

GRACE NOTES MARCH 2024

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

By Pastor Dennis Norby

Acts 2:41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. 42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The book of Acts is Luke's carefully investigated history of the beginning of the church. It follows the history of Jesus Christ recorded in the Gospel of Luke and picks up where that book finished, by describing the resurrected Christ's ascension into heaven. Having heard about this we might ask, what did the Apostles and other followers of Jesus do after Christ ascended? Specifically, how did they interact with one another?

At the start of Acts 2, we have the amazing events of Pentecost recorded for us. The tongues of fire, the speaking in tongues, and Peter's sermon are all laid out for us. As Peter's message ends a number of people were "cut to the heart" as it says in verse thirty-seven. They asked Peter and the rest of the apostles what they should do, and Peter responded, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself" (v. 38-39).

Verse 41 tells us the astounding news that having heard that instruction from the apostles 3,000 were baptized that day. Then we have this summary statement of how the believers lived and interacted with one another. This description has been studied and meditated on by Christians since that time to determine how we might live and act like Christians. Having said that, we should remember that these are verses describing how they lived, not necessarily saying that in every respect we should mirror their actions. What can we learn and imitate from these early believers?

For our purposes here, we will look at two of the things they were devoted to. First, they devoted them-

selves to the apostles' teaching. The apostles were Jesus' closest followers, learning from Him directly and being encouraged in their faith in Him regularly as He taught, performed miracles, and loved them without fail. The teaching of the apostles was able to connect the promises of the Old Testament concerning the coming of the Messiah with the work and ministry of Jesus which had just happened. This devotion to the apostle's teaching is something vital to the life and wellbeing of Christians today as well. Without faithful teaching we will be lost. May the Christian church always stay devoted to the right and true teaching of God's Word.

The second thing mentioned in the passage is "the fellowship." The Greek word, *koinonia*, used here means "fellowship" or "participation." It speaks of a relationship characterized by sharing things in common. This is a beautiful word to describe what the relationship of the early believers looked like. They were sharing things in common. This is mentioned here in chapter 2 and also described to some extent in Acts 4:32 which says, "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common" (also note v. 33-37).

They were devoted to one another! What a precious picture for us of the unity found in the life of the church. Richard Balge, in his commentary on Acts, says, "What prompted them to do this? We are not told that the apostles commanded them to do so or that they were trying to put some economic theory into practice. We can only conclude that they did it out of love for the Lord and for their brothers and sisters in Christ. They were devoted to the fellowship" (The People's Bible, p. 38).

Some have said that they find the teaching of communism in the Christians of that early church. However, communism is something forced or coerced. What these believers were doing was simply pouring out their love for one another in the manner which made the most sense to them. Voluntarily. There were those in their midst who were in need, and they had been graciously provided for by God. They saw that as an opportunity to shower others with love.

May the Lord Jesus cultivate in us a devotion to His Word as recorded in the books of the prophets and apostles. May the Lord provide for us an understanding of the needs of one another and clearly show us how we might encourage and strengthen our brothers and sisters in Christ through what God has first given to us. Amen.

Grace Free Lutheran
Council Meeting
Thursday, March 7, 2024
Deacons Meet 6:30pm
Boards Meet 7pm
Council Meets 8pm



