
March 2018

Grace Notes

Grace Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Desk . . .

“Learning to Pray the Psalms” seems at first glance to be a strange and unnecessary sermon series for Lent – especially one that extends through both the Sunday and midweek services. First of all, most of us are adults – we already know how to pray. We may certainly not feel any need to learn something we feel we already know quite well. And secondly, it seems odd to talk about praying through a book of the Bible – especially an OLD TESTAMENT book like Psalms! Isn't the Old Testament just a bunch of old stories and rules that can be more or less tossed aside now that Jesus has come and ushered in a new covenant?!?

Yet a closer inspection shows us how reasonable and even refreshing meditating on such a sermon series can be. To start with the first point – about learning to pray – let me begin with the beginning of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's little devotional book on the Psalms:

“Lord teach us to pray!” So spoke the disciples to Jesus. In making this request, they confessed that they were not able to pray on their own, that they had to learn to pray. The phrase “learning to pray” sounds strange to us. If the heart does not overflow and begin to pray by itself, we say, it will never “learn” to pray. But it is a dangerous error, surely very widespread among Christians, to think that the heart can pray by itself. For then we confuse wishes, hopes, sighs, laments, rejoicing – all of which the heart can do by itself – with prayer. And we confuse earth and heaven, man and God. Prayer does not mean simply to pour out one's heart. It means rather to find the way to God and to speak with him, whether the heart is full or empty. No man can do that by himself. For that he needs Jesus Christ..

Besides all this, prayer is not so much like riding a bike – once you’ve learned it you’ve mastered the skill for the rest of your life. Instead, prayer is a devotional thing – something that can deepen and strengthen as our faith in Christ deepens and strengthens and His work in us opens us up in new ways.

But all that being true – why pray the Psalms?! The Psalms are the prayer-book of the Old Testament AND New Testament Church. They are the prayers on Christ’s lips as He hangs on the cross – and the prayers He fulfills with His life. Yet even more than that – the Psalms are the prayers He teaches us as His followers to pray. The Lord’s Prayer is the most succinct and perfect Christian prayer, summarizing the heart of prayer into a few short sentences that are easily committed to memory. On the other hand, in the Psalms Christ takes the basic ideas of the Lord’s Prayer and spreads them out into all their fullness, depth, and beauty. In the Psalms we read of people rejoicing with praise as their hearts overflow with happiness and peace; yet we also read of people crushed in body and soul and pouring out their laments to God – and everything in between. As we learn to read and pray these psalms Christ widens our faith to include the gamut of human emotions and circumstances, all while helping us to see them through Christ’s work in this world – and in us. Again a quote from Bonhoeffer is instructive:

“If we are to pray aright, perhaps it is quite necessary that we pray contrary to our own heart. Not what we want to pray is important, but what God wants us to pray. If we were dependent entirely on ourselves, we would probably pray only the fourth petition of the Lord’s Prayer. But God wants it otherwise. The riches of the Word of God ought to determine our prayers, not the poverty of the heart.”

In the Psalms we encounter the riches of God’s Word on prayer. This year during Lent we mine those riches, that Christ may thrill and move and change us through them.

In Christ,

Pastor Josh

February Official Pastoral Acts:

- 3 sick/shut-in visits
- 3 private communions
- 1 pastoral care visit
- 3 leadership meetings
- 8 circuit visitor activities

The **English District Convention** is June 19-21 at Concordia University in Ann Arbor, Michigan. We are still looking for a member of our congregation to serve as our congregational delegate and attend the convention with Pastor. If you might be at all interested, please contact Pastor ASAP.

This month the **Sunday morning Adult Bible Class** will be wrapping up our series on the **Augsburg Confession** – as we tackle the last few articles of this historical document that explains the practical changes and differences between the Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

Our midweek **Lent services** continue this month, preceded by a 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper. On Maundy Thursday (March 29) and Good Friday (March 30) we have distinctive 7 pm services scheduled in remembrance of our Lord's suffering and passion.

March Birthdays

Richard Lamont	3/07
Jan Mertz	3/09
Myles Bremke	3/13
Caleb Moldenhauer	3/16
Myron Bremke	3/20
Brian Jones	3/25
David Jones	3/25
Reilly Jones	3/25
Wayne Hammond	3/29

March Anniversaries

Richard & Joyce Lamont	3/19
Dawn & Gary Coultrip	3/26
Dave & Jen Jones	3/29

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

From the President

I want to take this opportunity to invite everyone to attend Bible Study at 11:30 Sunday mornings. It could be more exciting and rewarding than you might imagine.

Pastor Josh is currently leading us through the life of Martin Luther and the Augsburg Confession. It has all the elements of a blockbuster movie. We have explored mystery, intrigue, power struggles and uncommon courage in the face of life threatening danger.

Through all this we are learning about the roots of our Lutheranism, faith and most importantly our extraordinary relationship with God.

Come try it out.

Evangelism Report

Check out the Outreach Bulletin Board in the hallway to see the Mission of the Month: **NEW LUTHERAN SEMINARY in the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**. Just last month this new seminary was officially opened and dedicated. It's the only one in the whole country – ready to train local men to serve in their local contexts. See the bulletin board for more information and pictures.

