

This Week at Grace
Sunday, March 11, 2007
The Third Sunday in Lent

22 Days to the Twins Home Opener

Remember to set your clocks ahead 1 hour Saturday night!

INTRODUCTION

Can we take the news to heart? Each story we encounter in this season is really about us. Lent began as we were reminded by an ashen cross that we do not have forever. The clock is ticking; the forty days are unwinding. We have now! If we take this day seriously, we may discover that our deepest hungers can be filled. When we know that we are heading toward a forgiving God, the news becomes good news.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING *Isaiah 55:1-9*

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their native land seems like an unbelievable promise of free food and drink for all who come to the celebration. What's more, those who return to the LORD also enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
 and you that have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
 Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
 Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
³ Incline your ear, and come to me;

- listen, so that you may live.
 I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.
- ⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
- ⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
 and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
 because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
 for he has glorified you.
- ⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found,
 call upon him while he is near;
- ⁷ let the wicked forsake their way,
 and the unrighteous their thoughts;
 let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
 and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
- ⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 nor are your ways my ways, says 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.

PSALM *Psalm 63:1–8*

O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)

- ¹O God, you are my God; eager- | ly I seek you;
 my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land
 where there | is no water.
- ²**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your | holy place,
 that I might behold your power | and your glory.**
- ³For your steadfast love is better than | life itself;
 my lips shall | give you praise.
- ⁴**So will I bless you as long | as I live
 and lift up my hands | in your name. R**
- ⁵My spirit is content, as with the rich- | est of foods,
 and my mouth praises you with | joyful lips,
- ⁶**when I remember you up- | on my bed,
 and meditate on you in | the night watches.**
- ⁷For you have | been my helper,
 and under the shadow of your wings I | will rejoice.
- ⁸**My whole being | clings to you;
 your right hand | holds me fast. R**

SECOND READING*1 Corinthians 10:1–13*

Paul uses images from Hebrew story and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,³ and all ate the same spiritual food,⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did.⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play."⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents.¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come.¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

GOSPEL*Luke 13:1–9*

Jesus addresses the age-old question of whether people deserve the bad things that happen to them. The short answer is "No." Yet, it is better to repent than to test the forbearance of God indefinitely.

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?"³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did.⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them — do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?"⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

⁶ Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none.⁷ So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?'"⁸ He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it.⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

TODAY:		<i>Daylight Saving Time Begins</i>
	8:30a	and 11:00a Worship Services
	9:30a	Coffee Fellowship
	9:45a	Sunday School/Education Hour
	9:45a	First Communion Instruction
MONDAY:	7:00p	Gracious Christianity
	7:30p	Cantori Rehearsal
TUESDAY:	9:00a	Staff Meeting
	9:30a	Ladies Bible Study
	11:00a	Pastor's Text Study
	2:30p	3D Meeting
	6:30 or 7:00p	Ministry Team Meetings
	8:00p	Church Council Meeting
WEDNESDAY:	2:00p	Grace Seniors
	5:30p	Cherub/Chancel Choir Rehearsals
	5:30p	Soup and Sandwich Supper
	6:30p	Bells of Praise
	7:00p	Lenten Worship Service
	8:00p	Adult Choir
THURSDAY:	6:00a	Early Morning Bible Study
	2:30p	Sr. Tower Friendship Group
	No	Evening Bible Study
FRIDAY:	1:30p	ThorneCrest Bible Study
	3:30p	4 th -6 th gr. Youth Room
NEXT SUNDAY:	8:30a	and 11:00 Worship Services
	9:30a	Coffee Fellowship
	9:45a	Sunday School / Education Hour
	9:45a	First Communion Instruction
	2:00p	Girl Scout Meeting
	2:15p	Good Samaritan Sunday

MISSIONARY FOR A DAY: [Mar. 11: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [Mar. 11: Sunday School] [Mar. 12: Given by Pastor Walsh.] [Mar. 13: Given by Babe & Lois Brandt.] [Mar. 14: GLCW].

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: Pastor John Henriksen (Rochester Methodist), Norman

Johnson, and Jerry Vogt.

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

IN YOUR PRAYERS, please also remember Carol Stiles upon the death of her mother-in-law, Mildred Stiles; Marilee Citsay and family upon the death of her brother-in-law, Gordon Michaelis; Marvel Dockwell and Robin & Greg Witham and family upon the death of son and brother, Robert Dockwell; Clarence Petersen upon the death of wife, Delona; Rich & Ann Oliphant upon the death of father, Donald Oliphant; and Margaret Bergland upon the death of her son, Jerry Bergland.

