

This Week at Grace
Sunday, January 21, 2007
The Third Sunday after the Epiphany
28 Day to Minnesota Twins Spring Training

INTRODUCTION

Preaching is powerful, and the power is in the word of God. That word can convict us of sin and raise us to new life. That word can heal divisions in Christ's body and help us appreciate the gifts of others. And that Word has become flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. As we conclude the week of prayer for Christian unity, we join with other Christians to pray that we can come together in Christ.

Agnes, martyr, died around 304

Agnes was a girl of about thirteen living in Rome. The details of her martyrdom are not clear, but she gave witness to her faith and was put to death as a result, most likely by the sword. The church has honored her as one of the chief martyrs of her time.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Blessed Lord God,
you have caused the holy scriptures to be written
for the nourishment of your people.
Grant that we may hear them,
read, mark, learn, and live them,
that, comforted by your promises,
we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life,
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

FIRST READING *Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10*

The exiles have returned. Under Nehemiah they have rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and its walls. Now the people ask Ezra, the priest, to read the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it they weep for their sins, for the long years in exile, and for the joy of the Lord that was their strength.

all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand;

and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

PSALM *Psalm 19*

The teaching of the LORD revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)

¹The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its | maker's handiwork.

**²One day tells its tale | to another,
and one night imparts knowledge | to another.**

³Although they have no | words or language,
and their voices | are not heard,

⁴their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends | of the world,

where God has pitched a tent | for the sun.

⁵It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.

⁶It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of | it again;

nothing is hidden from its | burning heat. R

⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re- | vives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom | to the simple.

**⁸The statutes of the LORD are just and re- | joice the heart;
he commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light | to the eyes.**

⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and en- | dures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous | altogether.

**¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. R**

¹¹By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is | great reward.

**¹²Who can detect one's | own offenses?
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.**

¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion

| over me;

then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.

**¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable |
in your sight,**

O LORD, my strength and | my redeemer. R

SECOND READING *1 Corinthians 12:12–31a*

Paul writes to the divided congregation in Corinth to tell them what it means for the church to be the one body of Christ.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But strive for the greater gifts.

GOSPEL *Luke 4:14–21*

Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown. In the words of Isaiah, he clearly states his purpose, his mission.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about

him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

TODAY: 8:30a and 11:00a Worship Services
9:30a Coffee Fellowship
9:45a Sunday School/Education Hour
12:00p Peer Ministry Meeting
2:00p Girl Scout Meeting

MONDAY: 6:00p Mary Circle
7:00p *Gracious Christianity*
7:30p Cantori Rehearsal

TUESDAY: 9:00a Staff Meeting
9:30a Ladies Bible Study
11:00a Pastor's Text Study
1:00p Widow Support Group
2:30p 3D Meeting
6:30p Scout Pinewood Derby
7:00p Personnel Committee Meeting
7:30p Lois Circle

WEDNESDAY: 9:15a Deborah Circle
9:15a Martha Circle
1:15p Ruth Circle
5:00p Chew-n-Chat
5:30p Cherub/Chancel Choir Rehearsals
6:30p Confirmation Classes
6:30p Sr. High Bible Study
6:30p Bells of Praise
7:30p Adult Choir

THURSDAY: 6:00a Early Morning Bible Study
1:00p Widower's Support Group
7:00p Evening Bible Study

FRIDAY: 1:30p ThorneCrest Bible Study
3:30p 4th-6th gr. Youth Room

NEXT SUNDAY: 8:30a and 11:00 Worship Services
9:30a Coffee Fellowship
9:45a Sunday School / Education Hour
12:00p Congregational Lasagna Dinner
1:00p Annual Meeting

MISSIONARY FOR A DAY: [Jan. 21: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [Jan. 21: Sunday School] [Jan. 22: In memory of loved ones given by Babe & Lois Brandt.] [Jan. 23: In memory of Dorothy Wangen given by family and friends.] [Jan. 24: GLCW].

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: (no one reported).

PLEASE REMEMBER those needing the continuing prayers of our congregation: Ella Anderson (granddaughter of Dan & Bonnie Anderson), Janice Anderson, Marlene Bergeson, Larry Bergo, Kathy Diaz, Mark Fisher (father of Lynn Stadheim), Theresa Gamble, Jan Guse, Dan Hagen, Tara Hanson, April Hustoft, Marlys Jahnke, Vern Nasby, DeAnna Nelson, LeMoyne Oakland, Marian Odson, Lissa Parrish, Dayna Saltou, Joyce Schreiber, Sally Skrlin, LaVon Stewart, Sally Witham (mother of Greg Witham), and Eleanor Wolfe.

IN YOUR PRAYERS, please also remember Pat & Mike Levisen and family upon the death of Pat's mother, Alice Nack.

BAPTIZED INTO THE KINGDOM of God at our 8:30 worship this morning is *Liley Ann Steven*, daughter of Wade & Nicole Steven. Her sponsors are Holly Langfald, Chelsea Loverink, Lonnie Berg, and Stacy Adams.

REFRESHMENTS BETWEEN SERVICES are being served today by Joey Henderson and his parents, Greg & Diane.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of Grace Lutheran Church will be held at 1:00p on Sunday, Jan. 28th. Your attendance is important. (A lasagna meal will be served prior to the meeting from Noon to 1:00.)

