

Good News of Grace



Family Worship Times

Sunday 8:00am & 10:30am

Sunday School 9:15am

Pastors

Michael Buchhorn & Erik Christensen

904 Logan Wayne, NE 402-375-1905

John 8:11 "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

As we look ahead to beginning of another year and reflect on the year closing, I would imagine that we may have done some things that we are not proud of, things that were embarrassing or just plain stupid. We may have done some things that were careless, things that caused others to worry. Perhaps we have hurt someone by what we have said or done, maybe we have betrayed a trust or done something mean and spiteful. Perhaps we have left undone something that needed to be done.

In the Gospel of John, we are told the story of a person who I'm certain had some things she wished she could undo. She was caught in the act of adultery and was hauled before Jesus and a large crowd. We learn as the story unfolds that she became a pawn in a larger conflict between the religious leaders and Jesus. She would be a test case.

The power play aside, it was a dangerous and humiliating situation for her. Someone in the crowd called out, "**Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?**" There she stood her sin exposed to all the world.

What would Jesus say? We probably remember his reply. Jesus said, "**Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.**" Jesus' words were a reminder that the only one who is qualified to condemn sin is the one without sin. At Jesus' words the crowd began to

disperse the oldest to the youngest. The older ones perhaps more quickly realizing their sin or the impossibility of attempting to appear without sin.

The woman was left alone before Jesus. He was without sin. He could rightfully condemn her. Jesus could have recounted all her history of adulteries. What would he say to her?

Jesus asked the woman, "**Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?**" Then Jesus speaks extraordinary words to her. Jesus simply said, "**Neither do I condemn you.**" Can you hear God saying that concerning you?

Thankfully God makes us a precious promise that He can and will say just that to us. He promises in His word, "**If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.**" (1JN 1:8-9). Jesus could speak words of release because He knew He would pay for the adulterous woman's sins as He stood condemned and hanging on the cross.

Certainly God knows what we have done. He knows it even better than we ourselves know it. But in love he chose to forgive the woman caught in adultery. In love God chooses to forgive you and me as well. What blessed news we do not have to try to hide our flaws and mistakes from God.

But then what? Jesus did not forgive the woman caught in adultery, so that she could hop back into bed with someone else. No, He told her, "**Go and from now on sin no more.**" She was given the chance to begin again down the path God intended for her.

Repeatedly in the Bible we hear similar words. We are set free so that we may leave sin behind and not continue in it any longer. Listen to God's words through the prophet Isaiah "**Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right!**" 1:16 When Jesus healed the man who had been an invalid for 38 years he told him "**Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.**" John 5:14.

As forgiven sinners we are given a new beginning. That new beginning comes with the opportunity not to repeat the mistakes of the past. God tells us: "Go and sin no more. Leave your life of sin. Stop sinning. Do not let sin reign in your mortal body." We are called to use this new beginning to conduct our lives in a manner which is pleasing to God. If our sin has caused others pain, we should in good conscience attempt to make amends. If we have stolen, we should return what we have taken, if we have spoken harmful words we should apologize. That is part of what it means to "Go and sin no more."

Our steps and efforts in this direction will certainly be marked with pitfalls. We will no doubt be unable to perfectly do what we should. Yet this is our goal. We live in this world to live a Christ like life. We strive to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of us. Forgiven by God we go forward to live the future as God's redeemed and restored creatures. St. Paul put it this way, ¹² **I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.** ¹³ **Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,** ¹⁴ **I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.** Philippians 3

Make the most of the season of grace God opens to us in the new year. Begin at the foot of the Savior acknowledging your sins, hear His word of absolution and then go forward following in our Savior's steps. May we encourage each other to that end for Jesus' sake.

College Sunday Night Dinners

Sunday Night Dinners for our College Students, Young Adults, and anyone who wants to join us will start back up on January 9th. Remember these meals start at 7:30pm. Thank you to everyone who has signed up and offered to prepare a wonderful meal for us in the past, and please don't forget to sign up for this semester! The schedule is hanging on the church door. We greatly appreciate all of your help!

Sunday Night College Bible Devotion – The Chosen!

We have two awesome opportunities for College Bible Studies this year! The first will take place Sunday evenings before our dinner. We will do a quick devotion using the 40-Day Devotional from The Chosen! We hope you enjoy it and plan to join us for some awesome fellowship! In case you have no clue what The Chosen is, then here is a quick description. The Chosen is an amazing tv show about the life of Christ and his first Apostles! They explore in a very real way the ups and downs of how being a follower of Jesus can impact our lives. They take a look at the complexity that the name of Christian brings to us, and yet they show that the gifts that are lavished upon us as God's children far outweigh the things that are sacrificed. Particularly, the gift of life, forgiveness, love and mercy are more freeing and uplifting than we can ever truly know. We would love for you to join us for some amazing food and fellowship as we gather around God's love!

