
March 2020

Grace Notes

Grace Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Desk . . .

"Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have..."

It's at about that point in the service that our minds start to wander, as we hit "autopilot." We've spoken that same paragraph countless times. It's always the same thing. Some of us have it memorized. Most of us could mumble through the whole thing while thinking about what to have for lunch, whether we should've worn a different shirt today, or whether we enjoyed that movie we saw last night. It's easy to do.

But those words we are speaking are arguably the most important paragraph we speak during the Sunday morning worship service. They are what separate freedom from bondage, ignorance from acceptance, Heaven from Hell, the trivial from the profound, life in communion with God from one in jagged separation from Him. It's what separates the Pharisee from the Tax Collector in Jesus' Parable (Luke 18:9-14). It's what separates existence in the Garden of Eden BEFORE the fall into sin – compared to the forced exit afterwards.

The paragraph in question is called the **corporate confession**, because we are corporately (meaning "together as a group") confessing our sins. We do so using biblical words and phrases written by godly Christians centuries ago. These words communicate our total depravity, total corruption, and total need for God's mercy. But like all good words, over time they can be overused and then start to lose the sharpness of their meaning when spoken by rote memory.

Yet these words are “performative speech:” they do something. It’s not just a treatise about “sin” and “grace” that we are rehearsing. It’s an honest heart admitting sin and clinging to the hope of God’s grace in Christ.

Lent historically – since about the 4th Century AD – was a time for deepening the devotion of all Christians in the Church; to make their faith ever clearer, deeper, and more real. I can think of no better way to do that than to let God’s Word inform and unpack the words we say each Sunday in the corporate confession, that the Holy Spirit would drive those words into our hearts and heads and souls – so that they lead us to the truth of sinful existence and leave us desperate for the words of Christ (and His forgiveness) that follow.

In His Service,
Pastor Josh

PS While the Sunday Sermon Series during Lent will focus on the Confession of Sins, our midweek meditations will look at “**Jesus in John**,” as we grow closer to our Lord by learning from Him and pondering what His words and actions during Holy Week (as recorded in John’s Gospel) help reveal to us and deepen our devotion to Him.

February Official Pastoral Acts:

- 5 sick/shut-in visits
- 3 private communions
- 6 pastoral care visits
- 2 leadership meetings
- 2 evangelism contacts
- 1 circuit visitor activity
- 1 hospital visit
- 1 family visitation
- 1 funeral (*Bill Swanzer*)

Upcoming Sermon Texts	
March 1	Genesis 3:1-21
March 8	Romans 4:1-8, 13-17
March 15	Exodus 17:1-7
March 22	John 9:1-41
March 29	Romans 8:1-1

During the regular Wednesday in Lent (March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1) we will be having our traditional **Soup & Sandwich Supper** at 6 pm followed by a **Lenten service** and meditation at 7 pm. Everyone is encouraged to join us. A sign-up sheet for the supper is posted in the hallway.

Every Sunday we record our worship service onto CD’s for shut-ins or those who are not able to make it to worship. If you know of someone who might be interested in receiving our **worship CD’s** please contact Pastor Josh or Glen Fridenstine.

Pastor is will be teaching the **Foundations of Faith** class starting Tuesday or Thursday evenings this month. This 8 week class covers the basics of the Lutheran faith. It can be taken as a refresher course for life-long Lutherans OR as an into course for someone new to Christianity or Lutheranism. Talk to Pastor Josh if you might be interested in joining us.

What's that??....No you aren't hearing things! The church has installed **new speakers** in the Nursery and Kitchen connected to the sanctuary sound system. They have a volume button on the top and can be adjusted accordingly. Please do not press the Pause/Play button; they operate best when left ON all the time.

Lutheran Women's League News

I would like to thank Carolyn for organizing and everyone who brought food and helped set-up, clean up and serve at the recent luncheon for Bill Swanzer, a beloved and long standing member here at Grace. He will be missed. Also a reminder of the Ladies luncheon at Michelle's in LaGrange on March 18th at 11:30.

LWML will once again host the Easter breakfast on April 12. Signup sheets are posted on the bulletin board in the hall way. Please sign up to indicate how many will attend.

~ Bonnie ~

March Birthdays

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

Dave & Jen Jones	3/29
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* If we accidentally forgot your birthday or anniversary, please tell Pastor and we'll add it to our list.

Altar Guild News

The flower chart has been updated for 2020.

Just a reminder that there are no Altar flowers during the season of Lent.

Altar guild will be offering to purchase Easter Lilies to decorate the chancel area for Easter again this year. I am in the process of getting pricing for the lilies. More information will be posted in the Sunday bulletin when available.