WE JOIN OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS in Christ throughout the Southeast Minnesota Synod today in praying for Evanger Lutheran Church of Sargeant, Bricelyn Lutheran in Bricelyn, Dennison Lutheran in Dennison, and Faith Lutheran Church of Janesville.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JOHN: As many of you know, I returned home from the hospital last Monday evening. I was on IV antibiotic through Wednesday so that is also done. I am feeling well and hopeful that I am well on my way to recovery. The plan is to return to work part-time this coming week. I am anxious to get back. I want to thank you for all of your expressions of concern, the many cards I have received, and most of all your prayers! What a blessing they are. I also want to thank Pastor Todd and the rest of the staff for all their hard work during my absence, and many of you for stepping in to help. God's blessings to all of you and again thank you! Lori and I appreciate your love and support!

GREETERS FOR OUR SERVICES this morning are Laverne & Eileen Seberson and Gary & Sharon Seedorf at 8:30; and Rodger & Carole Nelson and Craig & Becky Loehr at 11:00.

ACOLYTES are Karl Sather and Gracie Thomas at 8:30; and Ciara Wangen and Mitchel Webb at 11:00.

LESSON READERS for our worship services are Ginny Loberg at 8:30; and Judy Hall at 11:00.

REFRESHMENTS BETWEEN SERVICES are being served today by Natalie Oakland and her parents, Todd & Michelle.

ADULT FORUM TODAY will begin a discussion series on the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. (This was the plan for Thursday Evening Bible Study.) Gary Schindler will

moderate a showing of the portion of the film and follow up with discussion. Plan to attend this time of Lenten reflection.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS for 5th graders begins today through Apr. 1st. Classes will be held in the Chapel at 9:45a during the Sunday School hour. Both parents and students need to attend.

GRACIOUS CHRISTIANITY MEETING: Monday, Mar. 12th, 7:00p

The next meeting of the *Gracious Christianity Group* will be held Monday, Mar. 12th, 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.

OUR THANKS to those who donated dessert or helped serve coffee at St. John's Home last Sunday. It is so greatly appreciated by their residents and families.

GRACE SENIORS: Wednesday, Mar. 14th, 2:00p

Grace Seniors will meet that day in the Fireside Room. Jeanie Jackson (herself a fosterparent) will speak about the ups and downs of fosterparenting. Jeanie is also a member of our church and you will find her program very much of interest, so come and bring a friend with you. *If you need a ride to a Seniors activity, please call Lisa in the church office, or the Kleih's at 826-3176.*

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION – Summer Camp

Registration forms for Good Earth Village are here and if you get registered before Mar. 15th you qualify for a discount. Also, something new is – *Bring a Friend Discount* – check it out! Grace Lutheran pays \$100 for each member going to camp. Forms are located outside of Jill's office, financial scholarships also available.

ALTAR GUILD will have it's next meeting on Tues., Mar. 20th, at 7:30p in the Fireside Room. (There will be no April meeting.)

GLCW GUEST NIGHT: Tuesday, Apr. 17th, 6:30p

Grace Lutheran Church Women will host a WELCA Guest Night on Tues., Apr. 17th, beginning at 6:30p. Mary Nelson, author of two books, *Grace for Each Hour* and *Grace for the Tough Times*, is a survivor of breast cancer and prays for other women who have the disease. She leads the Pray for the Cure cancer ministry at Hosanna!, a church of 5,000 in Lakeville. Mark you calendars now and plan to join us!

"CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES" TRIP:

Tickets have been ordered for the Plymouth Playhouse presentation of *Church Basement Ladies* for Sunday, May 20th, at the 2:00p matinee performance. Sale will begin as soon as the tickets arrive. Plan to join us for this delightfully funny performance. More information will be coming.

SUBMITTED PICTURE DIRECTORY PHOTOS

Did you bring in a photo to be submitted for the picture directory done last fall? Previously we were told that these pictures would not be returned to the church, however, last week we received a mailing from the company which included these photos. They can be picked up in the church office. Photos we have include Joe & Pam Avery and family, Josh & Angie Barker and Auslund, Eda Bergh, Roger & LaJean Bjorklund, Arnold Brunsvold, Burnette Grunhovd, Hazel Gudmonson, Jean Hanson, Bob & Donna Oakland, Kent & Dee Peterson and Brandon and Randy, Chad Samp and Erica Stevens, Grace Vee, Cheri Wehrenberg and Brody, and Eleanor Wolfe.