Weekly College Bible Study – Gospel of John

If you can't make it to our Sunday Night Dinner and Bible Study then you can hopefully join us for our other Bible Study for college students, young adults, and again anyone who is young at heart! We don't check id's at the door so please come join us if you love talking about Jesus! This study will be covering the Gospel of John and we plan to start this the week of January 10th. More specific details will be coming soon as to where and when we will meet. But if you are interested contact Pastor Erik for more information.

High School Sunday School Class

Our current High School Sunday School Class is called, "GENESIS, SCIENCE, AND THE FOUNDING FATHERS!" Come join our High School Youth, Parents, and interested Adults Class as we unlock a "boat load" of topics in Genesis and how they totally apply to our day and our times. Ever wondered if science can confirm the Bible? Ever wanted to know what pearls of wisdom God's Word has to offer us for life today? And who were the founding fathers? Were they really just agnostics, deists or can they point us to the truth about Jesus and the Bible? Come join us as we discover how these three pieces actually fit together, in our new study through the beginning of God's Word... Genesis! Be sure to invite your friends and check out our schedule below!

High School Wednesday Bible Study

We are continuing an important part of our High School Christian Education at Grace this year in the Wednesday Evening Bible Studies! We will host these Bible Studies on the First AND Third Wednesdays of every month. In January we will meet on the 5th and 19th down at Cup of Grace from 7:45pm to 9:00pm. If you can join us, please do so. These studies again are open to all High Schoolers and their friends who are interested in growing closer to God and each other. We will use the book titled 10 Questions Every Teen Should Ask (And Answer) About Christianity, as well as the Bible to dive deep into God's Word for our lives!

Youth January 21st Lock-In:

After getting your feedback from our survey on youth inspired events, we have decided to offer a Lock-In during the month of January. This Lock-In would take place Friday, January 21st. We will need at least 1 parent to stay with us that evening. We will play games, have a few Bible studies, make Care Packages to take to the Police, Firemen, and First Responders. And potentially even offer a time to bake some delicious cookies! Come join us for a night to remember and we hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

MidWeek Classes

MidWeek Classes for 3rd graders through 8th graders will continue to meet during the month of January. We will go back to our original starting time of 6:30pm. Mark your calendars to join us for these awesome studies! Please remember that if the school is closed because of weather we will also cancel these classes. We want you to be safe and we have plenty of time to make these lessons up.

National Youth Gathering Fundraiser

Thank you so much for helping us with our Holiday Ham Sale! Together we have raised just under \$14,000 out of an estimated \$22,800. This doesn't consider our Holiday Ham Sale. But as you see we still have a way to go in raising all of the money we will need for this amazing trip. In light of that we are quickly pivoting to our next fundraiser. More specific details to come soon. But we will be partnering with our local Runza for our next event. January 10th our Youth Group will be greeting customers, delivering orders, and cleaning tables from 5pm to 8pm. 15% of all proceeds from that time will be donated back to our group. If you would enjoy a night out and are interested in helping us reach Houston, then come eat a Runza burger with us. We greatly appreciate all of your love and support!

Thank you Thank you to all who helped to make our Advent and Christmas season a time of joy and spiritual growth. A particular word of thanks to those who helped to decorate our sanctuary and care for the plants, our midweek meal hosts, our Sunday School staff for organizing our program, our musicians for the beautiful musical selections, our office helpers and custodians for cheerfully handling the extra work the season entailed. Thank you also to each of you who helped bring a message of hope or encouragement to others. May God continue to bless our congregation and allow us to work together with joyful hearts in service of the Savior and one another.

Preschool

The preschool students have been busy this month! We learned about different holiday traditions, and the students were able to taste gingerbread houses! They also made Christmas ornaments to take home! Holiday needs and wants were also explored. We continue to learn the story of the birth of Jesus, by opening gifts every week to discover "What God Wants For Christmas." The students will be watching the Nativity movie, and we will also end the month with our Christmas parties and gift exchange.

In January, the students will explore arctic animals, trying new things, and snow and ice. We will also learn about the life of Dr. King. Have a Merry Christmas and enjoy the time with your families!

Grace Lutheran Ladies Aid

December 8, 2021

December 8, 2021 the Grace Lutheran Ladies Aid celebrated the joys of Christmas by hosting a Christmas tea. Fourteen members, Pastor Eric and numerous guests were present. Pastor Eric presented the Christmas program by showing the video "The Chosen" followed by comments relating the Christmas story to today's world.

