

GRACE NOTES FEBRUARY 2024

A Monthly publication of Grace Free Lutheran Church Valley City, ND

By Pastor Dennis Norby

“Therefore, having his ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:1-2)

The Apostle Paul often wrote about the fact that his ministry was not one that he took upon himself or was even something that he sought after. Remember how the Lord worked to save Paul on the Road to Damascus? His apostolic ministry was given to him by God and Paul even notes here in 2 Corinthians that it was an act of God’s mercy that he had that ministry. The ministry was an act of mercy to Paul as well as all those to whom he ministered. We could even say that Paul’s ministry has been an act of God’s mercy to we who believe today who are the beneficiaries of his letters and the spread of the Gospel in the churches that he served in various capacities.

God’s mercy in providing Paul’s ministry does not mean that it was without troubles. Paul himself was accused by the “super-apostles” (2 Cor. 11:5, 2 Cor. 12:11) of being a less than capable minister of the word of God. It seems that a regular accusation against him was that he was a poor speaker. That would be discouraging enough in itself. But also, the hardheartedness and unbelief of the people could have been discouraging to Paul. The Apostle experienced the same thing that preachers and teachers have experienced since then – disbelief at the message of the Gospel. But he focused on God’s work and mercy in giving the ministry not on those who were rejecting it.

The response of unbelief at the preaching of the Gospel might cause some to attempt “disgraceful, underhanded ways.” The idea seems to be things been done in a secret or hidden manner. The Apostle Paul and faithful ministers of the Gospel since then have always worked to openly state the truth and simply proclaim the message of Christ. The Gospel message is not one that should be presented as a manipulation of emotions or connected with a bait-and-switch.

Paul says that he has not just renounced these practices but now refuses to practice cunning or to

tamper with God’s Word. The Apostle will not try to deceive anyone and trick them into turning to the truth. He is also adamant against tampering with God’s Word. In Galatians, he speaks clearly about the importance of not trying to “adjust” the Gospel to make it more acceptable to some. In Galatians 1 he says, “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel- not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:6-9).

The Gospel is not something that can be twisted or distorted and remain the Gospel. The Good News of Jesus Christ is the only thing that saves. The Word of God is not something we try to devise plans to make it “better.” The rightly preached and taught Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be openly taught and preached. The heartbreaking reality of this sinful world is that there are those who will not listen to the Gospel and will not believe God’s Word. There can be a temptation for those preaching to try – with good intentions – to get more people to listen and more people to believe. However, the Lord’s Word is that which brings life and forgiveness. Let us not forget Paul’s words to the Galatians if we are listening or if we might be given an opportunity to speak God’s Word to someone else.

The open preaching of God’s Word is what allows it to be honestly discussed and examined by those who have not heard it before. False teachers of the ancient past and even in modern times have often spoken of their messages as being only for a secret select few. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be proclaimed to all the world. The repeated instruction of God’s Word is that it is to be shared with all nations, with all peoples, and always until the Lord comes.

Let us pray that God would give us more opportunities to proclaim the Gospel to people who have not believed in the truth. Paul’s desire is to commend himself to everyone’s conscience by the open statement of the truth. May that be also our aim and goal. May the Lord work through the open statements of God’s Word to bring more and more people to faith and peace with God. Amen.

Grace Free Lutheran
Council Meeting



Thursday, February 8, 2024

Deacons Meet 6:30pm

Boards Meet 7pm

Council Meets 8pm

Complete Council meeting minutes and monthly financial report are available in the copy room.

Financial Summary

As of 1/25/2024

General Fund=\$91,596.78

Building Improvement Fund=\$38,592.96

(Sign=\$897.78; Parking Lot=\$6,195.18;

Exterior Maintenance=\$31,500.00)

Scholarship Fund=\$8,910.82

Seminary Fund=\$120.43

General Fund CD (1)=\$40,348.85

General Fund CD (2)=\$30,233.04

Parking Lot Fund CD=\$49,045.74

Roof Fund CD=\$48,295.00

General Fund Average Weekly Income \$5,693.99

General Fund Average Weekly Expense \$5,527.93

Church Leadership~

Newly Elected Officers are listed in bold.

