

This Week at Grace
Sunday, April 15, 2007
The Second Sunday of Easter

INTRODUCTION

These first weeks of Easter focus our attention on appearances of the risen Lord. It is not always easy to see Jesus after his resurrection. The gospel will remind us that Jesus has a new body in which he now lives: As we gather this day to greet each other and share the peace of the Lord, may our eyes be opened to discern that we are looking at the risen body of Christ!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of life,
you reach out to us amid our fears
with the wounded hands of your risen Son.
By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy,
and strengthen us to be the body of 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 Acts 5:27–32

Peter has been arrested for proclaiming the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. His response to the charges of the high priest summarizes the early church's proclamation of forgiveness of sin through repentance.

²⁷ When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

PSALM *Psalm 118:14–29*

You are my God, and I will exalt you. (Ps. 118:28)

- ¹⁴The LORD is my strength | and my song,
and has become | my salvation.
- ¹⁵**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents | of the righteous:
"The right hand of the | LORD acts valiantly!**
- ¹⁶The right hand of the LORD | is exalted!
The right hand of the | LORD acts valiantly!"
- ¹⁷**I shall not | die, but live,
and declare the works | of the LORD. R**
- ¹⁸The LORD indeed pun- | ished me sorely,
but did not hand me o- | ver to death.
- ¹⁹**Open for me the | gates of righteousness;
I will enter them and give thanks | to the LORD.**
- ²⁰"This is the gate | of the LORD;
here the righ- | teous may enter."
- ²¹**I give thanks to you, for you have | answered me
and you have become | my salvation. R**
- ²²The stone that the build- | ers rejected
has become the chief | cornerstone.
- ²³**By the LORD has | this been done;
it is marvelous | in our eyes.**
- ²⁴This is the day that the | LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be | glad in it.
- ²⁵**Hosanna! | O LORD, save us!
We pray to you, LORD, pros- | per our days! R**
- ²⁶Blessed is the one who comes in the name | of the LORD;
we bless you from the house | of the LORD.
- ²⁷**The LORD is God and has giv- | en us light.
Form a procession with branches up to the corners | of the altar.**
- ²⁸You are my God, and | I will thank you;
you are my God, and I | will exalt you.
- ²⁹**Give thanks to the LORD, | for the LORD is good;
God's mercy en- | dures forever. R**

SECOND READING *Revelation 1:4–8*

The book of Revelation recounts a vision of the risen Christ experienced by a Christian prophet named John. Here he describes Christ as the faithful witness or martyr, firstborn of the dead, ruler in a kingdom of priests, the one who comes, the beginning and the end of all time.

⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood,⁶ and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

⁸ I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

GOSPEL *John 20:19–31*

The proclamation of Easter continues in John's gospel with reference to peace, joy, mission, the Holy Spirit, and forgiveness. Jesus' words to Thomas assure us that the blessings of the resurrection are also for those who "have not seen and yet believe.

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

- TODAY:** 8:30a and 11:00a Worship Services
9:30a Coffee Fellowship
9:45a Sunday School/Education Hour
11:00a Spring Musical Rehearsal
2:00p Girl Scout Meeting
NO Good Samaritan Sunday (Rescheduled for Apr. 29th)
- MONDAY:** 7:30p Cantori Rehearsal
- TUESDAY:** 9:00a Staff Meeting
9:30a Ladies Bible Study
11:00a Pastor's Text Study
2:30p 3D Meeting
5:00p Parish Nurses Meeting
6:30p Circle Bible Study Leaders Meeting
6:30p GLCW Guest Night
- WEDNESDAY:** 9:00a Sewing Day
5:00p Chew-n-Chat
5:30p Cherub/Chancel Choir Rehearsals
6:30p 7th, 8th, 9th gr. Confirmation Classes
6:30p Sr. High Bible Study
6:30p Bells of Praise
7:30p Adult Choir
- THURSDAY:** 6:00a Early Morning Bible Study
2:30p Sr. Tower Friendship Group
NO Thursday Evening Bible Study
- FRIDAY:** 1:30p ThorneCrest Bible Study
3:30p 4th-6th gr. Youth Room
- NEXT SUNDAY:** 8:30a and 11:00a Worship Services
9:30a Coffee Fellowship
9:45a Sunday School/Education Hour
11:00a Spring Musical Rehearsal

MISSIONARY FOR A DAY: [Apr. 15: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [Apr. 15: Sunday School] [Apr. 16: Given by Babe & Lois Brandt.] [Apr. 17: Given by Pastor Todd Walsh.] [Apr. 18: GLCW].

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: Mason Attig (St. Mary's, Rochester), and Lois Undahl.