President Rhonda Sebade led the group in the recitation of the LWML pledge. There was no formal business meeting. Installation of officers for the 2022 year will be at the January meeting. Treasurer's books need to be audited by the January meeting.

Rhonda Sebade, Mary Lou Erxleben and Jan Casey presented the program entitled "Blessings of Christmas Today". Through out the program the group sang Christmas hymns which coincided with the program message.

The birthday song was sung for those having December birthdays. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Sunday School Updates and Reminders

This year, the 4th-grade and 5th-grade were combined, and it has been incredible seeing new friendships grow. As a class we have been studying the books of the Bible, as well as diving deeper into the Ten Commandments. This is the main focus that is happening in Midweek, and in Sunday School the kids are learning Bible stories, as well as how to write and say their own prayers. A memorable moment thus far was the students learning about Mary and Martha. Another amazing moment for these kids was the week when the 4th-8th graders were all together. They created teams and included each other equally, regardless of grade level, which was especially touching. Lastly, I love it when my joy for teaching transfers to the students. I remember telling them about one of my favorite stories and sharing how some heroes in the Bible are formed from the least expected. The students loved this conversation and gave examples of their own people. I look forward to taking on the next half of the year with this amazing group of kids. They do a great job of making the classroom feel just like home. I hope to continue seeing all of the students in the holiday season, as well as into the new year!

-Symphony Jareske

Upcoming Lessons Include:

January 2nd – The Thankful One – Jesus Heals Ten Lepers

January 9th – The Kingdom of Children – Jesus Blesses The Children

January 16th – The Passion Prediction – Mary Anoints Jesus

January 23rd – The King Arrives – Jesus Rides Into Jerusalem

January 30th – The Trusting One – Jesus Teaches About Offerings

In January, Sunday School Openings will continue to meet down in the church basement. Parents should plan to join their children as we kick off the morning with snacks, and a time of great fellowship at 9:15am. Immediately following this time of fellowship we are continuing to meet in the church sanctuary for music practice. Music is open to all classes and will be working on songs for our upcoming performances during church services in the new year.

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way with our special Children's Christmas Program called "*The Friendly Beasts!*" This was an awesome event, and it is all thanks to your dedication and hearts of love! I hope you got as much joy from working and helping the kids, as I know the families did from hearing the story of Christmas told once again. And a special thank you to Julie Bose our fearless director who went above and beyond to bring us such a special Christmas!

Again, as the calendar page flips please be watching for upcoming Sunday School events. We will be hosting a few fellowship events through the spring and summer that you don't want to miss. These of course include our annual Vacation Bible School. VBS this year will take place in June with more specific

details coming soon. But the theme for our 2022 VBS is **Zoomerang!!!** “At Zoomerang, the newest Answers VBS, you’ll marvel at the unforgettable wild-life, culture, and beauty of Australia while exploring the wonder and value of life. During this pro-life VBS, kids will discover that life is valuable. From the tiniest to the oldest, each person is made in the image of God—wonderfully designed to know and follow Jesus!”

Finally, our Sunday School and MidWeek Teachers Meeting for January will take place on January 13th at the usual time of 6:30PM. Covering administrative information for the start of 2022!

Respectfully,

The Sunday School Program (pastorerik@gracewayne.com)

For over 15 years, Grace Lutheran Church and surrounding communities have been supporting the local blood bank, LifeServe Blood Center, at the community blood drives. The blood drive was held Tuesday, December 7th to help the blood center keep inventory levels high as we make our way through a busy holiday season with an increased need for blood. LifeServe Blood Center was able to collect 32 units of blood, that has the ability to save up to 96 local lives. We also celebrate the following donors who hit milestones with his or her most recent donation: MIKE TEMME – 1 Gallon, and VIRGIL LOEWE JR – 15 Gallon!

Congratulations, Grace Lutheran Church, for another successful year of blood donation! You successfully donated 215 units of blood that has the ability to save up to 675 local lives. This was the highest number of units collected at Grace Lutheran since 2008!

We also want to thank Mary Rastede and Vickie Greve for the delicious treats they provide each blood donation day. Your service is greatly appreciated.

The next blood drive at Grace Lutheran will be Tuesday, February 15th, 2021, from 1:00pm – 6:00pm. Thanks to everyone who came out to show their support, **be sure to text ‘LIFESERVE’ to 999-777** to make your next appointment and we look forward to seeing you next time!

