

Greetings from Grace

February 2022

The Newsletter
for members of
Grace Lutheran Church
422 Valhi Blvd.
Houma, LA 70360
Pastor Rich Rudnik
Phone: 985-879-1865
Fax: 985-879-1833
Email:
secretary@gracehouma.org
Web Page:
<http://www.gracehouma.org/>



Pastor's corner:

Opting for Absence

To livestream the worship service or to not livestream the worship service, that is the question; or was the question at a recent Board of Directors meeting at GLC. While Facebook Live has most certainly been a blessing for worshipers during the pandemic lockdowns, a very real concern is that folks are getting used to staying home on Sunday, getting lazy and falling out of the routine of real in-person worship. As Covid becomes an endemic virus society is opening back up and virtual worshipers will face a choice; get out of your pajamas and come to church or continue claiming Covid is a valid reason to stay away.

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'" (Psalm 121:1)

I'm still recovering from Omicron so I know it's serious. I know there are some high-risk folks taking major precautions to protect themselves so I am very reticent as your pastor to demand folks return to in-person worship. I also know that some folks who are not attending live worship are happily hanging out at Walmart, restaurants, family gatherings and other social gatherings that are a much higher risk than spending 75 minutes in Grace's large, airy sanctuary. Such behavior states the obvious—you're not glad to go to the house of the Lord.

Let's revisit one of Christ's parables: *"A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'"* And another said, "I can stay in bed and watch it live-streamed, so even though I'm totally blowing off your banquet, in my own mind I'll pretend that I'm still loving and honoring you and taking part. *"So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"* (Luke 14:16-24, plus my embellishment)

Christ has commanded that His church gather together in person for very good reasons: to be formally blessed by His Word proclaimed and His Sacraments delivered for the forgiveness of sins; to encourage and admonish one another in the faith; to pray, praise and give thanks; to support the ministry of His church; and to be a public light to unbelievers as we act together in Christian love. He has clearly commanded regarding His body and blood: *"Do this..."*

Refusing to gather in worship when one is perfectly willing to participate in the world is nothing less than declining the king's invitation. The folks in the parable made what they considered to be good excuses for their absence. In the end they received exactly what they desired—absence from the king's banquet. The banquet Christ's church serves up is Jesus Himself for forgiveness, life and salvation.

Do you gladly go to the house of the Lord to tangibly receive this Gospel in the loving ways Christ offers it? Or are you willing to absent yourself from that for the convenience of livestream?

For the time being the GLC board decided to continue Facebook Live worship. And again, I don't mean to afflict the consciences of those high-risk individuals who are genuinely taking all necessary precautions to avoid Covid infection. But for those who are simply using Facebook Live as an excuse to stay home on Sunday, remember the admonition from Hebrews 10:25, *"...not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near."* When that day arrives, I seriously doubt livestreaming will continue to be an option.

Lectionary Readings:

February 6, 2022—Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany (Green)	Isaiah 6:1-8, 1 Corinthians 14:12b-20, Luke 5:1-11
February 13, 2022—Sixth Sunday After the Epiphany (Green)	Jeremiah 17:5-8, 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, Luke 6:17-26
February 20, 2022—Seventh Sunday After the Epiphany (Green)	Genesis 45:3-15, 1 Corinthians 15:21-26, 30-42, Luke 6:27-38
February 27, 2022—The Transfiguration of Our Lord (White)	Deuteronomy 34:1-12, Hebrews 3:1-6, Luke 9:38-39

2022 Board of Directors

President: Bonnie Dupre
Board Secretary: Bridgette Rudnik
Treasurer: Lisa Giroir
Christian Ed. Chair: Kristen Gouaux
Stewardship Chair: Kim Cape
Mission Outreach Chair: OPEN

Vice-President: Jerrie Fitzgerald
Financial Secretary: Bonnie Dupre
Activities Chair: Brandy Lirette
Social Ministry Chair: OPEN
Property Chair: Dale Boger

2022 Elders

Derek Crawford, Joey Souther, John Wegner and Joe Deane

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod - LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article - February 2022

God in Man Made Manifest

The season of Epiphany focuses on how God was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the miracles, signs, and wonders of Jesus in the world. And this made plain to all that Jesus really is who He said He was. He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

It is revealed for all the world to see that Jesus is God in the flesh. It is made manifest by His words and His work, by what He said and by what He did. And these belong together, for “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Jesus is the Word and will of God in the flesh, that is, He is the walking, talking enactment of God’s Word.

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts but also to trust in God in word and deed. As James wrote: “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22), and again, “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead” (James 2:14, 17-18, 26).

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only but also in deed and in truth. In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different people, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit.

Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God’s grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools. (Preface to the Book of Romans)

So, then, let our faith be active by God’s power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor - in church, in the family, and society - with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

Lector Opportunity

GLC will soon be returning to the use of lay persons reading Holy Scripture during the worship service. Volunteers must be able to read boldly and clearly. If you wish to read, please submit your name to Pastor Rich by email or written note even if you have been a reader in the past. Once a current group of volunteers is identified, Pastor Rich will offer a short lector training class.