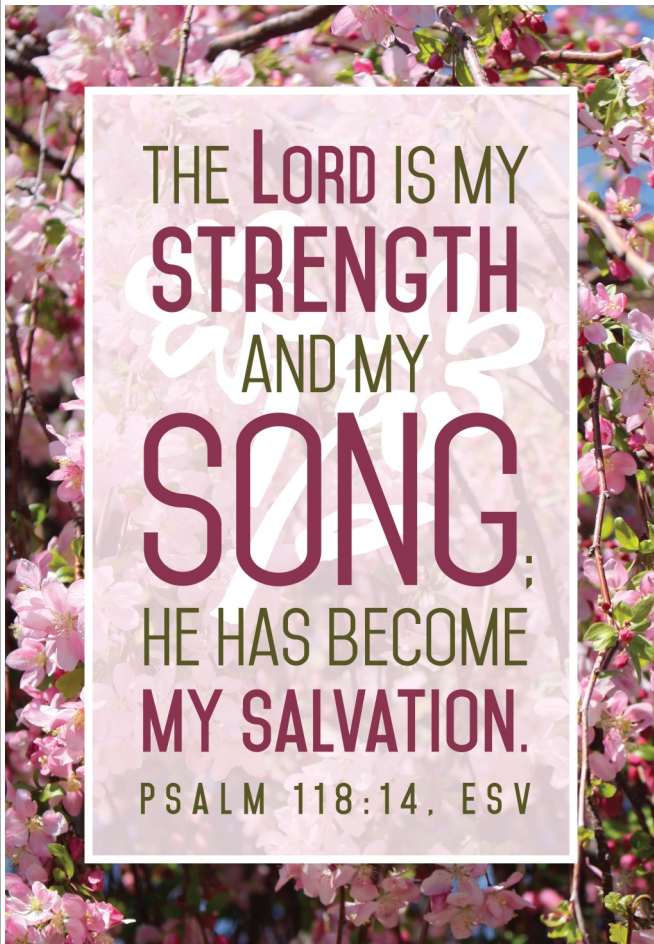
Complete Council meeting minutes and monthly financial report are available in the copy room.

Financial Summary

As of 2/27/2024

General Fund=\$162,180.66
(includes \$60,000.00 check from NDDOT)
Building Improvement Fund=\$46,592.96
(Sign=\$897.78; Parking Lot=\$6,195.18;
Exterior Maintenance (Roof)=\$39,500.00)
Scholarship Fund=\$100.00
Seminary Fund=\$980.11
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 \$6,211.45
General Fund Average Weekly Expense \$7,128.52



Daylight Saving Time
begins Sunday, March 10.
Remember to set your clocks
ahead one hour!

Zion's Schedule

Sundays

9am Divine Worship
10am Fellowship

LENTEN Schedule

Wednesdays March 6, 13, 20 at Grace

Soup Supper at 6:15pm

Service at 7:00pm



March 28~

Maundy Thursday Service
with Holy Communion 7:00 pm

March 29~

"He's Alive" presentation 7:00 pm

March 30~

"He's Alive" presentation 7:00 pm

March 31~

Easter Breakfast 9:00 am

Easter Worship Service 10:30 am

Youth Group

NEWSLETTER

Apologetics Conference SIMULCAST February 23 & 24

- All youth group & friends are invited to the Apologetics Simulcast Conference. This will be broadcast live from Texas. The event will help you to build confidence in defending your faith. Several sessions covered -
 - * FRIDAY: Man or Maker - How you were Made -
 - * SATURDAY: What are you - Who are you - How should you live
- FREE EVENT - Please sign up by Wednesday 21st so we can plan meals.
- FRIDAY: Doors open at 5:15 p.m. for supper til 9:30 p.m.
- SATURDAY: Doors open at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast til 5:30 p.m.

What's In This Month's Issue?

- Apologetics Conference
- Lock - In
- Mission Trip
- UP Close
- Campus Days
- Cross Walk
- Teen Ladies Bible Study

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Ladies Bible Study
 - Sunday's During Lent
- Apologetics
 - Sign Up by: Feb. 21
 - Event: Feb. 23 & 24
- Lock In
 - Sign Up by: Mar. 6
 - Event: Mar. 8 & 9
- Up Close Campus Days
 - Sign up by: Mar 17
 - Event: April 12 & 13
- Mission Trip
 - Info Meeting: Mar. 3
 - Sign up by: Mar. 20
 - Event: June 19-23
- Cross Walk
 - Event: Mar 29

Teen Lock - In March 8-9

R.S.V.P. by March 6th to Tom @ 701-840-9853
COST: \$10 per person

Doors Open at 5:30 p.m. Friday night
Lock-In ends at 6:30 a.m. Saturday morning

Please Bring the following:
Bible, gym shoes - sleeping stuff - snack to share -

We plan to leave the church and will have rides available for all youth.
Supper & Breakfast will be provided.
We encourage you to invite friends!!!



