

GRACE NOTES APRIL 2024

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

By Pastor Dennis Norby

Isaiah 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Isaiah's words proclaim to us the "otherness" of God. He is superlative to us in every way. He is "higher" as verse eight above says. He is holy, all-knowing, and all-powerful, just to name a few of His attributes, all of which should be instructive to us about how to view Him and His ways. However, our tendency is still, far too often, to expect God to work in the ways that we would and to think in the ways that we do. Our sin can blind us so that when His ways and our ways do not match, we think that He must be in the wrong. We think what He has done is not highly effective, and it is certainly not very practical. But Isaiah shares these words to set us straight by giving us the truth about God's Word.

Isaiah's words in chapter 55 teach us about the efficacy of God's Word. One commentator (Köstenberger, A. J. In Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament, p. 421), says, "both psalmists and prophets portray God's word in close-to-personified terms." The Word is doing things in those books of the Old Testament and the writers of the New Testament continue speaking of God's Word in that way. The Word of God is not static but dynamic. The Word of God is not a dead lifeless thing; it is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). It would be right for us to remember how John describes the incarnation in John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

The prophet Isaiah gives us the imagery of rain and snow falling and watering the earth. Year after year, we have seen the effects of rain and snow falling from the heavens above. The much-needed precipitation falls, and the plants of the ground break forth, sprouting, growing, and producing beautiful flowers and abundant yields of crops. The rain does not leave without effecting that which it encounters. Isaiah's message to

us is that the Word of God is effective in that same way.

The Word of God is doing things, as Isaiah says, "it shall not return to me empty." We know that the Lord's goal in sending His Word is that people might be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). We can rejoice and look back in our own lives when God's Word filled us with strength, hope, and peace despite the attacks of the devil, the world, and our own flesh. I keep thinking of the account of Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms. He said that his conscience was bound by the Word of God. The effect for Luther was a confidence and boldness to continue standing in the clear proclamation of the Bible, especially the message of justification by grace through faith. The Word of God gave him a backbone so as not to crumble under the pressures mounting up against Him.

The Lord has sent His word also to you and me today. It has been sent so that we know that we might be taught, reproved, corrected, and trained in righteousness so that we might be competent, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). I am thankful for all the times I have been able to see the Word of God work successfully in the lives of people I know and love and in my own life. I have seen God's Word hammer through hard hearts and smash inflated egos. I have seen it succeed in pulling brokenhearted people out of despair and I have seen God's Word fill people with hope. I have also seen God's Word fill people with joy as they have had the weight of their shame and guilt taken away by the proclamation of Christ's work of forgiveness. Thanks be to God for His effective Word.

We, in our own ways think that something else might "work" better to accomplish what we think should happen. May we learn from Isaiah and rest in God's Word doing what He wants to accomplish and seeing His gracious and merciful promises be fulfilled again and again and again. 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=\$199,513.46

(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

VBS

Prepare to swing into fun as we head out
on **The Great Jungle Journey!**

June 2-6

5:30 to 8:30 pm

Please sign-up if you are interested
in helping!

Contact - Erin Dahl 388.0631

VBS T-SHIRTS

\$5 each

Deadline - April 21st

Zion's Schedule

Sundays

9am Divine Worship

10am Fellowship

April 6th - Bridal Shower for
Jackelyn Bingham
at 9:30 am at Grace Free

April 14th - Quarterly Potluck and
Meeting

April 20th - END WMF Spring Rally in
Edinburgh / Begins at 9:30 AM

April 21st - Bridal Shower for Kiana
Olson / at 1 pm at Grace Free

Salad Supper

April 26th

Supper at 5:30 / Program at 7 PM

Speaker is Suzanne Bowman

April 28th - Stewardship Meal
free will to go to the Bible School

Youth Group

Resuming - Wednesday, April 3 @ 7 p.m.

In April, we will be wrapping up
"The Rocks Cry Out"
- The Age of Creation.