Deacons: Mardy Dahl, Jeremy Zeltinger, Craig Schroeder, **Walter Rolf, Tim Berntson, Scott Roehrich**

Trustees: Greg Pfennig, Bob Reinsel, Andy Sveet, **Brandon Hokana, Josh Schroeder**

Christian Education: Samantha Norby, Lexi Grotberg, **Katrina Zeltinger, Tina Borg**

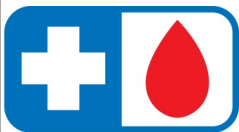
Stewardship: LaDeen Knutson, Ann Rolf, Joanne Wetch, **Val Reinsel**

Youth: Melissa Schroeder, **John Drummond, Becky Pfennig**

Auditing: Tasha Glasman

Council Secretary: Tasha Glasman

Thank you to those who completed terms this year: Eric Shanenko, DJ Morast, Kristi Melvin, Amy Milbrandt, Kristi Shanenko



**GIVE
Blood**

There will be a Blood Drive at Grace

Thursday, February 8-
11:30am-6:00pm

For information contact
Elaine Miedema, 845-9972

Zion's Schedule

Sundays

9am Divine Worship

10am Fellowship

Wednesday February 7

6pm Confirmation at Grace

7pm Answers For Kids at Grace

7pm Youth Group at Grace

7pm Adult Bible Study at Grace

LENTEN
Schedule

Ash Wednesday Service

February 14 at 7pm

Wednesdays February 21 & 28

Soup Supper at 6:15pm

Service at 7:00pm

*Confirmation will begin at 5:45pm during Lent

Good. True. Beautiful.

Grace Free & Zion

Art Show

Sunday, February 25th at 3pm

-Art viewing begins at 3pm

-Music and Literary Arts Program at 4pm

-Meal after the Program

-Art viewing and fellowship following the meal

All ages are encouraged to take part.

Please share what talent God has blessed you with!

Music. Poetry. Visual Arts. Culinary. Quilting. Etc.

Entry deadline is February 18th.

Entry forms are available at the kiosk.

May this year's theme verse inspire you.

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." Genesis 8:22



Contact: Pastor Norby 815-883-1673

Dear Grace Congregation,

I am excited to share with you a little about my first semester at FLBC! The fall semester has been an amazing opportunity to learn and grow in the Lord. God has been working in my life in numerous ways. He has been teaching me how to fully trust Him and His Word. Through my classes, my other activities, and my struggle to find a job this semester, God has shown me that He is working and present. His faithfulness and steadfastness have also been made even more known to me. While studying the Pentateuch with Pastor Olson, it is impossible to not see Jesus throughout the Old Testament when looking for Him. It points forward to the reign of Jesus, His death on the cross, and His resurrection. God's people constantly betrayed Him time after time in the Old Testament (just as we do now) and took for granted His blessings, but His faithfulness never ceased, and it never will. In Worldview, Kingdom, and Culture, I learned why the Christian worldview makes the most sense of reality and how to examine other worldviews as well as my own to see the truth. During basketball, I have seen the importance of keeping Christ as the focus of everything I do. The Bible college has been a great change in schooling. The focus is no longer encouraged to be on me and what I can do as it has been in years past, but on who Jesus is and what He has done. All that I do should be done for the glory of God, and the classes, professors, choir, and community at FLBC have helped change my perspective on life through God's Word and shown me how truly worthy He is. The community of believers at FLBC is incredibly encouraging and uplifting, and I am so very thankful for the blessing of the church body. Thank you as individuals in the congregation for your continued prayers and support. It is all greatly appreciated and is helping prepare me for a life of faithful service in God's kingdom. I am looking forward to this next semester of classes as well as the choir tour after the conclusion of the spring semester! **In Christ, Gracia Rolf**

During my time at the Free Lutheran Bible College, I have had a lot of fun and learned a lot. I have loved playing intermural sports like frisbee and volleyball. I have made some very good friends that have similar mindsets as me. They push me to be a better person, friend, and follower of Christ. Being surrounded by people that are all trying to grow in their knowledge of their faith is very helpful to create a solid foundation in what I believe and why I believe it. My favorite classes throughout my time at the bible college have been taught by Pastor Brent Olson. He taught Pentateuch, Historical Books, Major Prophets, and Minor Prophets. It has been extremely helpful for me to get a much clearer understanding of the Old Testament. I Learned about how God is the same from the beginning of the bible to the end. His character has never changed, and his plan has not changed either. In Historical books the major theme that we found throughout the books is that the battle belongs to the Lord. This theme has been the most beneficial thing that I have learned during my time at the Bible School. I so often get in God's way by trying to solve all my problems by my own strength and wisdom. That obviously hasn't worked very well because on my own I am a weak fool. But thankfully I have God, and he wants to fight my battles for me and often I just need to get out of the way and let him do his thing.

