

Grace Lutheran Church

Rev. Matthew Zickler

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Dear Saints of Grace,

Once more I'll be continuing with elements of the service and parts of the sanctuary in this month's letter. While I have discussed a couple of things unique to Grace's sanctuary, I thought this month I would turn to something relatively universal: the altar. Of course, the altar is something you see in pretty much every Lutheran Church and it is very historical. In fact, it is a reference to the Old Testament Temple. In that Temple, there were two altars. The first was the Bronze Altar. This stood in front of the Tent of Meeting. Now, inside the Tent from back/west to front/east were the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was behind the curtain, then the Holy Place in front of the curtain. In this Holy Place was the Altar of Incense. It was right in front of the curtain at the center of it.

Both of these altars had offerings made on them in the morning and in the evening each day. On the Altar of Incense offerings of incense (probably no surprise from the name) were made which represented the priest bringing the people of Israel before God in prayer. The smoke of the incense was the prayers of the people (cf. Psalm 141:2 – Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!). On the Bronze Altar were other sacrifices: animals, grain offerings, drink offerings, etc. Likewise, as the people were required to make other sacrifices, for example Mary and the sacrifice for her purification we heard about a couple of weeks ago from Luke 2, this would have been at this Bronze Altar as well.

So from this it is clear, that the Old Testament Altars were for sacrifices. Do we have a sacrifice then? No. We do not offer a sacrifice except our thanksgiving and praise to God. However, we have an altar, because we believe that it is on our altar that Jesus comes and meets us with His sacrifice in the Lord's Supper. That is a very important meeting. It's consistent with what the Lord told the Israelites when He said He would meet them at the Tent of Meeting (cf. Exodus 29:38-46; again these names make things not surprising). However, as Jesus meets us, He does so in the promise of bringing to us His body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. So, this altar, then, becomes not a place for us to offer animals—that shedding of blood is done on the cross. Instead, it becomes a place of the promise of Jesus' sacrifice coming to us, of Jesus Himself bringing that to us with His presence. That's why you'll see me bow to the altar often in the service—or even outside of the service. This is acknowledging Jesus' promise to be there in a special way.

Now having said that, there a lot of churches that understand this to be just a table for the meal, or maybe that will not have something in a prominent place in the service because of the belief that the Lord's Supper is merely something we do to remember Jesus' death. It is that, but it is so much more by the promise of His words "This is my body... This is my blood." What a gracious promise we have in those words and at the altar where those words are spoken. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Pastor Zickler", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Zickler

The celebration continues:

On March 16, 2025, the Sunday divine service will be enhanced by the choir from St. John's, La Grange. St. John's, along with Zion, Hinsdale, were the two churches that helped in establishing our own Grace church. Timing was everything back in 1925. The little mission church structure was completed quickly and since the first service was Christmas Eve 1925, the church was not dedicated until afterwards, January 16, 1926. It was in that service, that St. John's choir first united their voices with our Grace members.

And so, in our upcoming March service, we will be remembering the dedication of the little mission church and once again St. John's choir will be uniting their voices with ours. Please join in this 100th year celebration service and also the reception afterwards, "A Taste of Grace."

100 Years of Grace upon Grace



For many years, Palm Sunday was Confirmation Day. Do you know how many youth and adults have been confirmed here at Grace? Make sure you browse the memory table for the many names you may know, one might even be your own. Remember the flowers, the gowns, your own confirmation verse?

On March 16 at the "Taste of Grace" reception, we will be running photos of most all the classes throughout the history of Grace. Make sure you watch for your class photo. And remember to sign up for your favorite hymn, Bible verse or memory of Grace.

From the Women's Club

Women's Club is back! Ladies, mark your calendars for Monday, March 24th, 1:00 pm. We will start the meeting with some delectable treats, followed by a run down of our official business, and winding up with some wonderful fun time! New members and guests are always welcome. See you there!



March Birthdays!

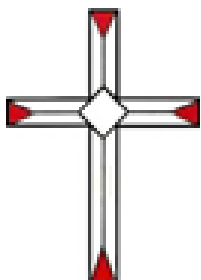
Brittany Briscoe	3/2
Judy Josefek	3/9
Hope Stetler	3/10
Hope Perri	3/11
Matthew Stetler	3/13
Elijah Zickler	3/13
Chris Arata	3/17
Tyna Eggert	3/22
Ezekiel Johnson	3/26
Becky Josefek	3/28



