

## Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn

493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137  
www.graceglenellyn.org  
Return Service Requested

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod - ELCA

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Grace To You is the monthly newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn.

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### FROM THE PASTOR

Do you ever wish that people would give up asking you what you're giving up for Lent for Lent? Me too.

"Giving something up" isn't a bad practice, actually. It's just that we so often turn "giving something up for Lent" into something fundamentally meaningless. I actually think a helpful approach is to focus on giving up something I know God doesn't want in my life, with the goal of making it a permanent habit. And like all spiritual practices, there's an individual side of this, and there's a community side.

If God were to ask The Church to give something up for Lent, what do you think it would be? There are a lot of possible answers, but the first thing that comes to my mind is "Give up trying to ensure our survival." That's a spiritual practice that is extremely difficult for many congregations. Most conversations, strategic planning, consultations, etc. center on the question, "How can we grow our church?" Which is not-very-subtle code for "How can we get more members so we don't die?" The focus of those conversations should be, "How can we serve Jesus?"

When I walked the 500-mile pilgrimage El Camino de Santiago in Spain 10 years ago, I had a lot of conversations with young people who were beyond finished with the Church. Their primary complaint was that they found the Church to be uncaring and irrelevant, only concerned with itself and its own power, and never with the real lives of people. They were pretty surprised when I described how the ELCA works with

refugees, talks about racism, welcomes LGBTQIA people, etc. One young woman said to me, "I lost my faith when I was 10. How can I get it back? Where can I find a church like yours?" The thing that attracted them was hearing about a church that wasn't focusing on its survival as much as it was focusing on the need in the world, and taking the risks that go with actually engaging it.

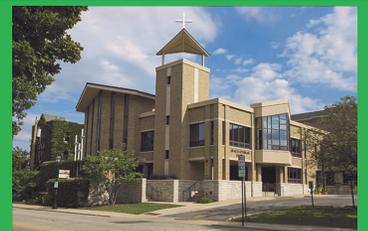
That's the spiritual practice I think God hopes to see from congregations. Give up trying to survive, and focus on giving yourself away instead, to the need of the world. Like all Lenten disciplines, this is pretty challenging. (Hence the "discipline" needed!) It requires laying down fear (Mark 5:36), being willing to leave things behind (Matthew 4:19), letting go of certainty and control and stepping into the unknown (Matthew 14:29-31).

It sounds counter-intuitive, but the less we focus on trying to survive, the more likely we are to survive. (But don't think about that!) The less we focus on survival, the more energy we have for serving. (2 Timothy 1:7) And the more we serve, the stronger our witness to the Gospel of Jesus will be. The stronger our witness, the more people will be drawn to him—and to the congregation that embodies him. But again, the discipline is in not starting at the end of that sentence! Our goal isn't to draw people to Grace, but to draw people to Christ. The best way to do that is by giving ourselves up, so that we can better reveal him. (Galatians 2:20) And that practice isn't just for Lent, but for our whole life together.

And hey, props to all of you who actually looked those verses up!

# GRACE TO YOU

*Proclaim, Build, and Serve*



## ASH WEDNESDAY IS FEBRUARY 26

This year we will offer **two services with the Imposition of Ashes** at 12:30 and 7:00. Each service will be preceded by a simple soup meal at 11:30 and 6:00. Start your Lent practice with the support of the community surrounding you!



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME: Sunday, March 8, 2:00am** clocks are turned **forward** one hour.

## COMING UP IN MARCH AT ADULT FORUM

Once again, we're getting an intergenerational take on the classic confirmation questions that confused you in middle school! Grace's Confirmation Class will be joining us to ask the questions that you wish you had asked back in the day:

### March 1 – *Justification by Faith*

It's a phrase you hear all the time in Lutheran churches, and you know it's the right answer to some catechetical question or other, but what does it actually mean for day-to-day life?

### March 8 – *The Cross*

How can a symbol of torture and oppression be something we consider beautiful? How is a Theology of the Cross different from a Theology of Glory—and why are Lutherans so obsessed with the “downer” side of that continuum?

### March 15 – *No Class*

Join us for a Green St. Paddy's Potluck! Yes, the “Green” refers to environmentally friendly—bring your own non-disposable tableware if you can. We'll provide a brunch main dish. If you're able, please contribute a brunch side of your choice.