I have really enjoyed my time at the Bible College, and I want to thank the church for all of the support

that they have given to me in my life from the time I was born until now. I look forward to how God is going to continue to work in my life through my last semester at the Bible College. **Seth Zeltinger**

Thank you for all the support you gave me while studying in my first semester at the Free Lutheran Bible College in Plymouth, MN! I have loved being in a community of believers as I dig into God's word every day. This semester I was blessed to be a part of both the volleyball and basketball teams here at school. It has been very encouraging to be on teams where God's glory is the primary motivation – something practically unheard of on a high school team. Our basketball theme/motto this year is to "live on mission", so whether we win or lose, we are called to be a light and witness of Jesus to the other team. In addition to sports, I have also enjoyed being in Concert Choir and Women's Ensemble, where we get to share the gospel through music. I always looked forward to being in the Christmas Concert at FLBC as I watched my siblings and cousins perform in it each year, and it went far beyond my expectations as the highlight of my semester. I was filled with joy each night as we proclaimed the theme, "Full of Grace, Full of Truth".

In my first classes at FLBC, I saw the Lord strengthening my foundation in Him. Being submerged in God's word daily helped me to have a deeper understanding of why I believe and trust the word of God. In one of our classes, Into Biblical Studies, Pastor Adam Osier taught us many reasons why the Bible is a reliable resource. This was very helpful for me to learn before going into a deeper study of His word in other classes because it gave me confidence that spending two years at FLBC is not a waste of my time.

Every class so far also helped give me a big picture of the overarching message of the Bible, and it was very encouraging to see that the picture has never changed and will never change. This was especially apparent in our class on the Pentateuch, taught by Pastor Brent Olson. He clearly showed us where to find the presence, prediction, and pattern of Jesus in the first five books of the Bible, and the same method can be applied to all of scripture. No matter what book we study, Old or New Testament, Jesus Christ is always the main theme. Thanks again for the support in my first semester at Bible College. I am extremely thankful for having a congregation that raised me up in faith and for all of the wonderful teachers that I had over the years. Everything that I learned in Sunday School and Answers for Kids gave me a better background and understanding that helped me to succeed in my classes as well. I look forward to what God has planned for next semester. I have so much to be grateful for!

Thank you, Faith Peterson

I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for your financial support in the past few months. Your generosity has been a huge blessing in my life, and I am very glad that I started attending FLBC. Over this semester, I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about God's word, and I am excited to continue my journey of learning about my savior and His teachings in the upcoming semester. One of my favorite classes so far has been the Worldview Kingdom and Culture class. We explored our culture, how we as Christians should respond to today's culture, and how we can understand subjective truth. The class has helped me gain a better understanding of my faith and how to apply it to the world around me. I am very excited for this upcoming semester and all the new things I will learn about my Lord and Savior. Thank you again for your support and prayers. **Sincerely, Kathryn Borg**

The 2023 fall semester at FLBC has provided me with many opportunities to grow spiritually and experience Christian fellowship with the campus community. One of my favorite things about last semester was the relationships that I created and developed. It has been great to make new friends, as well as reconnect with ones from last year. I have especially enjoyed getting to know my roommates, from California and Ohio, better. Serving as a resident assistant has also been a blessing as I work with my dorm assistant to meet needs in the dorm. While not on campus, I work at United Rentals, inspecting and fixing machinery.

