

Living with Christ, Growing in Grace!

Grace Evangelical Lutheran
Church

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*Rooted In Christ - Growing in Love -
Branching out in Service*



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Grace & Trinity Newsbites

MARCH & APRIL 2026

As March begins we are in the season of Lent. There are traditional practices – fasting, prayer and giving alms – which are meant to strengthen our walk with Jesus, our life as disciples. I encourage you to be open and creative in thinking about these Lenten disciplines. For instance, fasting from certain foods or habits might be good – but maybe the fast is necessary because it provides space to feast. So maybe it's a fast from judgment that allows us to feast on new experiences or compassion; or fasting from what used to be so that one can feast on the present. Prayer can take many forms – a 40 day retreat is a fine time to consider what prayer is and how prayer fits into daily life. See the box with ideas for prayer. Giving alms might be money to a specific cause, or it could be giving away the new thing and making do with the old. As Lent began we were reminded that we are dust, made of the same stuff as the earth and stars, finite. A reminder that might make us want to reexamine, to paraphrase Mary Oliver, what we are doing 'with our one wild and precious life'. That reminder is a good beginning for the church's annual 40 day retreat. A retreat held in the midst of our daily life, in which we are called to reflect on our priorities, to contemplate the choices we make, to take a good, hard, and loving look through our lives to see what idols we have created, to discern if it's God or us 'in whom we trust'. A time to amend or re-orient our lives that we, who see because we believe, might live more abundantly, joy fully, with greater love. It's our annual 'spring cleaning' event; time to de-clutter, refresh and renew; so that we might see more clearly who we are and where we are heading. With a bit less clutter, inside and out, we make room for gratitude, generosity, joy and peace. May we all be open to the Spirit who leads and guides us in ventures undreamed of, to places we might rather not go, who empowers and encourages us to be faithful disciples of Jesus the Christ.

May our observance of Lent lead to a joyful Easter time, which begins in April and lasts for 50 days. In April we will be celebrating Confirmation and our graduating high school seniors. It's also marks the end of our Christian Ed program year. How will Easter shape your life? What symbols of new life will decorate your space? How

will you embrace the new life in Christ that we celebrate during the 50 days of Easter? What new thing do you hope God will work in you?

However you journey through Lent and celebrate through Easter, know that you are beloved & Spirit led; be bold, love your neighbor. Do good and be kind. Do not be afraid, God is with you.

Traveling mercies,
Pr. Priscilla

PRAYER

Here's an idea for a Lenten prayer practice that I hope might become a prayer habit. Take home a bulletin and read the Sunday lessons as a daily devotion. For those with a Grace bulletin: Pray through the list of names on the prayer list every day. Use the prayers of intercession for daily prayer. Other ideas: Each time you come into the church building, pray for all who will enter the building that day. As you sit in the sanctuary, pray for all who will sit in the pews that day. As you enter your home, pray for all who live there, and all guests and workers who might pass through that day. As you leave your home, pray for all in need of prayer and that you might be a sign of Christ's presence to all you will meet while away from home. Pray as you enter/leave your car, your work place, school, a store, the theater, etc; pray for the first responders and those in need of care/correction whenever you hear a siren – ambulance, fire, or police. What other ways could you incorporate time/space for prayer in your day?

It's not too late to pick up a Lent devotional. They are available at both buildings. Feel free to take one for a neighbor or friend. If allowed, and you have one, put a few in your break room at work.

Thanks to all of you who have signed up to sponsor a month or two this year to help support our new friend, Abdoul, through Compassion International. Please continue to keep him in your prayers throughout the year. The sign-up sheet to be a monthly sponsor is on the table on the back table in the fellowship hall at Trinity.

In Our Prayers this Week:

To see an updated list please contact the office.

Trinity News

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

To see an updated list please contact the office.

Trinity – January Financial Report – General Fund

To see the latest report please contact the office.

Laity Summit 2026 – Serve Joyfully on March 23, 24 and 26, 2026
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm Central (5:30 pm to 7:30 pm) Mountain.

Laity Summit is a virtual space we gather to remember and celebrate our vision as United Methodists in the Great Plains conference. “The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ, who empowered by the Holy Spirit **love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously** in local communities and worldwide connections.

Laity across Kansas and Nebraska, you are invited to gather in this virtual space to hear testimonies of people fulfilling the Great Commission. This year, we get to “consider how we Serve Joyfully: with the heart of Christ, as we journey alongside the most vulnerable among us, offering care and compassion with joy. (Psalm 100:1, Nehemiah 8:10, John 13:14-15, and 1 Peter 4:10).”

The format for all times listed below is Central Time zone first, followed by Mountain Time zone.

Start Time – Every evening we will begin at **6:30pm Central / 5:30pm Mountain**

6:30 p.m. Central and 5:30 p.m. Mountain Welcome and Opening Prayer

- o Framing of the Evening and Opening Message (please have communion elements available at your site MONDAY ONLY)

7:00 p.m. Central and 6:00 p.m. Mountain - Join Breakout Session

(see daily options listed below*)

8:30 p.m. Central and 7:30 p.m. Mountain - Sessions Conclude

Please register at this link – <https://gp-reg.brtapp.com/LaitySummit032026>

We are encouraging you to host watch parties, so that you can share and vision together what might inspire you during the workshops!

Check out the following pages for UCC News:

<https://www.facebook.com/nebraskaucc>

<https://ucctcm.org/nebraska-conference-fast-five/>

Grace News

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

To see an updated list please contact the office.

Grace Lutheran Church - December Financial Report – General Fund Council Minutes are posted on the bulletin board by the offices.

The full financial report is available in the office.

