
February 2018

Grace Notes

Grace Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Desk . . .

What does it mean to **meditate**??? I asked my Confirmation class this question recently. The response I got was one of them doing an impression of some sort of Buddha-like figure, with arms forward going "Ohmm..." It wasn't really an incorrect answer; but it also wasn't the answer I was looking for as part of the class.

To meditate on something means to reflect or consider. The Buddha-ish version of meditation focuses on clearing your mind, blocking out all the stresses and bad vibes. By contrast, when God invites people to meditate He wants them to think deeply about a section of His Word. Reflect on what He says. Consider its full meaning and how it might apply to the situations of their life that day.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer puts it this way in his classic work "Life Together":

"In our meditation we ponder the chosen text on the strength of the promise that it has something utterly personal to say to us for this day and for our Christian life, that it is not only God's Word for the Church, but also God's Word for us individually. We expose ourselves to the specific word until it addresses us personally. And when we do this, we are doing no more than the simplest, untutored Christian does every day; we read God's Word as God's Word for us.

It is sufficient if the Word, as we read and understand it, penetrates and dwells within us. As Mary, "pondered in her heart" the things that were told by the shepherds, as what we have casually overheard follows us for a long time, sticks in our mind, occupies, disturbs, or delights us, without our ability to do anything about it, so in meditation God's Word seeks to enter in and remain with us. It strives to stir us, to work and operate in us, so that we shall not get away from it the whole day long."

When it comes to meditation there is probably no better place to start than with the book of Psalms. They are rich in feeling, emotion, faith, and instruction. The Hebrew poetry in them is often best soaked in as we go over it again and again to unlock the flavor and depth of what they entail.

And this is exactly what God invites us to do in the psalms. As it says right away in the first chapter, BLESSED is the one whose *“delight is in the instruction of the LORD, and on His instruction he meditates day and night”* (1:2). Later in another psalm it says, *“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that You have done; I ponder the work of Your hands”* (143:5).

We are blessed when we mediate on the psalms and draw out its meaning and then apply that to our lives. For instance: Psalm 23 is a beautiful passage to memorize – but God invites us to meditate on that passage so as to bring home its words and phrases into our very existence. *What does it mean that you have a LORD who shepherds you with His love? How will that impact how you start this day or what you’ll worry about tonight in bed? David is confident that his cup overflows (v. 5). What do you have to be thankful for today, that your cup “runneth over” with blessings?* I could go on...but that’s plenty to mediate on for one day.

Starting already in the middle of January we are going to heed our Lord’s invitation and meditate on His Word in the Psalms. For all of the Sundays of February (and March) we are going hear one of the Psalms and meditate on it – even as our Lord would encourage you to do so also in your own lives throughout the week – (which is what the daily Bible reading schedule at the back of this newsletter is for). We do so confident that God’s Spirit will stir us up and work within us.

In Christ,

Pastor Josh

January Official Pastoral Acts:

4 sick/shut-in visits

4 private communions

2 pastoral care visits

3 leadership meetings

3 hospital visits

The **English District Convention** is this summer. The convention is held every 3 years to discuss district business, pass resolutions, elect officers, and hear theological presentations/papers. It’s sort of like a district-wide Voters’ Meeting – that lasts for about 3 days with free meals. At our February Voters’ Meeting here at Grace we need to select a **delegate** (and alternate delegate) to attend the convention with Pastor. It’s on June 19-21 at Concordia University in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Consider whether you might be willing to go on behalf of our congregation.

The **Sunday morning Adult Bible Class** meets AFTER worship. Join us as we finish studying the **Augsburg Confession** – a historical document that defines what we believe as Lutherans and is applicable still today.

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday** (Feb. 14), as we join Christians around the world in marking that day with the imposition of ashes at our 7 pm worship. On the Wednesdays that follow we will have midweek Lenten services that focus on “*Learning to Pray the Psalms.*” A 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper will precede them. .

Volunteers needed:

- We are in need of someone with some photography ability to take some pictures of our church to put up on our new church website.
- We are also in need of someone with computer capabilities who could assemble and send out our monthly newsletter.
- We are in need of volunteers to help deliver boxes of food to those in need on the third Tuesday of each month, from roughly 2-3 pm.
- People willing to drive members of our church, who are unable to drive, to worship.

If you might be interested please talk to Pastor Josh.

February Birthdays

Brandon Swanzer	2/03
Diane Senyak	2/03
Eva Horning	2/04
Jan Kristoff	2/04
Barb Hadaway	2/09
Carter Jones	2/10
Kris Koepp	2/19

February Anniversaries

Dave & Marcia Metzger 2/01
Terry & Judy Gornek 2/20

* If we accidentally forgot your birthday or anniversary, please tell Pastor and we'll add it to our list.

From the President

We're rapidly approaching the first Voters' Meeting of the New Year and I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage all members to attend. My intent is to closely follow Roberts Rules of Order, which our Constitutional By-Laws dictate, during our Voters' Meetings.

This should result in making our meetings more efficient and focused. The goal is a shorter, more productive meeting, which I hope will bring in members who don't currently or regularly attend.

This procedure will likely cause a narrower focus during the Voters' Meetings. Because of this I want to work with Council to introduce other opportunities for members to make comments, voice concerns and make recommendations in a public forum. I believe this is an important part of the workings of the Church.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the February Voters' Meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Thank you to Donna Perron for volunteering to look over Grace's monthly bank statements.