Minnesota Twins Outing!

Members of Grace & Zion are invited!!!
Feel free to invite your Family, Friends, and Community Members for a day of Fun, Laughter, Fellowship, and an Afternoon at the Ball Park!

Saturday, June 15th 1:10 pm vs. Oakland A's



Itinerary:

7:00 am departure from Grace Free Lutheran
12:00 pm approximate arrival at Target Field!
1:10 pm GAME TIME
4:40 pm Approximate end of game
5:00 pm Departure from Target Field
10:30 pm Return to Grace Free Lutheran



Cost - \$110 per person

A \$55/person deposit is due at sign up (deadline to sign up is Sunday, May 12th).
The remaining \$55/person will be due Saturday, June 1st (two weeks prior to game).
*Checks made out to - Tom Milbrandt (Or @Tom-Milbrandt for Venmo)
(Questions? → give me a shout - 701.840.9853)

The Price Includes:

- Transportation on a 54-passenger Motor Coach (with lavatory) to & from Target Field.
- A "sack lunch" including a sub, chips, fruit, dessert, and beverage on the trip to the Cities (distributed about an hour before we get to the stadium).
- Your ticket for the game in the left field bleachers.
- And a snack for the ride home.

Fellowship Fun Baseball



Passion Play Rehearsal

He's Alive Rehearsals

Wednesday, March 6-

6:00pm Costume fitting
8:00pm He's Alive singers & quartet rehearse
Narration- Library

Wednesday, March 13-

6:00pm Narration- Library
All Cast- Sanctuary
8:00pm Narration- Library
All Cast- Sanctuary

Wednesday, March 20-

6:00pm Narration- Library
All Cast- Sanctuary
8:00pm Narration- Library
All Cast- Sanctuary

Saturday, March 23-

9:00am Set Completion
1:00pm Full Run Rehearsal

Sunday, March 24-

1:00pm Full Run Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 27-

5:00pm Cast & Crew arrive in shifts
7:00pm Dress Rehearsal

Friday, March 29-

5:00pm Cast & Crew arrive in shifts
7:00pm He's Alive presentation

Saturday, March 30-

5:00pm Cast & Crew arrive in shifts
7:00pm He's Alive presentation

Summer 2024 Youth Mission Trip Current Grades 6-12

June 19-23
Sioux Falls, SD
Departing Wednesday Night - Returning Sunday Afternoon

Serving along side Habitat for Humanity of Sioux Falls, SD we will be completing various projects in the Whittier neighborhood.
Abiding Savior in Sioux Falls, is partnering with us for housing, and hoping to join us on the work sites.

Cost per Youth: \$120
Registration and Deposit due March 20th.

A short informational meeting will be held immediately following worship on Sunday, March 3 for interested youth and PARENTS!

A teen ladies bible study will be held on Sunday afternoons at Alley Beans Coffee Shop. 1:00 p.m. during Lent All 7th-12th ladies are invited to attend!

Teen Ladies Bible Study

Up Close Campus Days April 12 & 13

9-12th graders are invited to head down to AFLBC for a weekend exploring the campus, and checking out classes.

Cost is \$75 plus lodging. Register by March 17th.

Matthew 16:24-26

And He said to all, "if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life to my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?"

GRACE YOUTH GROUP LED CROSS WALK MARCH 29 @ 8:30 A.M.

Good Friday is a very important day in our faith as Christians. It is a day that we reflect on Jesus' sacrifice to save us - the pain and torture He endured as He carried His own cross to Golgotha.

When you think about the cross Christ carried, imagine the weight He must have felt - all sins past, present, and future - for the entire world. Our cross walk through Valley City will take us down main street. WHY?