CHILDREN'S VISION INTERNATIONAL founder, Jeanene Thicke will be here for a presentation on Sunday, Apr. 15th. She will be here to greet our congregation at both services and will be doing a presentation about the orphanage in Bogota in the Fellowship Hall at 9:45a. The congregation is invited to attend.

PLEASE CONSIDER donating to our stewardship projects for Lutheran World Relief. We are in need of items for our May shipment. **Healthcare Kits** include: one hand towel, one wash cloth, one bath-size bar of soap (in original wrapper), one toothbrush, one 5-7 oz. tube of toothpaste, one wide-toothed comb, one metal file (or clippers with a file), and six bandaids (1/2-3/4"). You are welcome to donate single items or a complete kit with all items wrapped in the towel and tied securely. **School Kits** include: pads or notebooks of ruled paper (8 1/2 x 11 in., 150-200 sheets), one blunt "safety" scissors, one ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other, one pencil sharpener, six new pencils with erasers, one eraser (2 1/2" long), 12 sheets of colored construction paper, one box of 8, 16, or 24 crayons, one cloth bag (approx. 12 x 14 inches with cloth handles). Again, you are welcome to donate single items or a complete kit with all items placed in the bag. Fold handles over and secure with two large rubber bands, or tie with yarn. Monetary donations are also appreciated for items to be purchased to complete more kits. Thank you for sharing in our stewardship projects here at Grace Lutheran.

DON'T FORGET to check out our GLCW table of information located in the narthex. Many interesting articles, sign-up sheets for volunteers, and also the Prayer Petition Journal can be found there along side the Honorary Caring & Sharing Member List. Feel free to share a memory or kind word about the **bold women** of our church. Also, if you know of anyone that should be included on the list and was missed, feel free to call your GLCW President, LaJean Westeng, at 826-3726.

Our Library Needs Your Help

The following books are lost, forgotten, hidden, or missing from our church library. Please look through the list and see if any of them might be on your bookshelf or nightstand. If you have taken out one of the books and can't find it please notify Lisa in the church office and we will replace the copy. (If you have returned the item we may have recorded to your name, please also let us know. We have tried to be careful about checking, but can make a mistake.)

<i>A Table by the Window</i>	Lawana Blackwell
<i>The Lovely Bones</i>	Alice Sebold
<i>Silent Star</i>	Tracie Peterson
<i>Diamonds in the Dust</i>	Joni Eareckson Tada
<i>A Rush of Wings</i>	Kristen Heitzmann
<i>The Lost Boy</i>	Dave Pelzer (part of a series)
<i>City of Angles</i>	Peterson & Bell
<i>Holy Bible Concordance Revised Standard Version</i>	
<i>Chicken Soup for the Cat & Dog Lover's Soul</i>	Canfield/Hansen
<i>Chicken Soup for the Unsinkable Soul</i>	Canfield/Hansen
<i>Living Faith</i>	Jimmy Carter
<i>Legend of the Celtic Stone</i>	Michael Phillips (part of a series)
<i>A Voice in the Wind</i>	Francine Rivers
<i>At Home in Mitford</i>	Jan Karon (part of a series)
<i>Nicolae</i>	La Haye/Jenkins (part of a series)

Children's:

<i>Good Clean Jokes for Kids</i>	Bob Phillips
<i>High Hurdles – Olympic Dreams</i>	Lauraine Snelling
<i>High Hurdles – Letting Go</i>	Lauraine Snelling
<i>Someday Heaven</i>	Larry Libby
<i>What Did Jesus Do?</i>	Mary Simon
<i>Elsie Dinsmore: Elsie's Impossible Choice</i>	Martha Finley
<i>The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe</i>	C.S. Lewis
<i>The Magician's Nephew</i>	C.S. Lewis
<i>Exploring Ancient Cities of the Bible</i>	Carroll & Carroll
<i>Slowdown at Sears Point</i>	Ken Stuckey

Video:

The Ten Commandments

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, Mar. 4th	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Giving	\$ 13,564.00	\$ 84,277.00
Budgeted Need	\$ 10,096.00	\$ 90,864.00
Quarters for World Hunger	\$ 45.75	\$ 412.75
Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund	\$ 137.00	

Attendance Last Sunday - 404; Last Year - 377

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Albert Lea, Minnesota

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
March 11, 2007