2022 Flower Chart & Altar Flowers

The Flower Chart for this year is up on the bulletin board near the Sacristy. There are still several weeks available for dedications and celebrations. Stop by on Sunday and fill in a week or two for you or your family to receive the flowers for that Sunday. Altar Flowers are available for pick up immediately following the worship service on Sunday. Vases are available to borrow upon request, but please return them promptly as the church has a limited supply. Any flowers not picked up on Sunday are fair game for Pastor Rich to give away on his hospital and shut-in visits during the week.

Special note: The beautiful altar flowers we enjoy every Sunday are donated by Gloria Ashley. She continues to bless Grace with this gift of love. If you would like to send Gloria a “thank you” note, her address is: 226 Hampton, Houma, LA. 70364.

Lenten, Holy Week, & Easter Sunday Schedule

Ash Wednesday, March 2

Service in Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays Midweek Service

March 9 through April 6

Service in Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

Maunder Thursday, April 14

Holy Communion service in sanctuary at 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 15

Tenebrae Service in sanctuary at 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 17

Worship 9:00 a.m.

No Sunday School scheduled

In the palm of God’s Hands...

HEALTH CONCERNS: Hunter Moore, Joe Deane, Mary Deane, Mike Wallace, Shirley Mitchell & Tina Williams

BATTLING CANCER: Cindy Gorham, Jay Cruse, John Adams, Karen Curtis, Mari Tabor, Nan Ashley Hebert, Penny Emling & Ursula Breaux

CHRONIC CONDITIONS & ELDERLY: Brian Hoover, Camile Adams, Cindy Deane, Connie Oswald, Edna Marie Sevin, Helen Hoover, Jackie Webb, Kim Cape, Lisa Ledet, Mary Ann Keller, Rene Rolland, Richard LaCour, Sue Ackett & Virginia Cunningham

MOURNING A LOSS: the family of Georgette Savoie, Jean Angelbeck & Joe Deane Jr..

SERVING IN OUR ARMED FORCES & THEIR FAMILY: Andrew Winn, Haily Crawford, Heather Darce, Jack Hansen, Kyle Turcott, Leo Lampinen, Matthew Spolarich, Natalie Turcott, Nigel Koorie, Todd Mueller, Tom Hemminger, Victoria Shroyer & Zhain Shroyer

COLLEGE STUDENTS: Adriana Vitrano, Annie Reaves, Armand Erhart, Blayne Barras, Brandon Cinnater, Brooks Thomas, Emma Thomas, Donovan Domangue, Fielden Baker, Gabbie Corbitt, Hannah Cuneo, Hannah Norman, Harleigh Dahl, Isabella Appenzeller, Karly Kyzar, Madeleine Boudreaux, Peyton Kraus, Ross Reaves, Sophia Miller & Victoria Thalheim

Grace’s Mission

**Building one body in Christ through Worship, Witness,
Stewardship, Service, Love, Teaching and Fellowship**



Building One Body in Christ Through Worship, Witness,
Stewardship, Service, Love, Teaching and Fellowship

February 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
BD= Birthday BA=Baptismal Anniversary W=Wedding Anniversary		1 Donna Boger BA Lisa Giroir BA Ruth	2 Confirmation 4:30pm William Williams BD Psalms 27-29	3 Lorie Moreau-LaPlume BD Job 19-20	4 Darin Crawford BD Isalah 51-55	5 Thbodaux Worship Spm St. John's Episcopal Church Matthew 26-28
Epiphany V Worship 9am/Food Bank Coffee & Baked Goods SS for all ages 10:45am Zaylee Dinger BD Lorie Southern BD I Corinthians 3-4	7 Genesis 40-43	8 Bible study 1pm Dave Atkins BA Derek Crawford BA I Samuel 1-5	9 Confirmation 4:30pm Cassie Domangue BD Steven Kinsella BD Jacob Moise BA Psalms 30-32	10 Jenny Jones BD Job 21-22	11 Connie Oswalt BA Jenny Jones BD Isalah 56-61	12 Connie Oswalt BA Mark 1-2
Epiphany VI Worship 9am/Mite Boxes MG Baked Goods follow SS for all ages 10:45am I Corinthians 5-6	14 President's Day D. & G. Armstrong W Genesis 44-47	15 Bible study 1pm I Samuel 6-10	16 Confirmation 4:30pm D. & K. Greve W Psalms 33-35	17 Sunl Dupre BA Job 23-24	18 Isalah 62-66	19 Mark 3-4
Epiphany VII Worship 9am Youth Biscuits follow SS for all ages 10:45am George Bauman BD I Corinthians 7-8	21 Wendy Domangue BD Genesis 48-50	22 Bible study 1pm I Samuel 11-15	23 Confirmation 4:30pm Richard LaCour BD J. & M. Johnston W Psalms 36-38	24 St. Matthias, Apostle PIPELINER ARTICLES DUE Carmen Cunningham BD Darin Crawford BA Job 25-26	25 Jeremiah 1-6	26 Gail Atkins BD Kim Cape BD Ellen DeSoto BD Alec Cunningham BA Mark 5-6
Transfiguration Sunday Worship 9am Fall Festival Muffins follow SS for all ages 10:45am Cindy Bush BD I Corinthians 9-10	28 Exodus 1-4			<p>Grace Lutheran Church and Early Childhood Center 422 Valhi Boulevard Houma, LA. 70360 985-879-1885 / 1833 (fax) secretary@gracehouma.org www.gracehouma.org</p>		

<http://www.bible-reading.com/bible-calendar.html>