Keeping you in our thoughts and prayers

Sandy Barry, friend of Pastor Zickler
Bill Bien, friend of Linda McGuire
Linda BlaneK-Novak, friend of Pat Schlueter
Bob Blessman
Kate Borland, cousin of Bob Blessman
Lori Bradley, friend of Donna Perkowski
Marybeth Campion, member of Women's Club
Marlene Chaney, member of Women's Club
Megan Church, friend of the Stetler Family
Nancy & Kent Cloninger
Jerry Cohen, husband of Tracy Cohen
Blake & John Donegan, grandson & friend of Lois & John Flood
Tyna Eggert
Richard Flatley, Vietnam Veteran - WS Post
Lois & John Flood
Christine Fry, daughter-in-law of Betty & Bill Tanzer
Jerry Gajda, brother-in-law of Linda McGuire
Kate Gerlesits, friend of the Stetler Family
Marvin Griffin, friend of Pat Schlueter
Pam & Shawn Haslam, friends of Lois & John Flood
Joanne Hass, mother of Glen Hass
Nancy Henry, friend of Paul Sulak
Bonnie Jakubs, friend of Linda McGuire
Marsha Johnson, friend of Linda McGuire
Mary Jordan, cousin of Chris Sulak
Dan Kaiser, friend of the Claster Family
Nancy & Ron Kolar
Kooy Family, friends of Eleanor Kulaga
Eleanor Kulaga & Family
Revy Sabas Libatique, cousin of Lesley Arca-Blessman
Chris Lange, son of Cheryl Dore
Larry & Claire Latman, brother & sister-in-law of Steve Latman
Steve Latman
Allison, Rose, Rachel, Jamie & Robin, nieces of Chris & Bob Dame
Michael Martinez, step-nephew of Pastor Zickler
John Fred MacLean, friend of the Stetler Family
Bruce Mazurkiewicz, cousin of Tyna Eggert

James McGuire, nephew of Linda McGuire
Rod McInerney, friend of Pat Schlueter
Steve Miller, friend of John Mullarkey
Lisa Mullarkey
Cathy Muszynski Cox, friend of the Blessman Family
Benjamin Napolitano, g.grandson of Sue & Tony Napolitano
Frank Napolitano, brother of Tony Napolitano
Tony Napolitano
Noland Family, friends of Meg Krohe
Tracy Novak, niece of Pat Schlueter
Joyce Oberst, sister of Sue Napolitano
Levi Olson, cousin of Paul Sulak
Linda Parlin, sister of Carol Hassel
Mike Perkins, friend of Linda McGuire
Jürgen Pietzsch, cousin of Jennifer Claster
Regina Polistano, friend of Mark Rehn
Dorothea Rehn, mother of Mark Rehn
Ruth Reid
Deb Reilly, friend of Donna Perkowski
David Ridenour, cousin of Chris Stetler
Kristi Schmidt, sister of Lin Johnson
Kurt Seehofer, son of a friend of Pastor Zickler
Barbara & James Shumate, friends of Lois & John Flood
Rose Sirois, grandmother of Jacob Corzine
Adam Skelton, grandson of a friend of Pastor Zickler
Kimmey Skelton, daughter of a friend of Pastor Zickler
Courtney & James Spina, sister & nephew of Carly Yocius
Gayle Steele
Dave Stetler, father of Chris Stetler
Vanessa Stetler, sister of Chris Stetler
Doris Svec
Noah(Picek)Tovar, g.granddaughter of Lois & John Flood
Athey Ulrich
JB, John & Johnny Weiffenbach, cousins of the Schlueter & Claster Families
Pat Williams, friend of Doris Svec
Nancy Wolff, sister of Tyna Eggert



Please remember our shut-ins in your prayers

Eleanor Kulaga • Suzette Olszewski

**Grace Lutheran Church
Voters Assembly
February 23, 2025**

After our meeting opened with prayer, the minutes of the December meeting were approved as read. The church received a letter from Northern Illinois District encouraging each of us to support future church workers through a scholarship fund. Concordia has such a campaign where it will cap tuition at \$5,000.00 for those students desiring to become pastors, deaconesses or other church workers.

Pastor's Report: We held a movie/pizza night February 7 and saw the story of Paul, the Apostle. Lent is fast approaching with Ash Wednesday, March 5. Imposition of ashes will start at 6:45pm with the service following at 7:00pm. Upcoming Wednesday services, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be at 7:00pm. Easter Sunday will be the breakfast followed with the Divine Service at 10:00am. Pastor and Zeke Johnson will be attending the district convention on March 7th and 8th at Concordia, Chicago.

Financial Secretary's Report: nothing at this time

Treasurer's Report: Financial standing of the church as of 12/31/2024:

Receipts	\$325,195.75
Disbursements	(\$336,417.95)
Balance	\$135,874.80

Paul also presented a detailed summary of the last five years showing revenue, expenses and capital improvements leading up to a shortfall of approximately \$50,000.00. A more detailed report is attached.

Trustees' Report: Linda recapped expenses for 2024 including boiler repairs and inspections, parking lot renovation, lawn care expenses, A/C service contracts, the parsonage plumbing issues and even new light bulbs for the parish hall and church. All these totaled \$62,293.32.

So far for 2025, trustees has paid out \$2,578.36.

