

✠ TODAY AT GRACE ✠

Organist: Sue Nelson

Elder: Eli Wales

Ushers: Benno Sydow; Gary Gunther; Larry Nelson; Bill Rust; Jeff Stifter

Counting Team 1: Dale Enns; Larry Nelson; Ryan Oman; Pat Paplow; Phil Radichel

Church Cleaners: Oman

School: Oman

✠ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✠

Ushers: Benno Sydow; Gary Gunther; Larry Nelson; Bill Rust; Jeff Stifter

Counting Team 2: Gary Gunther; Rick Nelson; Bill Rust; Bob Vandever; Clint Welker

Hospitality Team 2: Andrea Dahl; Dan & Cindy Degnan; Larry Nelson; Barb Sydow

Church Cleaners: Bomber

School: Onyinge

✠ OUR SCHEDULE ✠

Sun., Mar. 31: 8:30 am – Choir Practice
9:00 am – Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service (Lent 4)

Wed., Apr. 3: Grace School Field Trip @ MN State Capitol
4:30 pm – Catechism for Public School Students
6:00 pm – Lenten Soup Supper
7:00 pm – Midweek Lenten Worship

Fri., Apr. 5: 7:00 pm – Grace School Fair on “Space”

Sun., Apr. 7: 8:30 am – Choir Practice
9:00 am – Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service w/Lord’s Supper (Lent 5)
11:00 am – Hospitality

Sun., Apr. 14: **PALM SUNDAY**
10:00 am – Worship Service w/Grace School Mini-Concert
12:00 pm – Council Meeting

Fri., Apr. 19: **GOOD FRIDAY**
7:00 pm – Good Friday Worship Service w/Lord’s Supper

Sun., Apr. 21: **EASTER** (S.S., Bible Class, Hospitality Suspended)
7:30 am – Easter Breakfast
9:00 am – Easter Festival Worship Service

Fri., Apr. 26: Kindergarten Roundup at Grace Lutheran School
Immanuel Lutheran High School Visitors’ Day

Apr. 26-27: 7:30 pm – Immanuel Play, “The Beverly Hillbillies”

Sat., Apr. 27: 9:00 am – Grace Work Day

Sun., Apr. 28: Voters & Dorcas Guild Meetings (week later due to Easter)

Sun., May 19: Confirmation Sunday

Wed., May 22: 7:00 pm – Grace School Spring Program

Thu., May 23: 12:00 pm – Grace School Dismissal for Summer

July 22-26: Vacation Bible School

Grace Lutheran Church & School



460 75th Ave. NE

Fridley, MN 55432

Email: john.p.hein@gmail.com

Home Page: www.FridleyLutheran.org

Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635)

Phone: 763-784-8784

School Phone: 763-784-6340

Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Lent 4

Date: March 31, 2019

✠ WORSHIP INFORMATION ✠

Hymns:

TLH 354: In the Cross of Christ I Glory

TLH 175: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

TLH 390: Drawn to the Cross

WS 769: Lift High the Cross

Listening assistance is available. Please ask an usher.

Worship Prep:

Psalm 32, TLH p. 130 f.

Liturgy:

WS, p. 1 (Projected)

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 12:1-6

Passion Harmony

Sermon: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” ²⁰ Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (NKJVTM)

