sponsoring the "Baskets of Promise" project for Lutheran World Relief. This has been a successful project and we thank everyone who participated in the past and again this year.

For 5 weeks, beginning April 14th, we will be collecting items that will be used to assemble the Personal Care Kits. We will end the collection on Mother's Day as we honor these mothers by helping them ensure health for themselves and their families by being able to use these kits that we provide for them.

Bars of Soap (4-5 oz.) Any brand in the original wrapping.

Bath Towels (lightweight, maximum size 52" x 27", dark colors are recommended).

Toothbrushes (adult size, in original packaging)

Nail Clippers (Metal, attached file optional).

Mother's Day will be the last Sunday of the gathering, but items can be brought at anytime.

April Birthdays

- 5th – Ryan Panko
- 7th – Gayleen Eden
- 8th – Janet Dieckgrafe
- 9th - Lisa Cropp
- 13th – Robin Eggleston
- 15th – Mitchell Brinkman
- 17th – Tom Brinkman
- 19th – Robyn Faris
- 21st – Michael Carman
- 24th – Lori Panko
- 28th – Owen Weber
- 29th - Amber Baehr

Noisy Coin Offering will be collected the last Sunday of the month. So save your change and make some NOISE!

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

14th - Joe & Ellen Brinkman

29th - Dave & Diane Smith

THANK YOU'S

We appreciate the classroom materials that were given to us at Christmas time, from the Teacher Wish List. Our students loved receiving the calculators, white boards, markers and stickers.

Thank you very much!

Kirk & Robyn Faris

Bryson Sofia Casin Will
Ava Charlie Naomi
Jordan Addy
Sophia Austyn Easton
Alexus Connor Allura
Aayu Lili Ruver

Grace Lutheran Church,
Thank you so much for
the classroom supplies and games
I was able to open them in
front of my kiddos. You should have
seen the smiles on their faces.☺
Thanks again for supporting
our 2nd grade classroom at JCC.
I am so happy to be back! ♡ Madi Pank

GO AND...

TELL THE STORY

Jesus isn't in the tomb anymore - God is on the loose! God is active and up to something! The story of Easter is an ongoing one, similar to the story of our own faith. Our response as disciples is to Go and.... to go out, go share, go proclaim, and to go tell the story.

Questions to Consider:

- What is one of your favorite Bible stories?
- Is there a prop or tangible item you might use to help you tell the story?
- How will you GO and tell the story?

Prayer: Master Storyteller, your stories seem almost unbelievable. Open us to recognize your patience, deep love, and grace. Help me be a storyteller. Amen.

Suggested Song: I Love to Tell the Story (ELW 661)

Learn More at www.nebraskasynod.org

GO AND... TELL THE STORY

April's theme is

GO AND... TELL THE STORY. Not your story, or a story, but to be brave enough after ten months of GOing to share the Holy Week story. Tell people about God's love for them. Find a way to slip it into conversations.

Palm Sunday I was at Good Samaritan Center with palm branches, and a young woman working there from the agency commented that she liked my plants. She did not know they were palm branches. I told the Palm Sunday story and gave her a palm. Telling the story can be that easy sometimes.

75th Anniversary Celebration Meal

The 75th Anniversary Committee met on February 19th. Included on the agenda was a discussion on the possible financial arrangements for the 75th Anniversary Celebration meal. The committee recommended to the Grace Lutheran Church Council that:

1. Every Sunday in April a receptacle will be placed on the back table of the church sanctuary for donations for the meal expense. Any and all donations will go towards the 75th Anniversary Celebration meal.
2. At the 75th Anniversary Celebration, there will be a freewill donation box by the picture display board(s), on which there will be an eloquently written statement regarding donations. Any donations will go for expenses related to the 75th Anniversary Celebration, including the meal. Any remaining donations will be placed in the General Fund of Grace Lutheran Church.
3. The offering accepted during the worship service was previously designed to be divided evenly between the ELCA's Mission Field Nebraska and the Osage Food Pantry.

This was approved at the February 20th Grace Lutheran Church Council meeting.

April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	APRIL FOOLS DAY		8th Grade Confirmation 6 pm			ELCW Spring Gathering @ Luther Memorial, Syracuse
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:30 am Worship w/ Communion	Bible Study		Kids for Christ 4 pm			
Tanzania Vision Trip Presentation	2:00 pm		8th Grade Confirmation 6 pm			
during fellowship			Adult Education @ GLC 7:00 pm			
9:30 am Sunday School						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:30 am Worship Rogation Sunday		Piecemakers Blanket Making	8th Grade Confirmation 6 pm			
9:30 am Sunday School		Church Council 7:00 p.m.	Adult Education @ GLC 7:00 pm			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:30 am Worship w/ Communion		TOWER ECHOES DEADLINE	Kids for Christ 4 pm			
9:30 am Sunday School			8th Grade Confirmation 6 pm			
28	29	30		Adult Education @ GLC 7:00 pm		
8:30 am Worship						
9:30 am Sunday School						

Grace Lutheran Church Council

March 11, 2024

The regular meeting of the Grace Lutheran Council was called to order by President Bret Wellensiek at 7:10 pm with 3 Council Members present. Pastor Helgren led an opening prayer.