### March 22 – *Saint & Sinner*

Another foundational Lutheran idea that isn't really about shame, but about finding freedom and grace in a healthy balance of honesty, accountability, love of self and love of the neighbor.

### March 29 – *No Class (Spring Break)*

We may have No Class but we always have coffee! Join some friends for fellowship and a sweet bite.

## SOCIAL MINISTRY UPCOMING EVENTS

Following the service on **March 15** there will be a “Green” **St. Patrick's Day Potluck Brunch**. Bring your own non-disposable dishes, utensils, and a potluck side dish to share. The main course will be provided.

**Save the Date! The Progressive Dinner will be held on Saturday, April 25.** Additional details will be posted as they become available.

## FAITH TALK

**THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 10:00-11:30AM**

Join us for a virtual trip to Egypt with Pastor Melody, on a visit to St. Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai. St. Catherine's is the world's oldest continuously functioning site of Christian worship, and has housed the world's oldest continuously functioning library since the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the oldest copies of scripture have been discovered there, and the history of the faith community there is fascinating and surprising. Pastor Melody visited St. Catherine's last year; there are lots of cool slides and stories!

## MONDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS

Starting on **March 2, 7:00pm**, will study the Letter to the Hebrews. The study guide from Augsburg-Fortress Press written by Janet Corpus will take us through the key themes of the Letter in six sessions.

The Letter to the Hebrews is a complex and interesting Book, considered by many to be the most polished and eloquent Book of the New Testament. First of all, no one knows who wrote it. Several notable early Christians have been suggested. The Letter links passages from the Hebrew Bible to the concerns of the Christian community coming under persecution in the late first century. The unknown author tries to lead the reader to an understanding of the nature, life and ministry of Jesus and then explore Christian faith and conduct in a hostile world.

The Monday night group has become cohesive over the years, sharing treats and conversation as well as our Bible study. Still, there is always room for more, and we will make you feel welcome. Contact Mark Hamilton or Vince Hardt if you have not participated before and wish to join us now. We will make sure there are sufficient course guides available.

## FAMILY MINISTRY PAGE

### SUNDAY MORNING FAITH FORMATION 10:15-11:00AM

**Sundays, March 1, 8, & 22:** Spark (Preschool-K), Shine (1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade), & Ignite Confirmation (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade) will meet. Please bring your bibles to class with you!

**Ignite Confirmation:** This month you will be continuing your Sunday Morning Faith Formation study with Pastor Melody upstairs in the Adult Forum. All subjects covered come directly from our Confirmation curriculum, giving both Confirmation students and adults the opportunity to reflect on the following topics: March 1-Justification by Faith; March 8-The Cross; March 22-Saint & Sinner

**Fusion High School Monthly Gospel Study:** This group will meet in the Ignite Confirmation Room in March. Dominic LoGalbo will lead this discussion on **Sunday March 1, 10:15-11:00am**.

**ALL Faith Formation will be on break March 25 for a St. Patrick's Day "Green" Potluck Brunch immediately following worship and on March 29 & April 5 due to Spring Break.**

### HOLY COMMUNION OPPORTUNITY

Any students in 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade are invited to participate in Holy Communion instruction. On **Sunday, April 19** we will offer Holy Communion Instruction from 2:00-3:30pm. We ask that at least one caretaker stay with the student during this class. We will enjoy an afternoon snack together, bake Communion Bread, and learn all about how and why we practice Holy Communion each Sunday. The following Sunday, April 26 will be Holy Communion Sunday where we will celebrate this milestone with the students during the service. Please see Becky Ficarella or Pastor Melody with any questions.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT IGNITE CONFIRMATION

Grace Lutheran Church & Faith Lutheran Church have partnered together for Wednesday Night Confirmation. This group will meet each Wednesday night at Faith Lutheran Church (41 Park Boulevard in Glen Ellyn) from 7:00-8:30pm. The sessions will feature a lecture from Pastor Joe Yucha, following with the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students breaking into small group discussions to dive even deeper into the topic. Becky Ficarella will be on site to assist with Small Group Leadership. This group will meet Wednesdays in March. Since we are in the Season of Lent, the students will attend Wednesday Night Service at Faith Lutheran beginning at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary, followed by Confirmation instruction until 8:30pm.