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, David Johnson (son of Norman & Irene Johnson), Norman Johnson, Glenn McDaniel, Ethel McGill, Vern Nasby, DeAnna Nelson, LeMoyne Oakland, Marian Odson, Lissa Parrish, Joyce Schreiber, Sally Skrlin, Mark Stevens, LaVon Stewart, James Vangen, Leland Wadding, Sally Witham (mother of Greg Witham), and Eleanor Wolfe.

IN YOUR PRAYERS, please also remember the family of Anna Kycek whose funeral was held last week.

WE JOIN OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS in Christ throughout the Southeast Minnesota Synod today in praying for Garness Trinity Lutheran Church in Mabel, LeRoy Lutheran of LeRoy, Faith Lutheran in Delavan, and Hegre Lutheran Church of Kenyon.

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!

OUR THANKS to all who helped cook and serve for Loaves and Fishes during the month of March. Because you cared, many lives were touched.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN: You have a wonderful opportunity available to you this Tuesday, Apr. 17th. We will be hosting a Guest Night for Grace members and members of area churches. The program will be featuring Mary Nelson who will share her faith story. She is the author of two devotional books that speak to our study this year – *Hope in God in Times of Suffering*. Please take advantage of this chance to hear a great speaker. This is a Guest Night, so bring a friend or two with you. It should be a great night of fellowship.

APRIL IS KITCHEN CLEANING MONTH! Help is needed. The sign up notebook is located on the GLCW table in the narthex. Choose a job to do with others and make it a great fellowship time. The coffee is always on!

GOOD SAMARITAN SUNDAY for April has been rescheduled for Apr. 29th. Plan to join us!

SPRING IS HERE!! Do you want to go for a bike ride? Grace Lutheran is putting together a team to ride in the Freeborn County Cancer Society Bike-A-Thon to be held on Saturday, May 5th. Starting time is 6:00a at the Sibley warming house and the team members are expected to ride at least to Glenville. Time is short, so sign up *now* on the poster in the narthex and pick up a pledge sheet. Questions? Call Jeanette (377-1871), or talk to Pastor Todd.

SENIOR BRUNCH AND BACCALAUREATE has been scheduled for **Sunday, June 3rd**. (Please note the change of date and mention it to those involved.)

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.

"CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES" TRIP: There is one ticket left for the play on Sunday, May 20th. The sign up sheet is on the GLCW table in the narthex. This is also an informational flyer for everyone who has signed up for tickets. It includes departure time, cost, description of the meal, and process for the collection of funds. Hopefully, winter will be over by then and all will enjoy a beautiful spring day for traveling with a great Christian community!

GRACE QUILTERS continue to appreciate your donations of fabric, sheets, mattress pads, curtains, drapes, and blankets to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Think of us as you do your "spring cleaning". Join us the first and third Wednesdays at 9:00a to assemble and pack the quilts. (Lutheran World Relief no longer accepts clothing.) Please call Ardis Bang at 373-7503 if you have any questions.

THANK YOU to all who attended this year's Easter Breakfast. We hope you enjoyed the meal. Proceeds raised will go to help fund this summer's youth mission trip. Thank you to the Vogt Family for the donation of eggs and sausage. Thanks to Dennis Brue whose donation of pancakes, syrup, and time is much appreciated by the youth attending the mission trip and the members of the congregation who were treated to a great breakfast. To the many volunteers who helped out with the breakfast, we couldn't have cooked and served the breakfast without you. We are so blessed to have such generous people in our congregation.

THE NEW DOORS ARE HERE!! The process of staining to prepare for installation will begin soon with a goal of having the doors installed by the end of May. One of the side doors and a sample of the stain color can be viewed in the tower entrance area.

GOLF, ANYONE? The owner of the Clarks Grove Golf Course is considering starting a coed church golf league for churches in the area. As part of the plan, he would rebate 10% of the green fees to a participant's church. If anyone is interested in helping to organize a league like this, please talk to Pastor John about contact information for the owner.

BOOK CLUB will meet again on May 7th, 7:00p, at the home of Hazel Spiering, 2122 Grand Ave. The featured book is *The Little Sparrows* by Al & JoAnna Lacy. Join us for some great discussion and fellowship!

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, Apr. 8th	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Giving	\$ 19,244.00	\$ 154,554.00
Budgeted Need	\$ 10,096.00	\$ 141,344.00
Quarters for World Hunger	\$ 55.50	\$ 681.00
Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund	\$ 87.00	

Attendance Last Sunday - 977; Last Easter - 944

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Albert Lea, Minnesota

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
April 15, 2007