Serving the month of March: Carolyn Husted

~ Robin ~

Message from the President

The following remarks are titled “We’re not here to Bury Caesar, But to Praise Him”!

The February 23rd Voters’ Assembly has come and gone, but it hasn’t because we postponed the meeting until after the March 1st church service due to the passing of Bill Swanzer, Sr., one of the patriarchs of Grace. Bill went to Heaven February 20th and is probably playing baseball with Bob Feller, Lou Boudreau, and Al Rosen. Bill loved the Cleveland Indians!

My late wife, Emilie, and I first met Bill Swanzer when we visited our son, Jimmy, who continued his love of music at Oberlin Conservatory in September, 2001. Bill and his wife, Coralie, were always gracious to Jimmy and to Emilie and me. Bill loved our youngest son. “How’s my boy, Jimmy, doing?” he often asked. We moved to Oberlin in July, 2006 and after c. 1 month, Bill and Coralie took us to the Texas Roadhouse Restaurant in Elyria. I’ll always remember that day—Bill was there to help us get acclimated to the area we now called “home.”

Case in point: the first or second week we lived in this “land flowing with Milk and Honey,” I took my car to the picnic grounds where Grace held its annual church gathering. Coralie was there and when she saw me, Coralie asked me to help get pop out of her car’s trunk. “Good grief, Charlie Brown,” I thought. “What is Pop Swanzer doing in the trunk of the car?” Then I saw Bill get out of the front seat of the car, the trunk opened, and there were a few dozen cans of soda! Crazy Midwesterners, calling “soda,” “pop”! My first lesson in living in this “wilderness” I called Oberlin and Lorain County!

Bill and I often talked baseball, he about the Cleveland team and I about the St. Louis Cardinals. Bill ardently bragged in a positive way about his grandson, Cole, who had all the instincts of a 20-year-old while playing high school baseball. But Bill was more than “baseball talk.” Bill proudly conversed about Grace Lutheran Church, his passion for the Nativity pageant, and other church Outreach ideas he had....to grow the congregation. Others may reflect on his family relationships, so be my guest! I’m just happy to think of Bill and what he has meant to my family. Good night, Bill, not good-bye.

Thank you for listening. My name is Fred C. Feddeck, a member of Grace’s Church Council, and I approve of this message.

February 25, 2020

Buildings & Grounds News

One of the refrigerators has failed - when it was needed the most. I will call a repair man to have it diagnosed and a decision will have to be made weather to repair or buy new.

- Dale Rider -

Congregational Safety Guidelines

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Oberlin, OH

January 15, 2020

General Overview

Thomas Hadaway is spearheading an effort at Grace Lutheran Church to put together a **Church Safety Team** that will be prepared to deal with a variety of possible emergency situations such as a fire, tornado, bomb, gas leak, medical emergency, disruptive behavior, or an armed intruder/shooter. They will also be concerned with the security of our church building during Sunday morning services, special occasions, and when no one is present. As the **Safety Team Leader** Mr. Hadaway will be assembling this Church Safety Team this year and together they will begin preparations and training.

In the meantime, you can be assured that Mr. Hadaway and others are already watching over the safety and security of this church (the building and people). In an effort to be better prepared for a possible emergency situation, please read and make note of the following guidelines:

Alertness

Everyone is responsible for observation and assessment.

- Observe people and the environment continuously and purposefully.
- Assess by making a reasonable evaluation of the potential for harm.
- During worship service be aware and alert of possibilities for harm or danger.
- If you see something suspicious or concerning, please talk to a Safety Team member immediately.

Carrying Firearms or Weapons in Church

The law of Ohio with regards to concealed carrying permits in places of worship states:

Ohio Revised Code 2923.126 provides that a licensee **may not carry a concealed handgun** onto the premises of any place of worship unless such place of worship permits otherwise. You may be facing anywhere from 1st degree misdemeanor charges to 4th degree felony charges.

This decision (to allow someone to carry a concealed weapon) will be addressed by Pastor Josh in coordination with the English District and Safety Team Leader, Thomas Hadaway, on a case-by-case basis. All personnel must be fully trained and certified before consideration.

First Aid Kit

There is a first aid kit located in the brown kitchen cabinet immediately to the left inside the kitchen door – labeled “First Aid” on the right side door.

Alone at Church

When a volunteer is going to be alone in the church it is the recommendation of the Church Safety Team that the person lock the door behind them as they enter – so that no one can “unexpectedly” follow them in. It is also a good practice for such a volunteer to let a family member or friend know when and where they are going (“*to Grace about 2 pm*”) ahead of time.

