

This Week at Grace
Sunday, March 25, 2007
The Fifth Sunday in Lent
8 Days to the Twins Home Opener

INTRODUCTION

The Lenten preparation is almost at an end. Something new is about to happen! Mary's act of anointing Jesus is extravagant, but when we know that grace has come to us, it is time for lavishness. Our old values get rearranged when we realize how deeply we are loved.

Annunciation of Our Lord

Nine months before Christmas we celebrate the annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Son of God. The ancient church believed that this was also the date of the world's creation and of Jesus' death on the cross.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness,
and your grace waters our desert.
Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing,
that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love
given to all through your Son, 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 43:16–21*

This prophet of the exile declares that long ago the LORD performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage. Now, the LORD is about to perform an even greater act of deliverance. This salvation leads the people to praise God.

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD,
 who makes a way in the sea,
 a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse,
 army and warrior;
 they lie down, they cannot rise,
 they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

- ¹⁸ Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.
- ¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
- ²⁰ The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
- ²¹ the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

PSALM (ELW) *Psalm 126*

Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy. (Ps. 126:5)

- ¹When the LORD restored the for- | tunes of Zion,
then were we like | those who dream.
- ²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with | shouts of joy.**
- Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great | things for them."**
- ³The LORD has done great | things for us,
and we are | glad indeed.
- ⁴**Restore our for- | tunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses | of the Negeb. R**
- ⁵Those who | sowed with tears
will reap with | songs of joy.
- ⁶**Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves. R**

SECOND READING *Philippians 3:4b–14*

Writing to Christians in Philippi, Paul admits that his heritage and reputation could give him more reason than most people to place "confidence in the flesh." But then, he goes on to say what truly matters to him.

⁴ If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ.

⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL *John 12:1–8*

Judas misunderstands Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with a costly perfume. Jesus recognizes the true significance of her beautiful expression of love and commitment as an anticipation of his burial.

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ² There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor? ⁶ (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

TODAY:	8:30a	and 11:00a	Worship Services
	9:30a		Coffee Fellowship
	9:45a		Sunday School/Education Hour
	9:45a		First Communion Instruction
	11:00a		Spring Musical Rehearsal
MONDAY:	6:00p		Mary Circle
	7:30p		Cantori Rehearsal
TUESDAY:	9:00a		Staff Meeting
	9:30a		Ladies Bible Study
	11:00a		Pastor's Text Study

2:30p 3D Meeting
3:30p Widow Support Group
7:00p Personnel Committee Meeting
7:30p Lois Circle

WEDNESDAY: 9:15a Deborah Circle
9:15a Martha Circle
1:15p Ruth Circle
5:30p Cherub/Chancel Choir Rehearsals
5:30p Lenten Supper
6:30p Bells of Praise
7:00p Lenten Worship Service
8:00p Adult Choir

THURSDAY: 6:00a Early Morning Bible Study
6:00p Grace Foundation Meeting
6:30p Lenten Telecast, Cable Channel 6
NO Evening Bible Study

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

NEXT SUNDAY: *Palm 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
4:30p Tenebrae Rehearsal
6:00p First Communion Banquet

MISSIONARY FOR A DAY: [Mar. 25: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [Mar. 25: Sunday School] [Mar. 26: Given by Pastor Todd Walsh.] [Mar. 28: GLCW] [Mar. 28: In memory of grandson Aaron Brandt's birthday given by Babe & Lois Brandt.].

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: Mark Severson.

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

WE JOIN OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS in Christ throughout the Southeast Minnesota Synod today in praying for Our Savior Lutheran Church of Cleveland, Grace Lutheran in Peterson, Little Cedar Lutheran in Adams, and First Lutheran Church of Albert Lea.

FLOWERS TODAY are from the funeral of Raymond Kilian held this past week. Please remember his family and loved ones in prayer.

FLOWERS LAST SUNDAY were given in memory of Harold Berge by the Berge Family.

LESSON READERS this morning are Dale Buendorf at 8:30; and Sherry Seberson at 11:00.

OUR THANKS to Altar Guild workers in February and March: Ardis Bang, Dona Matheson, and Joyce Hibbard.

FOODSHELF OFFERING: Today we will receive a special offering for local foodshelves. Checks may be made out to the church and the funds will be forwarded to the foodshelves. Remember, cash/check donations give considerable buying power to the foodshelves as they buy from Channel One at 1/5 cost.

REFRESHMENTS BETWEEN SERVICES are being served this morning by Tyler Stadheim and his parents, Blake & Lynn.

SPRING MUSICAL REHEARSALS continue today, 11:00, in the Fireside Room for those in grades 2-6. All students interested in participating are encouraged to attend!

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!

BUTTER BRAIDS ON SALE NOW! Youth who are attending this summer's mission trip to Appalachia will be selling *Butter Braids* through today, with delivery expected before Easter. Cost per braid is \$8.50. Flavors available are: cinnamon, blueberry cream cheese, cherry apple, cream cheese, raspberry, and also caramel rolls (9 ct.). If you are interested in purchasing and have not been contacted by someone – youth who are selling items include: Mason Tuohy, Katie Nelson, Ashley Wieland, Ben Robinson, Ashley Paulsen, Sidney Laurie, Jessica Henderson, Heather Dahl, McKinzey Christian, and Alex Schultz.