Thank you to Bonnie Abicht for volunteering to look over Grace investment balances monthly.

The Finance Committee has agreed to meet quarterly to review Grace's finances.

Evangelism Report

Check out the Outreach Bulletin Board in the hallway to see the Mission of the Month: CAMPUS MINISTRY. What do campus ministries look like? Why are they important? What is the LCMS doing or offering to help congregations like ours revive a campus ministry? What can we do around here in Oberlin?

Those are all questions for us to learn about, discuss, and try to address in our own context. Want to learn more, discuss this, or try something?!? Contact Pastor Josh...

Altar Guild News

Thank you to all who provided poinsettias to grace the chancel area this year: Fred Feddeck, Carolyn Husted, Robin and Glenn Turnbull, Donna and Wayne Perron, Dave and Marcia Metzger, Susan Walker, John and Jan Kristoff and Jean Palmer.

A new flower chart sign-up is posted on the bulletin board. Please note the new chart has been laminated so be sure to use the dry erase marker when you sign-up for flowers. Thank you!

Serving in February: Karen Huston and Carolyn Husted

~ Robin

Women's League News

Tentatively scheduled: LWL meeting in late **February or early March** to plan our first six month's activities which includes the annual **Easter Breakfast on April 1**: it's coming up quickly! All women from our congregation are encouraged and welcome to attend. The more ideas the better.

Norma Stechow and Carolyn Husted served ham and au gratin potatoes for the 19 guests at the January Free Community Hot Meal. February Free Community Hot Meal will be hosted by Susan Walker. Thanks Sue for volunteering! We still have two slots open (November and December) which are just begging for someone to step up and volunteer!

Coffee Fellowship in February:

- 4 Jan Mertz
- 11 Kathy Knipper
- 18 Karen Huston
- 25 Jan Koepp

Our next women's breakfast will be held on Thursday, February 22 at Oberlin Kitchen Diner on South Main Street. 9:30 am. Please join us.

Daily Bible Readings

Feb. 1	- Psalm 19	Mar. 1	- Psalm 57-58
Feb. 2	- Psalm 20-21	Mar. 2	- Psalm 59-60
Feb. 3	- Psalm 22	Mar. 3	- Psalm 61-63
Feb. 4	- Psalm 23	Mar. 4	- Psalm 64
Feb. 5	- Psalm 24	Mar. 5	- Psalm 65-67
Feb. 6	- Psalm 25-26	Mar. 6	- Psalm 68
Feb. 7	- Psalm 27-28	Mar. 7	- Psalm 69
Feb. 8	- Psalm 29-30	Mar. 8	- Psalm 70-71
Feb. 9	- Psalm 31	Mar. 9	- Psalm 72
Feb. 10	- Psalm 32-33	Mar. 10	- Psalm 73-74
Feb. 11	- Psalm 34	Mar. 11	- Psalm 75
Feb. 12	- Psalm 35-36	Mar. 12	- Psalm 76-77
Feb. 13	- Joel 1	Mar. 13	- Ps. 78-79
Feb. 14	- Joel 2:1-17	Mar. 14	- Psalm 80
Feb. 15	- Joel 2:18-32	Mar. 15	- Psalm 81
Feb. 16	- Joel 3	Mar. 16	- Psalm 82-83
Feb. 17	- Psalm 37	Mar. 17	- Ps. 84-85
Feb. 18	- Psalm 38	Mar. 18	- Psalm 86
Feb. 19	- Psalm 39	Mar. 19	- Ps. 87-88
Feb. 20	- Psalm 40-41	Mar. 20	- Psalm 89
Feb. 21	- Psalm 42	Mar. 21	- Psalm 90
Feb. 22	- Psalm 43-44	Mar. 22	- Psalm 91
Feb. 23	- Psalm 45-47	Mar. 23	- Ps. 92-93
Feb. 24	- Psalm 48-49	Mar. 24	- Psalm 94
Feb. 25	- Psalm 50	Mar. 25	- Psalm 95
Feb. 26	- Psalm 51-53	Mar. 26	- Psalm 96
Feb. 27	- Psalm 54-55	Mar. 27	- Psalm 97
Feb. 28	- Psalm 56	Mar. 28	- Ps. 98-100
		Mar. 29	- Psalm 101
		Mar. 30	- Psalm 102
		Mar. 31	- Psalm 103-104

February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 • Mental Illness Support Group 7 pm	2	3
4 • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:40 am	5	6 • Confirmation 7 pm	7	8	9	10
11 • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:40 am	12 • Council's Meeting 7 pm	13 • Confirmation 7 pm	14 • Ash Wednesday Service 7 pm	15 • Mental Illness Support Group 7 pm	16	17 • Free Hot Meal 5 pm
18 • Worship 10 am • Voters' Meeting 11:30 am	19	20 • Confirmation 7 pm	21 • Soup & Sandwich Meal 6 pm • Lenten Service 7 pm	22 • Women's Break-fast at Oberlin Kitchen Diner @ 9:30 am	23	24
25 • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:40 am	26	27 • Confirmation 7 pm	28 • Soup & Sandwich Meal 6 pm • Lenten Service 7 pm			

Upcoming Important Dates:

- Feb./March: LWL Meeting
- March 29: Maundy Thursday Service 7 pm
- March 30: Good Friday Service
- April 1: Easter Breakfast
- April 1: Easter Service