Drawn by the Powerful Message of the Cross

✠ THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ✠

- ◆ **Among Us:** This past week Nyla Welker was hospitalized at Mercy due to an irregular heartbeat, something with which she has been struggling in recent weeks. Fluid built up around her heart as well. After meds and undergoing shock treatment, she returned home on Friday. While she is doing well, she requests our prayers.
- ◆ **Midweek Lenten Services:** Our midweek services will continue this Wed. at 7 pm with a soup supper at 6 pm to which all are invited. The theme of our series is "Mementos of Our Savior's Passion."
- ◆ **Good Friday:** On Friday, April 19, at 7 pm, we will be holding our Good Friday service. The Lord's Supper will also be celebrated. The Day our Savior died is very precious for us as redeemed sinners. Let's honor it by pondering His profound love for us.
- ◆ **Easter:** On Sun., April 21, we will be having the Easter breakfast at 7:30 am, followed by the Easter worship service at 9 am. What an opportunity we have to gather in worship on the day we commemorate our Lord's glorious resurrection from the dead!
- ◆ **Easter Breakfast:** Those men interested in helping with the breakfast are asked to sign up for various duties. The list is by the guest book.
- ◆ **Easter Flowers:** A sign up sheet is out by the guest book for anyone interested in purchasing Easter lilies or decorative flowers for Easter Sunday. Please see Mikey Oman with any questions.
- ◆ **Grace School Student Fair:** This Friday, April 5, at 7 pm the children of the Day School will be presenting a school fair with the theme centered on outer space. Each child will have a booth and will make an individual presentation. Come and listen to our students who, along with the teachers, have prepared extensively for this event.
- ◆ **Daily Rest:** *Daily Rest* is a new daily devotion book printed by the CLC. The first issue is provided to all Grace mailbox holders at no charge. Paid subscriptions will begin with issue #2, available at \$15/year for four issues. To subscribe, write your name on the signup list and give your payment (check made out to "CLC"), to Norma Rust. Issues will be delivered to the church.
- ◆ **Visitors Day:** You are invited to attend Immanuel Lutheran High School Visitors Day on Fr., April 26 starting at 8 am. Students (grades 7 and up) will have an opportunity to experience firsthand what it would be like to attend Immanuel. Please speak with Pastor regarding your interest as he will be bringing students to campus that day.
- ◆ **Kindergarten Roundup:** On April 26 potential kindergarten students for the 2019-20 school year are invited to attend school for the day at Grace. Please speak with Teacher Heidi Nelson for details.



- ◆ **Summer Camp at ILC:** If you plan on sending your 6th-9th grader or pre-camper (ages 5-10) to summer camp, registration opens today at 3 pm. This is the year that the camp is held on the ILC campus. Spots fill up very quickly, so if you intend to register it is best to do it today: youthcamp.clclutheran.net/register.html.
- ◆ **Retirement Gift:** CLC members are invited to contribute to a monetary gift which will be presented to Prof. Paul Schaller at Graduation (May 18). Please make your checks payable to Immanuel Lutheran College and indicate: "Prof. Schaller Retirement." Send your gift to: Immanuel Lutheran College, 501 Grover Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54701.
- ◆ **Retirement:** Professor Paul Sullivan recently announced his intention to retire from his call at ILC. We thank the Lord for his many gifts which our church body has enjoyed as he has prepared our young people for their service in His kingdom. May the Lord bless him and his wife, Jan, in this next phase of their life. Prof. Sullivan writes: "It has been a privilege to have served as instructor at ILC these past twenty-two years, also as dean of students to have been entrusted with the physical and spiritual welfare of the high-school students and collegians for twenty of those years. After prayerful thought, I've come to the conclusion that the Lord, through the normal aging process, is having my body tell me it is time to plan to retire after the 2019-2020 school year (God willing--our times are in his hands). 'There is a time for everything, / and a season for every activity under heaven' (Eccl. 3:1)."
- ◆ **CLC News:** Teacher Seth Schaller of Messiah Lutheran in Eau Claire, WI, has received the call to be Principal and 4th-8th grade Teacher at Trinity Lutheran in West Columbia, SC. ✠ Pastor David Schaller of Redeemer Lutheran in Sister Lakes, MI, has received the call to Prince of Peace Lutheran in Loveland, CO. ✠ Many of us remember Pastor Rick Grams who retired from Red Wing, MN, and has been living in Boise, ID. He has suffered from Myasthenia Gravis which initially manifested itself largely in regard to his eyesight, but then also cognitively. Rick's cognitive deterioration has gradually progressed. His wife, Gloria, works for Wells Fargo and is transferring to Shoreview, so they are looking for a place to live in the area. Rick and Gloria welcome your prayers concerning Rick's health, their need for a new home in MN, financing these unexpected changes, the mutual adjustment to living with dementia, and managing all of these matters and the attending emotions and stress.
- ◆ **Sunday School Memory Work:** Easter Recitation and Hymn