YOUTH ANNUAL DUTCH MILL BULBS are also on sale now! Last year was the first year of this sale. Annual and perennial flower bulbs and rooted plants like begonias,

strawberries, gladiolus to orchids and lilies are available to purchase. Each assortment costs \$5.00 with a varied number of bulbs. We will be selling flower assortments until Apr. 1st. The above listed youth will also be selling these with profits going toward this summer's trip.

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, Arnold Brunsvold, Bob & Donna Oakland, Chad Samp and Erica Stevens, and Grace Vee.

ADULT FORUM today will continue viewing a portion of the film "The Passion of the Christ" with discussion included on the portion of the film viewed. This series will continue for the next few weeks.

PLEASE JOIN US on Wednesday evening for our mid-week Lenten worship. Worship begins at 7:00p with Holden Evening Prayer as our worship liturgy. This week we will be privileged to hear Katie Nelson share her faith story. A baked potato bar with a variety of toppings will be served from 5:30-6:30p in the Fellowship Hall.

DO YOU LIKE TO BOWL? The Good Samaritan Center is holding a bowling benefit that aids on-site grounds improvements on Mar. 31st from 1:00-3:00p. There will be free bowling and shoes, prize giveaways and fun! All we ask is that you fundraise or donate at least \$10.00 toward their effort. If you would like to participate, talk to Denae or call Mary Slette at 379-2716.

Would you like to share an Easter Lily with the congregation?

Lilies are available at \$9.75 each. (Please place your order by Apr. 2nd.)
Drop this form along with payment in the offering plate, or mail to the church office.

In honor/memory of: _____

Given _____ **by:** _____

AREA COMMUNITY CHOIR will present the cantata, *Footprints in the Sand* by Joseph M. Martin at Calvary Baptist Church, Monday evening, Apr. 2nd at 7:00p. The public is invited. A freewill offering will be taken with all proceeds going to the Food Shelf and to help defray expenses.

WANTED: Youth who are interested in participating in the Easter Sunrise Service. We need many voices, readers, volunteers, ushers, musicians, etc... to make this event happen. Please contact Denae or Pastor Todd if you wish to help.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for the Annual Easter Breakfast!

Dennis Brue is getting his griddle fired up for his famous pancakes. We will be serving pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit, muffins, coffee and juice from 7:00-10:00a Easter morning. Cost of the meal is \$5.00 per plate. Families of 4 or more cost \$20.00. Proceeds from the breakfast will help fund the summer mission trip to Appalachia. Matching funds provided by *Thrivent for Lutherans*.

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 lead a presentation about the orphanage in Bogota in Fellowship Hall at 9:45a. The congregation is invited to attend.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF TRUCK will be here in May. We will be assembling kits in April to be included in that shipment. We are in dire need of the following items: cloth school bags (about 12" x 14"), colored construction paper, cloth diapers and pins, receiving blankets, nail files or clippers, toothpaste, and wide-toothed combs. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

IN JANUARY, Grace youth participated in an Urban Immersion weekend in Minneapolis. The weekend entailed learning about the working poor in our area, poverty locally and globally, as well as volunteer opportunities. Youth and adult leaders were put to work helping and learning from those who were at a crossroad in their life. The gifts that we received during the weekend were truly sent by God. We have had a request to schedule another weekend. We would like to offer this as an intergenerational event for our congregation. Youth and adults interested in taking part in this event are welcome to sign up on the bulletin board outside of Denae's office. The weekend planned for this Urban Immersion is May 4th-6th. If you would like to find out more about the weekend planned, please talk to Denae Juntunen. The cost for the weekend is \$40.00. Please consider taking part in this amazing opportunity.

MEN OF ALL AGES are invited to attend the 4th annual Breakfast with The Bishop, Harold Usgaard, on Sat., Apr. 14th, at 8:00a at Cabela's upstairs restaurant. A special presentation, *Coming of Age: Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Young Men*, will be given by Professor Rollie Martinson of Luther Seminary. Cost is \$10 per person. A sign up sheet is available in the narthex today. (Deadline to register is Apr. 6th.)

"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. A sign up sheet is located on the GLCW table in the narthex today. We will also plan to enjoy a buffet lunch at the theatre (however, you are welcome to bring a bag lunch if you so desire). Plan to join us for this delightfully funny performance. Tickets are going fast! Sign up today.

MARCH CIRCLE MEETINGS:

Mary Circle meets Monday, 6:00p, at the home of Jeanette Beamer, 1402 Crestview Rd.

Lois Circle will meet Tuesday, 7:30p, at the home of Irmgard Kleih, 24106 Walnut Dr. Irmgard will also lead the Bible Study.

Deborah Circle meets Wednesday, 9:15a, at the home of Alice Spilde, 604 Edgewood Ave.
Bible Study Leader is Peggy Bangert.

Martha Circle will meet Wednesday, 9:15a, in the game room at St. John’s Home, 801 Luther Pl.,
(use Office entry door). Donna Ball will serve as hostess, and Judy Menssen will lead the Bible Study.

Ruth Circle meets Wednesday, 1:15p, at the church. Bible Study Leader is Ardis Bang.

For anyone who does not receive the *Lutheran Woman Today*, Bible Study helps are available in the narthex today.

Circle Chairs are also reminded to stop in the office prior to their meetings to pick up copies of the March 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, Mar. 18th	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Giving	\$ 13,127.00	\$ 112,983.00
Budgeted Need	\$ 10,096.00	\$ 111,056.00
Quarters for World Hunger	\$ 54.50	\$ 518.75
Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund	\$ 367.00	

Attendance Last Sunday - 431; Last Year - 580