Minutes of February meeting were reviewed. Cheryl Grundman moved to accept the minutes as presented, Bret Wellensiek 2nd. Minutes approved.

Treasurer's report reviewed. Cheryl Grundman motioned to accept the Treasurer's report, 2nd by Bret Wellensiek. Motion carried.

Sarah Purcell arrived at 7:20.

Pastor's report.

1. Provided February contacts - sick/communion visits and phone calls with shut in's.
2. First communion instruction started, with 1st communion to be on Maundy Thursday for Sheridan Thompson and Charlotte Wellensiek.
3. Liturgy and the Natural World will be offered on Wednesday evenings in April starting on 4/10/24 at 7 pm. Training is at no-cost, offered through Lutheran School of Theology.
4. There is a Middle School Gathering at Sheridan Lutheran in Lincoln on 4/13/24. Pastor will try to attend with any youth interested.
5. Boundary training for Pastors and PMA's is scheduled.
6. Thursday Lenten Lunches at Grace have been well attended with 10 – 13 each day.
7. Jean Effken's funeral was 3/9/24. Funeral scheduled at Burr on 3/30/24.
8. Kids for Christ will be held on 3/27/24.
9. Synod training with Bishop scheduled of 3/19/24 in Adams.
10. World Day of Prayer was observed at Hope on 3/1/24.

President Wellensiek reviewed correspondence. Training information provided to all council members – Let's Fill your Toolbox! on 4/13/24. Thank-you from Lutheran Family Services, Notification from Brotherhood Mutual -potential property insurance increase.

Committee Reports

Property: The window company brought back some of the stained-glass windows that had been repaired and took the rest.

Worship, Evangelism, Music and Fellowship: Samantha Wallenburg will be singing for us on Easter Sunday. Pictures have been printed for the photo display. Committee recommended a service of Blessing for the Seeds and Soil. Blessing scheduled for 4/14/24.

Parish Ed and Young People: Kids for Christ will meet on 3/27. The youth group will be sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt following worship on Easter Sunday.

Stewardship and Memorial: Cheryl has scheduled a tour of the People's City Mission Warehouse on Thursday April 18th at 1 pm. The Sunday School is in need for a new DVD player – this will be purchased with Memorial Funds.

Old business:

Worship Duty is complete thru next month with council members picking up the open Sundays. Members are encouraged to sign up as they are able.

The 75th Anniversary Committee will meet on April 4th at 6 pm. Invitations for the 75th Celebration will be going out at Easter. The council reviewed the policy approved last month for funding the celebration:

Every Sunday in April a receptacle will be placed on the back table of the church sanctuary for donations for the meal expense. Any and all donations will go towards the 75th Anniversary Celebration meal.

At the 75th Anniversary Celebration, there will be a freewill donation box by the picture display board(s), on which there will be an eloquently written statement regarding donations. Any donations will go for expenses related to the 75th Anniversary Celebration, including meal. Any remaining donations will be placed in the General Fund of Grace Lutheran Church.

The offering accepted during the worship service has previously been designated to Osage Food Pantry and Mission Field Nebraska.

New Business

Easter preparations are underway for Easter Sunday on 3/31/24. Members are encouraged to donate Lilly's for the Easter Cross.

Vacation Bible School – Osage has materials and will call a meeting after Easter. Logistics of 75th Anniversary celebration discussed.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday April 16, 2024, at 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Jody Wellensiek, secretary

These minutes will be reviewed and approved at the next council meeting.

Pictures Wanted

The 75th Anniversary Committee is looking for pictures that might be included in a video presentation or on a picture display board. If you have a picture(s) that you would like to contribute please make a copy of the picture(s) and give to Alta Bohling, Andrea Eggleston, Pastor Helgren, Lori Panko, Sarah Purcell, Dean Wellensiek, or Melissa Wellensiek. If you prefer, you can email the picture(s) to GraceLutheran75@gmail.com. All possible pictures are needed by June 1, 2024. **Thank you!**

SAVE LABELS AND CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Clip and collect labels from Best Choice, Clearly Best Choice, and Best Choice Superior Selections for your favorite non-profit organizations. The Save-A-Label program helps non-profit organizations and schools easily raise needed money. These labels need to be sent in the Best Choice Company in groups of 1,000 UPC symbols. Some items to look for are: canned goods, dairy items, baking products, cereals, etc. These products are carried by independent local grocers. These nearby grocers have them in stock: Tecumseh Central Market, Russ's Market, Beatrice, Super Savers & Russ's Market in Lincoln.

There is a container for the labels in the church kitchen.

Thank you for your help, Karen Cerny





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