As our Mission of the Month, any offerings given this month and labeled “Missions” will be directed to this new Lutheran seminary. It's a chance for each of us to support God's work far away in a very tangible way.

Altar Guild News

Altar Guild will be offering to purchase Easter Lilies to adorn the chancel area for Easter Sunday. Watch the Sunday bulletin for pricing information. The deadline to order will be **March 18, 2018**. I will post a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Please place your money in an envelope marked “LILIES” and put in the offering plate.

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 March: Robin Turnbull

~ Robin

Women's League News

Coffee Fellowship in March:

- | | |
|----|----------------|
| 5 | Heidi Scholl |
| 12 | Anita Saathoff |
| 19 | Carolyn Husted |
| 26 | Marcia Metzger |

Community Hot Meal on March 18 will be hosted by Pat Fraunfelder and Kathy Knipper.

Susan Walker, Jean Palmer and family and friends fed 15 hungry persons at the February Community Hot Meal. We still need volunteers for November and December meals.

Easter will be here soon – April 1 to be exact. LWL plans to once again offer breakfast on Easter Sunday morning. 8:30-9:30 a.m. There will be a sign up sheet posted on the bulletin board for those planning on attending.

LWL will meet on **Thursday March 8 at 7:00 pm**. in the meeting room opposite the kitchen. Important 2018 scheduling to be discussed. All women at Grace are automatically members and are encouraged to attend our meetings.

Daily Bible Readings

Mar. 1	- Psalm 57-58	1-Apr	- Psalm 105:1-11
Mar. 2	- Psalm 59-60	2-Apr	- Psalm 105:12-45
Mar. 3	- Psalm 61-63	3-Apr	- Psalm 106
Mar. 4	- Psalm 64	4-Apr	- Psalm 107
Mar. 5	- Psalm 65-67	5-Apr	- Psalm 108
Mar. 6	- Psalm 68	6-Apr	- Psalm 109
Mar. 7	- Psalm 69	7-Apr	- Psalm 110
Mar. 8	- Psalm 70-71	8-Apr	- Psalm 111
Mar. 9	- Psalm 72	9-Apr	- Zechariah 1-2
Mar. 10	- Psalm 73-74	10-Apr	- Zechariah 3-4
Mar. 11	- Psalm 75	11-Apr	- Zechariah 5-6
Mar. 12	- Psalm 76-77	12-Apr	- Zechariah 7-8
Mar. 13	- Ps. 78-79	13-Apr	- Zechariah 9-10
Mar. 14	- Psalm 80	14-Apr	- Zech. 11:1-12:9
Mar. 15	- Psalm 81	15-Apr	- Zech. 12:10-13:9
Mar. 16	- Psalm 82-83	16-Apr	- Zech. 14
Mar. 17	- Ps. 84-85	17-Apr	- Nahum 1
Mar. 18	- Psalm 86	18-Apr	- Nahum 2
Mar. 19	- Ps. 87-88	19-Apr	- Nahum 3
Mar. 20	- Psalm 89	20-Apr	- Zeph. 1
Mar. 21	- Psalm 90	21-Apr	- Zeph. 2:1-3:7
Mar. 22	- Psalm 91	22-Apr	- Zeph. 3:8-20
Mar. 23	- Ps. 92-93	23-Apr	- Ezekiel 1-2
Mar. 24	- Psalm 94	24-Apr	- Ezekiel 2-3
Mar. 25	- Psalm 95	25-Apr	- Ezekiel 4-5
Mar. 26	- Psalm 96	26-Apr	- Ezekiel 6-7
Mar. 27	- Psalm 97	27-Apr	- Ezekiel 8-9
Mar. 28	- Ps. 98-100	28-Apr	- Ezekiel 10
Mar. 29	- Psalm 101	29-Apr	- Ezekiel 11
Mar. 30	- Psalm 102	30-Apr	- Ezekiel 12-13
Mar. 31	- Psalm 103-104		

March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worship 10 am Memorial Commitee Meeting 11:40 am 	<p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elder's Meeting 4 pm 	<p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation 7 pm 	<p>7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soup & Sandwich Meal 6 pm Lenten Service 7 pm 	<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Illness Support Group 7 pm 	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>11 Daylight Savings Time Begins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worship 10 am Adult Bible Class 11:40 am 	<p>12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council's Meeting 7 pm 	<p>13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation 7 pm 	<p>14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soup & Sandwich Meal 6 pm Lenten Service 7 pm 	<p>15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Illness Support Group 7 pm 	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Hot Meal 5 pm
<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worship 10 am No Bible Class 	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation 7 pm 	<p>21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soup & Sandwich Meal 6 pm Lenten Service 7 pm 	<p>22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's Breakfast at Oberlin Kitchen Diner @ 9:30 am 	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25 <u>Palm Sunday</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worship 10 am Adult Bible Class 11:40 am 	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation 7 pm 	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mauandy Thursday Service 7 pm 	<p>30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Friday Service 7 pm 	<p>31</p>

Upcoming Important Dates:

- April 1: Easter Breakfast 8:30 am—9:30 am
- April 1: Easter Service