To see the latest report please contact the office.

Reminder, Vicki Furchert is still collecting Best Choice UPC codes. Our American Legion Auxiliary gets 3 cents per code. The funds are used for Veteran's projects. There is a collection bucket in Parish Hall at Grace.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for movie night – last Tuesday of the month.

Lutheran Advocacy Day at the Nebraska Capital

March 9, 2026 - 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

Join fellow Nebraska Synod Lutherans, Mosaic and Lutheran Family Services (LFS) for a day of advocacy training, worship, meeting with your state legislators and showing up to live out your faith. Come by yourself or bring a group from your church. Come if you are an experienced advocate. Come if this is your first time speaking to a senator. Join us in making our voices heard as people of faith!

Note: Mosaic and LFS will help prepare you to speak with legislators about current bills related to Medicare, Medicaid, housing and broad band accessibility but you are also able to lift up other justice issues important to you.

Location: St Paul United Methodist Church, 1144 M Street, Lincoln NE

Schedule:

9 am Check in and Gathering

9:15 am Welcome, Announcements, Introductions

9:30 am Worship led by Bishop Johnson

10 am – 11 am Advocacy Training-what do I say and how do I say it?
Details about specific bills

11 am – 12:00 pm Travel to capital
(walk for those who are physically able)

Group picture in front of the Capitol, prayer for legislators

Capital tour, observe legislature in session

12:30 Return to church

Lunch and individual/group meetings with legislators

1:30 Additional opportunities for engagement with LFS and Mosaic

2:00 Closing prayer and blessing on advocacy efforts

Individuals are welcome to return to the capital on their own after the closing prayer and blessing.

Register here:

<https://nebraskasynod.org/event/lutheran-advocacy-day-at-the-nebraska-capital/>

The following suggestions for reflecting on God's Word come from: "**Walking Wet**, a Lenten Series developed by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and the Virginia Synod focused on the promises made at baptism. The five baptismal promises, which are made whenever someone is baptized, provide guidance as we live as a child of God in the world. These promises are meant to drench us daily in God's love and grace - promises for each day, not merely meant as a one-time deal at our baptism."

• **Lectio Divina:** Lectio Divina offers a focused way for an individual to listen to and reflect upon God's Word. The technique involves reading or listening to a passage of scripture multiple times and reflecting on a word or phrase that catches your attention. Grace Lutheran Church in Lancaster, PA has a website with a helpful overview of Lectio Divina and step-by-step instructions you can download. Here's the link: <https://gracelutheranchurch.com/lectio-divina-2/>

• **Head, Heart, Gut:** This practice is a variation on Lectio Divina. The invitation is to read a passage of scripture and reflect on it using these three questions:

- **Head:** Read the scripture passage once and ask yourself - What is one word or phrase from this passage that speaks to me?
- **Heart:** Read the scripture passage a second time and ask yourself – What do you feel? What situation in your life is being touched by this passage?
- **Gut:** Read the scripture passage a third time and ask yourself – What is God's invitation to you from this passage?

AN EASY BREAD RECIPE

Mix together in a large mug or small mixing bowl

2 packs (or equivalent) yeast

A tablespoon or so of sugar or honey or molasses

½ cup warm/hot water – if too cold or too hot the yeast may not work.

Let sit until mixture is bubbly and about double

In large mixing bowl –

Mix together 4 cups of flour – can be any combination of flour (all whole wheat flour will make a very heavy dough) – can add cornmeal if you wish. Mix in 1 tsp salt.

Pour in yeast mixture. Add ½ cup melted butter or oil. Add 1 cup warm water or milk; can also put in a beaten egg or two if you want.

Add ¼ cup honey or molasses or white or brown sugar

Mix well. Add more flour if dough is too soft or more liquid if too crumbly.

Knead dough until smooth and elastic – about 10 minutes. If you get tired of kneading you can throw the dough onto a hard surface multiple times.

Put in a bowl, cover and set in a warm spot until dough has doubled in size. Usually about ½ hour. Then shape it as you'd like. Rolls, a round or oblong loaf, a braid coiled into a circle or left in a long braid on a cookie sheet.

Pre-heat oven to 350. Depending on the shape and size bake it for 20 -40 minutes. When done, bottom should be brown and sound hollow when you tap it.

Easily adapted - roll it out and spread with cinnamon, butter and brown sugar; roll it up and slice into cinnamon rolls. Use for pizza dough or make it into garlic bread sticks.

Add dried fruit or spices to the dough. Use more or less sugar/honey/molasses depending on whether you are making something savory or sweet. Can also add sweet potato or pumpkin puree or applesauce – a ½ cup or so.

Breaking bread

Every meal was not communion, but every meal was blessed.
Always offered with Thanksgiving and then shared among the rest.

Whether feeding the 5000 or only two or three
Jesus took the bread and broke it, then he died for you and me.

So, in the bread remember the blessed peace to come,
Then take it with Thanksgiving and savor every crumb.

Grace Lutheran Church

Invitation for Easter Flowers

(If Easter Lilies are unavailable,
other flowers will be substituted.)

We will again have a garden of lovely
Easter Flowers for our Easter worship services.

You may order and pay for your lilies direct from the church office
if done so by noon on **Friday, March 27th**.

\$19.50 per Lily for # _____ of plants.

Easter Lily given in honor/memory of (circle one)

From: _____

Or:

If you bring in your own plant, fill out the following by
Friday, March 27th in order to get your donation listed in the
Easter Bulletin. **Please do not bring your lily in until April 3rd.**

Thank you – however- I would like to bring my own Easter Lily,
Given in honor/memory of (circle one)