My favorite class last semester was Lutheran Confessional Theology, taught by Pastor Mundfrom. We went through different parts of the Book of Concord and learned and discussed why Lutherans believe what they do. I particularly enjoyed learning about the doctrine of the two kingdoms, which describes the Christian's role in both the church and state. I also found what Pastor Mundfrom taught about baptism, in Means of Grace and Eschatology, to be edifying. It was beneficial to learn what the Bible says about a subject that many have questions on. In Major Prophets, Pastor Brent Olson taught us more about salvation history and how Christ is present in the Old Testament. We learned how the coming of the Messiah was prophesied in Isaiah 53 as the Suffering Servant. **Jakob Rolf**



Watch for more information on these upcoming youth events.

February 15– Game Night

February 23-24– Apologetics Conference Livestream

April 12-13- Lock-in

April 28– Youth Sunday

*Information and sign up sheets can be found on the bulletin board by the coat room.

Children's Ministry News

Sunday, February 11-

Alpha Sunday School will sing for special music

AFK will not meet during Lent.

WMF Bible Study

Monday, February 19 at 7pm

Faith Circle

Tuesday, February 27 at 11am

Women's Bible Study

Thursdays at 10am

Men's Discipleship

Tuesdays at 6am

Men's Prayer

Saturdays at 7am

2 Joanne Mundfrom
Aaron Norby (Dennis)
Bridger Weber
(Devin)

3 Randy Melvin

5 Melissa Schroeder

6 Faye Graalum

7 Gabe Herzog (Larry)

Jeanne Shanenko

8 Kathleen Schierkolk

9 Rebekkah Borg

10 Laurie Christensen

11 Abigail Gilbertson (Erik) 21 Kerry Trenda

Nikki Hanson

23 Bella Shanenko

14 Kevin Borg

(Jeremy)

15 Ada Gilbertson (Erik)

24 Shayne Powers

18 Isaac Gilbertson (Erik)

26 George Richman

19 Mikey Meester

27 Hayden Morast

Garrett Hokana (Brandon)

(DJ)

Missionaries

15 Barb Schierkolk

19 Hannah Lee



DONUT forget

how much

JESUS LOVES YOU!

We love because HE first loved us. 1 John 4:19

All are invited to a

Valentine's Day Meal and Party!

February 11th



-Stewardship will be serving a meal following church

-Kids may bring a valentine box and valentines for each other

-plan 25 valentines if you would like to bring for each child to drop in their box



February



2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Women's Bible Study 10am	2	3 Men's Prayer 7am
4 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am	5	6 Men's Discipleship 6am	7 Confirmation 6pm Answers For Kids 7pm Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	8 Women's Bible Study 10am Blood Drive 11:30-6pm Deacons Meet 6:30pm Boards Meet 7pm Council Meets 8pm	9	10 Men's Prayer 7am
11 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am Stewardship Meal 11:45am Valentine's Event	12	13 Men's Discipleship 6am	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> Confirmation 5:45pm Ash Wednesday Service 7pm ASH <i>Wednesday</i>	15 Women's Bible Study 10am Youth Group Game Night	16	17 Men's Prayer 7am
18 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am	19 WMF Bible Study 7pm	20 Men's Discipleship 6am	21 Confirmation 5:45pm Soup Supper 6:15pm Lenten Service 7pm	22 Women's Bible Study 10am	23 Youth Apologetics Conference Livestream Event	24 Men's Prayer 7am
25 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am Art Show 3pm ART SHOW	26	27 Men's Discipleship 6am Faith Circle 11am	28 Confirmation 5:45pm Soup Supper 6:15pm Lenten Service 7pm	29 Women's Bible Study 10am Leap Day		



GRACE FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH
2351 WEST MAIN ST.
VALLEY CITY ND 58072



GRACE & ZION FREE LUTHERAN CHURCHES

«AddressBlock»

Sundays at Grace

Sunday School 9:00 AM
Divine Worship 10:30 AM

Sundays at Zion

Divine Worship 9:00 AM
Fellowship 10:00 AM

Sundays: Lift High the Cross KOVC (1490) 10 AM KSJB(600) 8 AM
Watch Live! Sunday Mornings at 10:30 AM at www.gracefree.com/watch-online

Church office hours are 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Mon-Fri

Phone: (701) 845-2753

E-mail: gracefree@msn.com

Website: www.gracefree.com

Senior Pastor Dennis Norby thenorbys@msn.com
Administrative Assistant~ Sarah Meester gracefree@msn.com
Children's Ministry Leader~ Erin Dahl