### FUTURE 2020 DATES FOR GENERATIONS CHOIR

Bring a potluck item to share for dinner. We will meet for dinner from 6:00-6:45pm and then sing in the balcony from 6:45-7:15pm. Young and old are invited! You do not need to read music to join this group. ALL ARE WELCOME!

**March:** No Generations due to midweek Lenten worship

**April:** Rehearsal is Wednesday, April 15, presenting at worship on Sunday, April 19

**May & June:** Generations is on break!

**July:** Rehearsal is Wednesday, July 15, presenting at worship on Sunday, July 19

**August:** Rehearsal is Wednesday, August 12, presenting at worship on Sunday, August 16

Please let Becky Ficarella know if you have any questions!  
bficarella@graceglenellyn.org 630-469-1555 x17

GRACE LIBRARY

Did you know we have a library? It is located in Becky's office. There are books for all ages. Many of them have come from the Book Fairs that have been held at Grace. So stop by and check out a book! This picture only shows a portion of the available materials in our library.



CELEBRATION OF TABLES

GLEN ELLYN FOOD PANTRY FUNDRAISER



The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual *Celebration of Tables* fundraiser will be held on **March 7<sup>th</sup>** at the Glen Oak Country Club. *Celebration of Tables* is now the signature annual fundraiser for the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry, produced in partnership with the Glen Ellyn Newcomers Club.

The event features gorgeous — sometimes outrageous — tables personalized by local businesses, GE Newcomers, friends and other stylists. Enjoy a mimosa as you stroll around two dozen decorated tables and take time to appreciate the art of entertaining at the table. Brunch is included, along with cash bar, free valet, raffle and live music. In line with the Pantry's mission, we will be collecting shelf-stable food donations at the event.

Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased in advance at [www.celebrationoftables.com](http://www.celebrationoftables.com), at Marcel's (490 N. Main St.), at the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry, or buy at the door.

Attend with your neighbor who loves throwing parties, bring a friend, mom or sister who appreciates a glass of wine and enjoys admiring highly creative table decorations and decor, or share with anyone who supports the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry's mission.

WEEKLY BUILDING USAGE

Sunday	8:30am	Grace Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	9:00am	Grace Lutheran Worship
Sunday	10:15am	Faith Formation
Sunday	1:00-5:00pm	FCCC Classes & Worship Service
Sunday	5:00-6:00pm	Support Group
Mon-Fri	9:00-1:00pm	Senior Service Center
3rd Monday	9:00-11:00am	Food Pantry Board of Directors
Monday	11:00-12:30pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
Monday	1:00-3:00pm	Food Pantry for Clients
2nd Monday	5:30pm	Executive Committee
3rd Monday	6:00pm	Grace Finance Ministry
3rd Monday	7:00pm	Grace Church Council
Monday	7:00pm	Bible Study
1st Tuesday	10:00am	Social Ministry
3rd Tuesday	10:00-Noon	Sr. Center Book Club
1st Tuesday	11:00-12:30pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
2nd Tuesday	11:00-12:30pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
4th Tuesday	11:00-12:30pm	Sr. Center Exercise Class
Tuesday	1:00-3:00pm	Wooly Knitters
Tuesday	1-3pm & 5-7pm	Food Pantry for Clients
Tuesday	6:00-7:30pm	Pill Bottle Project
1st Tuesday	6:00pm	Grace Property Ministry
Tuesday	6:45-9:30pm	Society for Creative Anachronism
1st Wednesday	9:30-11:15am	Community Quilters
3rd Wednesday	9:30-11:15am	Community Quilters
4th Wednesday	10:00-Noon	Sr. Center Movie
3rd Wednesday	11:15am	Faith & Friendship Luncheon
Wednesday	12:30pm	Grace Lutheran Worship
Wednesday	1:00-3:00pm	Food Pantry for Clients
Wednesday	7:00pm	Grace Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday	8:00-10:00pm	Support Group
2nd Thursday	10:00-11:30am	Women's FaithTalk
Thursday	1:00-3:00pm	Food Pantry for Clients
4th Thursday	7:00pm	Women of Grace
2nd Thursday	7:30-10:00pm	Trad Irish Music Session
Friday	6:30-7:45pm	Support Group
Saturday	8:30-11:00am	Sunflower Dancers
Saturday	9:00-1:00pm	Slancholedi Language School
Saturday	6:00-8:00pm	FCCC Worship