- Bringing the true meaning of Easter Week to life. Good Friday is not just "a day off."
- Reminder of the weight that comes with carrying the cross.
- Preparing our hearts for the glorious empty tomb on Easter morning.

The cross walk will start with devotional/prayer, remembering what Jesus endured on his last days on Earth. Taking this time to contemplate the thoughts of Jesus, the people around Him, and his disciples. The walk will conclude at Grace with Scripture, Prayer & Reflection.

All are welcome to join, this is not just for the youth.

Questions:

Check in with Tom Milbrandt 701-840-9853

**“While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And day and night
Shall not cease.”**

Genesis 8:22

*By a word the world is held together
And a word works the wonders we behold.
Forming our rhythms, known by men of old.
And by a word it is purged and weathers.*

*Seed is cast to gather rain that in soils seep
New life is born nourished by the unseen
Until harvest comes to the faded green
Growing to die and gathered by the reap’r.*

*With the heat life thrives and begins to swell
By cold it is preserved, yet grows no more.
While one is here, the other is wished for
But both are present, eternal in hell.*

*Summer comes and preparations begin
With sweat for the season promised to come.
Winter brings death, but rest for only some;
For the wise with hope for life once again.*

*A promise giv’n when sun the horizon rends;
Life is kept in joyful days and dreary
And at its setting, rest for the weary.
Reminding men that what begins must end.*

*Unfailing rhythms of forgotten breath,
The world Strains with the weight of broken man.
But is held by the man whose word unbreakable
Brings communion in suffering and life by death.*

By Caleb Mehlhoff

- 2 Suzette Trenda
- 3 Brandon Stensland
- 7 Benjamin Melvin
(Randy)
- 9 Jonah Norby
(Dennis)
- 11 Doris Sanden
Cindy Tatom
- 16 Naomi Hanson (Troy)
- 17 Bonita Roswick
- 18 Toby Larson
- 21 Barry Borg
Justin Roswick (Cody)
- 22 Scott Roehrich
- 26 Daryl Stensland
- 31 Jack Schroeder (Josh)



Missionaries

- 11 Jonathan Abel
- 13 Brent Raan
- 16 Eliana Olson
(Andrew)
- 18 Selah Olson
(Andrew)

WMF Quarterly Meeting

Saturday, March 16 at 9:30am

WMF Bible Study

Monday, March 18 at 7pm

Faith Circle

Tuesday, March 26 at 11am

Women’s Bible Study

Thursdays at 10am

Men’s Discipleship

Tuesdays at 6am

Men’s Prayer

Saturdays at 7am





March



2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 Men's Prayer 7am |
| 3 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am | 4 | 5 Men's Discipleship 6am | 6 Confirmation 6pm Soup Supper 6:15pm Lenten Service 7pm | 7 Women's Bible Study 10am Deacons Meet 6:30pm Boards Meet 7pm Council Meets 8pm | 8 Youth Lock In | 9 Men's Prayer 7am |
| 10  Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am | 11 | 12 Men's Discipleship 6am | 13 Confirmation 6pm Soup Supper 6:15pm Lenten Service 7pm | 14 Women's Bible Study 10am | 15 | 16 Men's Prayer 7am WMF Quarterly Meeting 9:30am |
| 17  Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am | 18 WMF Bible Study 7pm | 19  Men's Discipleship 6am | 20 Confirmation 6pm Soup Supper 6:15pm Lenten Service 7pm | 21 Women's Bible Study 10am | 22 | 23 Men's Prayer 7am |
| 24  Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am | 25 | 26 Men's Discipleship 6am Faith Circle 11am | 27 He's Alive Rehearsal 5:00pm | 28  Women's Bible Study 10am Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion 7pm | 29  He's Alive 7pm Youth Cross Walk 8:30am | 30 Men's Prayer 7am He's Alive 7pm |
| 31  Easter Breakfast 9am Divine Worship 10:30am | | | | | | |



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