AT THE JANUARY CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING the agenda for the Annual Meeting on Jan. 28, 2007, was approved. Apart from the traditional reports, etc., there will be two resolutions and the proposed 2007 budget. One resolution is to designate our mission partners for Missionary for a Day giving for 2007. The other resolution is to propose to the congregation the purchase and installation of pew cushions. A member has donated funds that they hope can be used for this purpose if the congregation approves. The proposed 2007 budget is \$525,009 which represents a 2.99% increase. On the day of the Annual Meeting the Adult Forum between services that morning will be an opportunity for members to hear information regarding the resolutions and proposed budget and ask questions. See you at the Annual Meeting!

YEAR-END GIVING STATEMENTS for 2006 are now available in the narthex area. Remember to pick yours up today.

2007 OFFERING ENVELOPES for our Sr. High youth are also available in the back of the narthex this morning. Students are encouraged to stop and pick theirs up today.

CIRCLE BIBLE STUDY helps are available on the round table in the narthex for the January Circle meetings. These helps are to assist those who do not have the *Lutheran Woman Today* magazine which has the complete study available.

BOOK CLUB will not meet in the month of January. The next meeting will be held Mon., Feb. 5th, at the home of Jill Hagen and will focus on the books *Dinner With the Perfect Stranger* by David Gregory, and *Ultimate Gift* by Jim Stovall.

10th gr. CONFIRMATION STUDENTS AND PARENTS:

Confirmation pictures are now available and may be picked up in the Office.

STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS for the GLCW are in need of all things such as: layettes (see complete list on the collection box, GLCW handbook, and in next month's *Grace Notes*), health kits, school kits, sewing kits, and soaps. The inventory is very low and we need your help to build it back up again for May's shipment.

HEARTS TOUCHING HEARTS in the Lord, a book written by retired Grace Pastor Milt Ost detailing Grace Lutheran's mission work in Latvia and Russia, continues to be available for purchase in the church office.

GRACIOUS CHRISTIANITY MEETING: Monday, Jan. 22nd, 7:00p

The next meeting of the *Gracious Christianity Group* will be held Monday, Jan. 22nd, 7:00p, at the home of Dave & Carol Larson, 111 South Lane. *Gracious Christianity* is a Bible Study that meets monthly to seek answers to difficult real life situations that face us in the hopes of understanding more clearly what Jesus would have us do and be. Three agreements guide our discussion:

- (1) We seek to understand Jesus as demonstrated by word and deed in the passages that reflect his character and proclamations. We then seek to understand one another's points of view. Lastly, we offer our own understanding or insight.
- (2) We respect each other's opinions, being especially curious about those who express a perspective different from our own. We realize everyone has a reason for believing and feeling like they do, and it is to our benefit to understand this.
- (3) We ask that comments be tied into the scripture we are studying, so that our direction remains guided by the Jesus exposed in the Gospels, not by our own agendas.

We will take this opportunity at the beginning of the year to review where we've been since our first meeting last June. If you've missed any of the sessions and would like to catch up, this is a perfect time to do it! We'll review the passages we've studied so far and discuss how we're changing (or not) as we get to know Jesus more intimately. In February, we launch into new issues and guidance from the Word. We hope you will make this study one of your commitments this spring. You deserve the break, the support, and the joy of getting closer to Jesus. ☺ See you there! -- David Larson and Mary Laeger-Hagemeister

Annual Meeting

January 28, 2007

**Dinner served at 12:00p
Meeting begins at 1:00p**

Come enjoy a great meal and
let us do the cooking!

Proceeds to help support the Heifer Project.

Join us!

JANUARY CIRCLE MEETINGS:

MARY CIRCLE meets Mon. evening, Jan. 22nd, 6:00p, at the home of Pam Pleiss, 400 Johnson St.
(A light supper will be served.)

LOIS CIRCLE will meet Tues. evening, Jan. 23rd, 7:30p, at the home of Gwen Groskurth, 204 Lee Pl.

DEBORAH CIRCLE meets Wed., Jan. 24th, 9:15a, at the home of Mary Hallum, 2201 Stevens Rd.,
#210. Peggy Bangert will lead the Bible Study.

MARTHA CIRCLE will meet Wed., Jan. 24th, 9:15a, at the home of Judy Menssen, 1306 Levison St.
Bible Study Leader is Evelyn Hovland.

RUTH CIRCLE meets Wed., Jan. 24th, 1:15p, at the church. Pat Linnes will serve as hostess.

Circle Chairwomen are reminded to stop in the church office prior to their meetings for copies of the
January Circle Announcements.

GIVING AT GRACE:

The Property and Finance Ministry appreciates your generous support.
Your faithful stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace.

	Sunday, Jan. 14th	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Giving	\$ 13,821.00	\$ 24,102.00
Budgeted Need	\$ 9,803.00	\$ 19,606.00
Quarters for World Hunger	\$ 64.00	\$ 102.00
Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund	\$ 107.00	

Attendance Last Sunday - 447; Last Year - 431

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Albert Lea, Minnesota

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

January 21, 2007