Mission Council Minutes

December 13, 2021

The Mission council at Grace Lutheran Church met at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, December 13, 2021. The following members were present: Deb Jensen, Pastor Buchhorn, Angie Beiermann, Dwight Mock, Chuck Potosnyak, Brian Frevert, Megan Dubbs, Lowell Johnson, Justin Anderson, Chad Janke, Neal Greenwood and Heather Reinhardt.

The meeting was called to order by Chad Janke, in Jerry Echtenkamp's absence.

Pastor Buchhorn led with an opening prayer.

The minutes from November 8, 2021, were reviewed. It was moved by Justin and seconded by Chuck to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Deb presented the financial reports for November 2021. It was moved by Angie and seconded by Megan to approve the financial reports. Motion carried. Earlier in the year a \$15,000 gift was given to the congregation with the hope it would be used for a special project, at that time it was placed in the general fund until a suitable project was identified. After discussion, a motion was made by Justin and seconded by Deb to move the \$15,000 gift from the general fund to the Air Conditioner Replacement Fund. Motion carried.

Elder's report - Chuck Potosnyak – The Board of Elders met prior the Mission Council meeting on December 13. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved. Membership changes were reviewed. A transfer in to the congregation is awaiting paperwork, three members entered the church triumphant since the last meeting. Pastor Buchhorn officiated his daughter's wedding in Texas Dec. 4. Other upcoming events were reviewed as well as an update on Junior Confirmation/Midweek classes, Sunday School and Campus ministry efforts. The board reviewed its progress on goals for 2021. It was decided to resume the Saturday Family Communion hour beginning on January 8. The upcoming service schedule and duty assignments were reviewed. The Elders' orientation meeting/retreat for 2022 will be Monday, January 3 beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Committee Reports:

Trustee Report -Justin Anderson-Two bids were presented and discussed in replacing the air conditioner units with 6 standard size units. Johnson's, Inc. from Norfolk came to an estimate of \$84,011.00 with an additional \$1,223.00 to install electric heat sections in each air handler. Heartland Heating & Air Conditioning from Norfolk provided an estimate of \$77,100.00 with an additional \$1750.00 to add electric heat to each unit. Heartland Heating & Air Conditioning could start on the project this winter and would allow for payments to complete the project with 30% down initially. It was moved by Brian and seconded by Megan to begin the air conditioning/heating replacement with Heartland Heating & Air Conditioning, allowing for more clarification and possible changes to the estimate. Motion carried.

Campus Ministry- per Pastor Buchhorn-Pastor Erik was absent due to serving a final's breakfast at Cup of Grace for the students as they enter their final week of the semester. Meals will continue to be served on Sunday evenings for college students at Cup of Grace next semester. If you are interested in signing up to provide food or help, a sign-up list is located on the southwest church door.

Endowment- Gifts to support missionaries from the Endowment Fund approved at the November voters meeting were to be mailed this week. They will be going to support the following missions: Pastor Conrad in Mexico, Pastor Flo and Siouxland Hispanic Outreach, Jesus Our Savior Pre-school in Winnebago, Lutheran Hour and Pastor John Bombaro who is working on training pastors in Latvia.

Memorial Fund - Deb Jensen - Memorial Fund has \$4,346.00. The kitchen has been busy serving families for funerals and social activities. Ideas are being generated for ways to utilize the memorial fund.

Education – Ham sales for the National Youth Gathering will be ready to be picked up or will be delivered on Wednesday, Dec. 15th. Sunday School has also started their Christmas program practice after the late service on Dec. 5th, 12th, and 19th. The program will be held on Christmas Eve at 6:00 p.m.

Preschool Angie Beiermann - Preschool reported 6 students enrolled in the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class and 7 in the T/TH with potentially a new student joining in the near future. A bid is being sought for leveling some of the playground in preparation for a new swing set. The preschool

committee is still looking at different types of swing sets to purchase. The Preschool Board also asked the Mission Council to look at replacing some windows at the school. Preschool is serving the Advent Supper on Dec. 15th at 5:15 p.m.

No other reports were given.

Old Business:

Ongoing Facility projects-

The Council discussed the need for re-painting the metal doors of the church.

It was discussed to table this project until the weather was warmer and conducive for painting.

The Council has decided to discuss another workday at the January meeting to complete various maintenance projects around the church. A list is being generated for possible maintenance projects.

Continuing COVID precautions – The board of Elders is continuing to monitor practices as we move past the worst of the pandemic. Recent upticks in local cases are a reminder that some caution is still in order. If there is input which would be helpful in this regard speak to a pastor or board member.

Financial Secretary & Counters-With the election of the counting teams, the 10:30 Elder is no longer being asked to assist with counting. This allows the counting team some flexibility on when offerings are counted. We currently have counters scheduled until April.