CIRCLE OF CARE

Do you sometimes see someone listed in prayers that you would like to send a card to, but you don't have one at home and then too much time passes to send one? Well now there is no reason for a missed opportunity. Just head into Becky's office and select a card off the rack! These cards aren't just here to acknowledge church members, you may also select cards for anyone you know for any event that you like. Share your thoughts with a card and brighten somebody's day!



**BROWN BAG AND BUDGET**

Bring lunch if you like, and join us for a small group to help encourage and guide anyone who wants to improve their money management skills. Whether you use a budget app, an Excel spreadsheet on your computer, or pencil and paper, we will share tips to help you balance your budget. Our next meeting will be on **Sunday March 8 from 11:30-12:30**. As long as interest continues, we will meet on the second Sunday of every month. Bring your laptop if you use one.

**ALL AGES BARN DANCE**

Come join us in Grace’s Gym on **Sunday, March 8 from 2:00-3:30pm** for live music, which includes a dance “caller” to instruct the group which dance steps to follow. This is a great work out and a joyful time for all. Bring a friend and step to the beat!

**GENERATIONS CHOIR WILL NOT MEET IN MARCH. JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15**

**Women of Grace**

Come join us for fellowship and food on **Thursday, March 26**. We will gather at Arrowhead Golf Course in Wheaton from 7:00-9:00pm. Bring a friend and join in the fun!

**FAITH AND FRIENDSHIP**

Come in out of the cold for a warm bowl of soup and warm fellowship with Grace friends. We will meet for lunch and fellowship on **Wednesday, March 18 at 11:15am**. All are welcome! Come join us!!

**STAR SANGHA SONIC SPRING EQUINOX CEREMONY**

Join Becky Ficarella and *Star Sangha* in Grace’s gym on **Friday, March 20 at 7:00pm** for a heart-opening celebration of the Spring Equinox--a time when day and night are in balance. *Star Sangha* will use their voices to open space where our spirits can play, re-balance, and experience new energy connecting to the beauty of the cosmos through sound. The labyrinth will be available for walking meditation and prayer. Love offerings are greatly appreciated.



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN**

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
 493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania Avenue  
 Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137  
 Office: 630.469.1555  
 Emergency Pastoral Contact: 630.674.2887  
 Email: info@graceglenellyn.org

**www.graceglenellyn.org**

**Every Member: Minister & Missionary!**

Melody Eastman, Pastor  
 Becky Ficarella, Ministry Associate  
 Carole LoGalbo, M.S., LCPC Parish Counselor  
 Barbara Sudds, Office Manager  
 Bradford Thompson, Minister of Music

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30am - 3:00pm  
 Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 - 3:00pm

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

Dorothy Tracy, Sigrid Elliott, Rich Davison, Scott Kacz, Paul Gergola, Benjamin Cuatzo, and Susan Papierski for healing and strength.  
 Mark Frerichs and family for safety and strength.  
 Anniversary wishes to Jerry & Brigitte Miller, March 6 (56) and Jim & Helen Sladek, March 22 (62).

**Prayers for our Homebound Members:**

Farrel Benefield, Anita Blakemore; Bob Claus, Evelyn Elson, Patricia Moore, Carol Peterson

**NOSES AND NUMBERS**

DATE	ATTENDANCE		OFFERING
	SUNDAY	WEDNESDAY	
1/5	84	8	\$ 4,528
1/12	61	7	\$ 2,760
1/19	65	13	\$ 6,810
1/26	90	8	\$11,301

Grace’s total income through January 2020 is \$31,196 while expenses incurred during the same period are \$42,780.

**GRACE TO YOU**

**ARTICLE SUBMISSION SCHEDULE**

Submit articles and photos to the church office at info@graceglenellyn.org.

**April Issue  
 Due March 4**

**May Issue  
 Due April 1**