Why belief in long ages distorts
God's character and why dating
methods can be unreliable.

We will also be preparing for
the upcoming Youth Sunday!

Up Close—Campus Days

April 12 & 13 youth grades 9-12 will be traveling to
AFLBC for a weekend diving into the Word and
maybe diving after some frisbees.

We are grateful that the Hanson family will be
hosting the teens this year and for
Samantha Norby providing transportation.

Please be praying for their weekend down on
campus and their travel to and from.

Teen Ladies Bible Study

We are studying Philippians – Exuberant Joy – the
WMF study and are bible journaling together. All
teen ladies are invited to join us and welcome to
bring a friend. Each teen is provided a journaling
bible and is welcome to bring any journaling
supplies that they would like or use what we have
collected. We will be getting together, Sunday,
April 7th at 1:00 p.m. at Alley Beans. Future Dates
and times for the month will be discussed at that
time.

Youth Formal

Sunday, April 21 @ 4:30 p.m.

All teens are invited and welcome to
bring a guest to the youth formal.

A nice meal will be served,
photo opportunities available,
testimonies shared, and
memories made.

Please RSVP by April 14th.

Parents – we need your help –
decorating, cooking, desserts,
serving, etc. Please let Amy or Tom
know how you are able to help out.

Youth Sunday

Sunday, April 28th, the youth will be leading
worship at Zion @ 9 a.m. and Grace at 10:30
a.m. All youth are encouraged to participate.

We will be working on putting the service
together the two Wednesday evenings prior at
youth group.

Final FCA for the 2023/2024 school year
April 28th from 7-9 p.m.
More details to come.

- 1 Roxanne Stensland
- 2 Claire Shanenko (Jeremy)
Corey Johnson
- 5 Becky Schroeder
Greg Pfennig
Easton Grotberg
- 6 Tim Berntson
Lori Pritchett
- 9 Kristin Peterson
Katrina Zeltinger
- 14 Frank Christensen
- 21 Monte Pritchett
Connor Pfennig (Greg)
- 22 Tom Milbrandt
- 25 Jakob Rolf (Walter)
- 26 Cade Powers
Samuel Dahl (Mardy)
- 27 SueAnn Berntson
- 28 Katy Borg (Kevin)
- 30 Wally Bjornson



Missionaries

10 Bethany Lee (John)

WMF Bible Study

Monday, April 15 at 7pm

Faith Circle

Tuesday, April 23 at 11am

Men's Discipleship

Tuesdays at 6am

Men's Prayer

Saturdays at 7am

Minnesota Twins Outing!

Members of Grace and 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 ballpark!

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

Cost - \$110 per person

**Deadline - Sunday, May 12th
\$55 deposit due at sign-up / remaining \$55
due on June 1st**

Contact - Tom Milbrandt 701.840.9853



April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Men's Discipleship 6am	3 Confirmation 6pm Answers For Kids 7pm Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	4	5	6 Men's Prayer 7am Bridal Shower 9:30 am
7 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am	8	9 Men's Discipleship 6am	10 Confirmation 6pm Answers For Kids 7pm Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	11 Deacons Meet 6:30pm Boards Meet 7pm Council Meets 8pm	12	13 Men's Prayer 7am
14 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am Quarterly potluck & meeting	15 WMF Bible Study 7pm	16 Men's Discipleship 6am	17 Confirmation 6pm Answers For Kids 7pm Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	18	19	20 Men's Prayer 7am END WMF Spring Rally
21 Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am Bridal Shower 1 pm	22	23 Men's Discipleship 6am Faith Circle 11am	24  Confirmation 6pm Answers For Kids 7pm Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	25	26 Salad Supper 5:30 pm	27 Men's Prayer 7am
28  Sunday School 9am Fellowship 10am Divine Worship 10:30am Stewardship meal Catechization	29	30 Men's Discipleship 6am				



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