Annual Voter's Meeting-The Annual Voter's meeting that was held on November 21 at noon was reviewed and discussed for suggestions. Overall, the meeting went well, and the food was excellent. Thank you Vel's for catering a great meal. One suggestion to be noted was the timing of the meeting. Holding the meeting the weekend before Thanksgiving could have caused conflicts for those wanting to attend. It was suggested to look at an earlier date in November for next year's meeting.

Chad Sebade has already begun snow removal duties for 2021-22 winter season.

New Business:

New Officer Installation will be held on January 2 at the 10:30 a.m. service.

New offices/members include Secretary: Michelle Ekberg; Treasurer: Louise Green; Elders: Mike Heithold & Jared Heithold; Mission Council: Diana Langemeier & Lowell Johnson.

A special thank you was given for Neal Greenwald, Justin Anderson, Deb Jensen and Heather Reinhardt for their faithful service on the Mission Council.

The meeting closed with the Lord's prayer.

The Next Meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Reinhardt

GRACE FAMILY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Dick Nolte
- 3 Diana Langemeier & Walter Rauss
- 5 Daniel Greenwald & David Stuthmann
- 7 Scott Heinemann
- 8 Amber Nelson & Violet Maturey
- 9 Kara Heaton, Taven Ocampo & Casey Junck
- 11 Allen Wittig & Katie Mathieson
- 12 Sadi Fredrickson & Brian Bebee
- 14 Cory Erleben, Beckett Foote, Kurt Janke, Maddux Heithold,
Mike Bebee & Nancy Niemann
- 16 Jerry Echtenkamp, Johnny Lempke, Dwight Mock, Brayden
Wehrer & Leanne Centrone
- 18 Stacey Kai, Alan Thomsen & Pam Nolte
- 19 Kevin Anderson & Lowell Heggemeyer
- 20 Anthony Munson & Theresa Lubberstedt
- 21 Vickie Greve, Delvin Mikkelsen, Grady Van Cleave &
Ben Lilienkamp
- 22 Joshua Ruwe, & Haley Brogren
- 23 Paul Biermann & Roger Fredrickson
- 24 Barbara Greve, Alvin Longe, Jess Thompson & Cheryl Suehl
- 26 Heath Greve & Nick Spahr
- 27 Karlee Janke, Amber Sperry & Ross Rastede
- 28 Gary Manning
- 29 Mason Sharer
- 30 Janice Poppe & Jill Roeber
- 31 Dan Mitchell & Logan Mathieson

Elder on duty

- 02 8:00 am. Lonnie Matthes
10:30 am. Troy Stowater
- 09 8:00 am. Chuck Potosnyak
10:30 am. Josh Ruwe
- 16 8:00 am. Mike Heithold
10:30 am. Jared Heithold
- 23 8:00 am. Troy Stowater
10:30 am. Lonnie Matthes
- 30 8:00 am. Josh Ruwe
10:30 pm. Chuck Potosnyak

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Acolyte

- 02 8:00 am. Hallie Heithold & Brodrick Tiedtke
10:30 am. Drew Reinhardt & Blake Kneifl
- 09 8:00 am. Emma Heithold & Maddux Heithold
10:30 am. Cole Zach & Landen Sharer
- 16 8:00 am. Grady Van Cleave & Payton Junck
10:30 am. Reese Rethwisch & Lanee Rethwisch
- 23 8:00 am. Konnor Kai & Hunter Ruwe
10:30 am. Graycen Trautman & Cloey Young
- 30 8:00 am. Hallie Heithold & Taven Ocampo
10:30 am. Brodrick Tiedtke & Drew Reinhardt

Greeters

- 02 8:00 am. Lowell & Kathy Johnson
10:30 am. The Tiedtke Family
- 09 8:00 am. LeRoy & Carol Robbert
10:30 am. Justin & Megan Anderson
- 16 8:00 am. Jaret & Nicole Harmer
10:30 am. Galen & Kathy Wiser
- 23 8:00 am. Gene & Janet Casey
10:30 am. Chad & Pam Janke
- 30 8:00 am. Chuck Potosnyak & Louise Green
10:30 am. Don & Lisa Nelson

Lay Readers

- 02 8:00 am. Kathy Johnson
10:30 am. Mary Temme
- 09 8:00 am. Hallie Heithold
10:30 am. Jennifer Kesting
- 16 8:00 am. Lowell Schardt
10:30 am. Galen Wiser
- 23 8:00 am. Jeanette Swanson
10:30 am. Jo Junck
- 30 8:00 am. Diana Zach
10:30 am. Andy Bose



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