Last Week's Stats: Mar. 24						Sun.: 85	S.S.: 16	B.Cl.: 32	Wed.: 60
Sun. Offering:		Grace:		\$2,674	CLC:		\$745		
Wed. Offering:		Grace:		\$2,491*	CLC:		\$940		
Weekly Need:		Grace:		4,000	CLC:		1,000		
-Under / +Over:		Grace:		+1,165	CLC:		+685		
Year-to-Date Offering:		Grace:		\$47,973**	CLC:		\$11,907		
Year-to-Date Need:		Grace:		48,000	CLC:		12,000		
Year-to-Date (+/-)		Grace:		-27	CLC:		-93		
GLC Other: 27		Living Faith:		60	Tuition Aid:		60		
SAF Endowment: 100		MDF:		10	Kinship:		10		
ILC Student Aid: 10		ILC Bldg.		100	IIF: 0		CEF: 0		
Current Balances:				Tuition Aid: \$353					
* Includes \$350 in school tuition						** Includes \$2,050 year-to-date school tuition			

storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you. 'Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, they would have none of my counsel *and* despised my every rebuke. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled to the full with their own fancies. For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; but whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil'" (Proverbs 1:22-33).

When wicked Ahab was confronted by the prophet Elijah, the king blamed God's messenger for Israel's woes. "Is that you, O troubler of Israel" (1 Kings:18:17)? Ahab refused to look at himself and brought judgment on himself. Any who warn about sin, deceit, unbelief, and immorality (homosexual behavior, gender hypocrisy, distortion of marriage, and abortion are popular expressions today of anti-Christian behavior) are accused of hatred and hate crimes.

To those who recognize that all sin is an affront to the holy God before whom all must stand one day, words such as found in Proverbs are, for all their honesty, words of love spoken that all who *listen* may be free from fear of evil. To those who are gods to themselves and deaf to God, and who choose to do what is right in their own eyes, the words of the Lord are hateful, and the messengers are haters.

Speaking the whole counsel of God is not hate speech. We will not let who we are or what we preach be dictated by the godless God-deniers whose life is dictated by doing what is right in their own eyes. Their "end is the way of death" (Proverbs 16:25). Rather we will "follow His steps, Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth, Who when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously ... (1 Peter 2:21-23).

To preach and practice the truth is hate only to such as love the darkness and who have no respect for the Lord. Only as the heart is convicted and relief found in Christ can the disciplinary love of God as well as the love of God unto salvation in Christ be understood. "Who *is* wise? Let him understand these things. *Who is* prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD *are* right; The righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them" (Hosea 14:9).

"Now, Lord, look on their threats and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your Word" (Acts 4:29).

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 3/2019

IS IT HATE OR LOVE?

In an age no different than any other in this sin-cursed world, except perhaps for more-in-your-face wickedness, we can hardly believe what we hear, nor believe what we see. Opinions, expressions of personal pique, political chicanery, and propaganda from the halls of congress to the newsroom are the norm. Even pictures can be photo-shopped. Everything must be taken with a grain of salt.

In Judges 17:6 and again in chapter 21:25 we read, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Today we have "kings," civil authorities. Nothing has changed. The distinction between truth and error, faith and unbelief, right and wrong, morality and immorality, principle and fancy, is blurred and gives license for sinner to do what is right in his own eyes. The result in our nation today is the undermining of, if not the destruction of, civility, decency, trust, and camaraderie. Another result is the fomenting of venomous hatred. The cause is clear. It is not a "which came first" debate, e.g. the horse or the cart. Scripture leaves no doubt. "The imagination [intent] of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21). As God witnessed the wickedness of man before the flood, He recognized also that "every intent of the thoughts of his [man's] heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). This was not the man (human being) God created but was and is the result of the abuse of free will on the part of Eve and then Adam in the Garden when they disobeyed God. Man has destroyed himself and fouled his own nest. As he continues down this course of impenitence, he is inviting judgment in time and eternity.

There is of course a way out of the sin dilemma that afflicts society and threatens divine judgment in time and for eternity. The way out from slavery to sin and ultimate judgment is found in the grace and mercy of the Father Who in love overcame both in Christ. The Father's call to repentance goes out with the assurance that "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." We have the assurance further, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:7,9). However, verses 8 and 10 of this same chapter sound a caveat not to be overlooked: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ... If we say that we have not sinned we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

But right here lies a problem ... not with the Lord God; not with His Word. The call to repentance as well as the message of relief and ultimate salvation is muted, changed, and traded away by an apostate church which to a great extent has lost its own way, and the sense of its assigned mission.