Continued->

Elders' Report: At their January meeting, the elders have been preparing their annual members letter. They also donated \$1000.00 through World Relief towards the California fires.

Grace Academy: Thanks to all who attended their pancake breakfast. They plan the class trip to Washington, DC.

Board of Education/Evangelism: no reports at this time

Planning Committee: Progress is going smoothly on the anniversary program with the next event being March 16th. Tracy has placed an announcement in the Lutheran Witness and on our Facebook page. She would like to place a blurb in our Western Springs Tower Topics and the other village magazines.

Old Business: none

New Business: The pull down movie screen has recently broken apart. Bob Dame will look into a replacement screen or alternative. Also, it was suggested that new draperies would look very nice for the anniversary event in November.

With no further business at hand, the meeting was adjourned with the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Josefek, Secretary



SCRIP



SCRIP orders will be taken
on Sunday, **March 9th** after the Service.

Questions?

Please call Sara Fitzgerald
708-822-8094

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
SUMMARY OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES
2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
REVENUES (Regular)*	237,994	213,552	221,616	232,006	242,204	199,666
EXPENSES						
Elders	150,613	153,282	161,497	169,083	183,708	190,715
Trustees	36,905	37,698	39,845	48,674	44,527	46,357
Education	4,306	2,280	3,194	3,234	3,225	3,566
Evangelism						
District & other agencies	18,704	8,463	10,389	8,638	9,062	9,928
Total	210,528	201,723	214,925	229,629	240,522	250,566
OVERAGE (SHORTFALL)	27,466	11,829	6,691	2,377	1,682	(50,700)
Bequest income not included in above revenue	50,660	5,000		19,395	19,308	100,000
* Does not include memorials, building, roof, boiler or parsonage capital campaign fund receipts.						
Other non budget expenses not included above						
Boiler repair (paid from building fund)			3,056			
Air conditioner unit (paid from Legacy Fund)					11,218	
Parking lot and parsonage driveway						51,600
Organ maintenance (paid from memorials)	5,863					
New boiler (paid from legacy fund and donations)				78,646	781	
new boiler door (paid from Seeger funds)				2,980		
Parsonage bathrooms renovation (paid from Haffner bequest and donations)					34,275	1,313
New church roof and siding (paid from roof fund)					59,980	
Kitchen countertops						7,695
new coffee maker						871
	5,863		3,056	81,626	106,254	61,479

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
TREASURER'S REPORT
December 31, 2024

	OPERATING FUNDS	LEGACY FUNDS	ROOF AND BUILDING FUNDS	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
Balance - January 1, 2024	110,100.88	14,688.88	21,707.43	146,497.19
<u>Receipts - January 1 through December 31, 2024</u>				
Weekly collections	192,385.00			192,385.00
Other receipts	3,321.15			3,321.15
Building Fund	1,350.00			1,350.00
Interest Income	131.03	3,160.63	1,328.23	4,619.89
Net scripts revenue (1,260.00 less 1,215.29)	44.71			44.71
Parsonage repairs (QCD)	6,000.00			6,000.00
Insurance proceeds for parsonage flood damage	10,000.00			10,000.00
David Keil bequest		100,000.00		100,000.00
Kitchen countertops	3,200.00			3,200.00
Other donations	3,500.00			3,500.00
Other memorials received	115.00			115.00
Landscaping Fund	660.00			660.00
Total	220,706.89	103,160.63	1,328.23	325,195.75
<u>Disbursements - January 1 through December 31, 2024</u>				
Budget				
Elders	196,850.00			196,850.00
Trustees	49,200.00			49,200.00
Education	4,900.00			4,900.00
District & other missions	9,500.00			9,500.00
Evangelism and youth group	1,500.00	15,000.00		16,500.00
Other agencies and non budget expenses	928.00			928.00
Parsonage flood restoration cost	9,372.60			9,372.60
Parking lot and parsonage driveway	6,800.00	44,800.00		51,600.00
Kitchen countertops	5,978.00	1,717.32		7,695.32
Phase 2 - Parsonage bathroom renovation	1,313.02			1,313.02
New coffee maker	871.00			871.00
Total	261,950.00	(61,517.32)		(336,417.95)
Transfers to checking account	12,000.00		(12,000.00)	
Increase in valuation of mutual fund		599.81		599.81
Balance - December 31, 2023	67,907.14	56,932.00	11,035.66	135,874.80
<u>Detail of Account Balance</u>				
Checking account	4,381.43			4,381.43
Designated for parsonage repairs and renovation	28,525.71			28,525.71
Certificates of deposit	35,000.00	40,000.00	11,035.66	75,000.00
Money Market accounts at Edward Jones		7,309.66		7,309.66
American Balanced Fund - mutual fund		9,622.34		9,622.34
Total	67,907.14	56,932.00	11,035.66	135,874.80