Evacuation

When an emergency situation occurs during a worship service, please proceed toward the exit doors and take directions from any Safety Team member or the Pastor. If the building is evacuated, please do not drive your car so as to not interfere with responding emergency vehicles. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD VOLUNTEERS ATTEMPT TO HANDLE OR REMOVE SUSPICIOUS DEVICES.**

Evacuation Routes

Evacuation routes/maps for the sanctuary and the remainder of the church are located on the exit doors.

Designated assembly places after an evacuation

If the church is evacuated, the congregation should exit as directed by ushers and/or Safety Team members. Move to the grassy area or sidewalk that is in front of the Parsonage on Prospect Street. Do not cross or stand in roadways or driveways, if possible, to stay clear of responding emergency vehicles.

Medical Emergencies

Members of the congregation who are trained medical or emergency personnel should notify the Safety Team of this so that they can be called upon in case of medical emergency. They should alert someone from the Safety Team immediately if they notice a medical concern involving someone at church.

Procedures for dealing with an intruder or violent incident

Threat of violence

For all: When in the vicinity of an active assailant: If someone recognizes the look or sounds of danger – act and forcefully communicate the danger and necessary action (i.e., “*Gun! Get out!*”). Take action as listed below: **Run, Hide, Fight.** As soon as it is safe to do so, staff or others should alert police by contacting 911 with clear and accurate information.

DO NOT PULL A FIRE ALARM AS THAT COULD BE PUTTING PEOPLE IN DANGER.

1. **RUN** if physically possible - It is understood that most of our congregation are elderly. Do your best. It may save your life.
 - Have an escape route and plan in your mind
 - Be aware of nearest exits and places to conceal yourself.
 - Leave your belongings behind.
 - Take others with you, but do not stay because others will not go.
 - Keep your hands visible.
 - Call 911 when far away from danger and safe to do so.
 - Attempt to assist others less mobile than you-if it is safely possible to do so.

2. **HIDE**
 - Hide in an area out of the shooter’s view.
 - Pews are a good place to lay down on or underneath. The wood stops or slows down bullets quite well.
 - Hide near a door, but out of view, so that you can quickly escape.
 - Get in a room, lock the door, block or barricade entry, close blinds or cover windows. Avoid rooms with large amounts of glass, if possible.
 - If there are no other rooms, hide yourself inside the room you’re in.
 - Turn off lights.
 - Silence your cell phone and do not make a call to anyone.
 - Keep quiet and use strategies to silently communicate with first responders.
 - Remain in place until given an “all clear” by identifiable law enforcement

3. **FIGHT** – Again, understood that we have an elderly congregation.
 - Take action as a last resort and only when in imminent danger, take action against the shooter.
 - Attempt to distract or incapacitate the shooter.
 - Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter (fire extinguishers, chairs) at his eyes, face, throat or groin area.

ARRIVAL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

When law enforcement arrives: Their first priority of law enforcement is to incapacitate the shooter. It is not to assist victims. Knowing this:

- Identify the location of the shooter to police, if known.
- Remain calm and follow instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands
- Raise hands and spread fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid quick movements toward officers such as reaching out to them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling.
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction.

ONCE LAW ENFORCEMENT INCAPACITATES THE SHOOTER

- Remain calm.
- Law enforcement will control the area and provide all instructions.
- Do not drive away in your vehicles once you are rescued. Your statement might be needed.
- If you don't know what to do, ask a Safety Team member.

Coffee Fellowship in March:

- 1 Karen Huston
- 8 Anita Saathoff
- 15 Barb Hadaway
- 22 Marcia Metzger
- 29 Judy Gornek

March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship 10 am • Voters' Meeting 11:40 am 	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evangelism Committee Meeting 10 am 	3	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder's Meeting 3:45 pm • Soup & Sandwich Supper 6 pm • Lent Service 7 pm 	5	6	7
8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:30 am <p>Daylight Savings Time Begins</p>	9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Meeting 3 pm 	10	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soup & Sandwich Supper 6 pm • Lent Service 7 pm 	12	13	14
15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:30 am 	16	17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCS Food Box Delivery 2 pm 	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ladies Lunch 11:30 am • Soup & Sandwich Supper 6 pm • Lent Service 7 pm 	19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Illness Support Group 7 pm 	20	21
22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:30 am 	23	24	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soup & Sandwich Supper 6 pm • Lent Service 7 pm 	26	27	28
29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship 10 am • Adult Bible Class 11:30 am 	30	31		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April newsletter items due (April 2nd) 		

Upcoming Important Dates:

- April 9: Maundy Thursday Service 7 pm
- April 10: Good Friday Service 7 pm
- Easter Breakfast: 8:30 – 9:30 am April 12