What Martin Chemnitz (1522-1586) said of his time in connection with the description in Judges is still true today, "Scripture is constantly describing the corrupt and dissolute state of the church ..." In our apostate age, if those charged with sounding the call to repentance do not because they will not or cannot, the voices against social injustice, incivility, dishonesty, hypocrisy, relativism, and unbelief are muted. Even worse is it when driven by societal whims and hiding behind the cloak of love, those charged with proclaiming the way of righteousness defined in Scripture satisfy itching ears by countenancing unrighteousness and sinful practices. "Thus saith the Lord" is replaced by "We preach, practice, and tolerate what makes you feel good."

It is to be fully expected that what is said above will be mocked and ridiculed by many. Today's mentality may even call it hateful and judgmental, but is it love or hate to tell the truth? Of course, how one answers depends to a great extent on one's point of reference: Scripture or human reason.

While sin and every manner of evil will be in the world until the end of time, it is only the Lord through His Word Who can curb the course outbreak of sin that threatens society. Only the gospel can incline hearts to the way of righteousness. Only the Father's grace of forgiveness in Christ can change hearts and move people to walk in the way of the Lord rather than in their own.

Though not exclusively, to a great degree unbelief and societal definition of life is rooted in evolutionist philosophy so prevalent in natural religion and in public education. To the evolutionist there is no God to whom he believes himself accountable ... until judgment day when it will be too late. If there is no God and consequently no absolute standard of decency, it is no reach to do selfishly what is right in one's own eyes. So, "Do your own thing." At the same time under that false philosophy there is no God to whom to turn in time of stress, and ultimately at death. As a dying atheist said when told to hang on, "I am trying to, but what is there to hang on to?"

Our Savior Jesus Christ did not look out for His own interests, but for the interest of sinners, not that they (we) should continue in their (our) sin, but that they (we) should recognize their (our) sin and repent.

There is a reason why the Father said, "You shall ... You shall not" (Ten Commandments). He Who gave absolutes of right and wrong said also "By the Law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). The apostle Paul wrote, "I would not have known sin except through the law" (Romans 7:7). The Father said "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This should surprise no one for He told Adam and Eve in Eden that the consequence of

disobedience would be death (Genesis 2:16-17). They ate and they died. Even though God made man ..., even though He implanted in his heart the natural law ..., even though He forewarned Adam and Eve of the consequence of disobedience ..., even though He gave the Law on Sinai ... does all this mean that God, then, hates man? Absolutely not!

Certainly, the message of the law is uncomfortable. It hurts. It is meant to. Do loving parents discipline and correct their children because they hate them? Does God bind us to His moral law because He hates us? The answer of those who reject Him is "yes;" of those who believe in Him the answer is "no." Unless there is recognition of sin and its dread eternal consequence, they who choose to do what is right in their own eyes have no reason to rue sin. God did not give His law in a spirit of hate, but in love. The Law of God serves its purpose when the sinner in despair cries out, "I have sinned." He Who does not desire the death of the wicked mends the heart of the penitent sinner at the foot of the cross of Christ.

All who recognize and confess their sin, and believe in the Savior from sin have reason to be thankful that the Spirit of God convicted them through the law, and thereafter has given the assurance: "The blood of Jesus Christ His [God's] Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The penitent appreciates with thankful heart that the "gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23b). To all to whom God is the hope for time and eternity, this is love. To those who reject Him, the Father's message is foolishness.

We pray for faith to live honestly and without hypocrisy. Confronted with the reality of our own flesh, we pray daily for forgiveness in Christ. **Christians bound by the Word of God will pray for faith to witness to the truth without *ad hominem* (personal) attacks, or from a spirit of obnoxious phariseism.** Therefore, we will **be careful about how we speak**, but speak we must, individually and as members of the Body of Christ. When we testify against the errors of an apostate church or the moral degeneration of society and a nation, as we speak His Word we speak by the authority of God. By those who love the darkness, we will be accused of hatred, of hate speech, and of being judgmental. Get used to it! They also falsely accused and hated Christ.

To speak the truth about the immorality which Scripture condemns and warn of the consequences is not hatred. God says, "How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge. Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, Because you disdained all my counsel, and would have none of my rebuke, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, when your terror comes like a