



NEWSLETTER

GRACE
Evangelical Lutheran
Church

January 2020

FROM THE PASTOR

Decluttering: What Stays And What Goes? The Reverend Heinz D. Raidel

I read recently that Marie Kondo has started selling her own signature line of “things.” I found this interesting because Marie is a celebrity type who promotes herself, in both her books and her TV series, as being the expert on decluttering; which is actually getting rid of “things” which we don't need in our lives. It would seem Marie’s business plan consists of first selling us a “how to” book on clearing our homes of “things,” and then selling us more “things” to take the place of the “things” we tossed out. Hmmm. The expression “coming and going” comes to mind here...

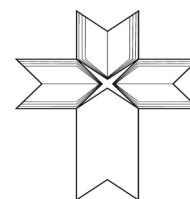
To be sure, decluttering is a good thing. Our acquisition of material things can enslave us to the material world. (This was kind of a theme of a recent Advent service.) It's not easy, but freeing ourselves of material enslavement by getting rid of the idea that we can find happiness or fulfillment from accumulating “stuff,” is an awesome feeling. But caution is required here; all that new open space in our lives can be a source of great temptation. And so it requires serious intentionality and discipline to not fill the space back up with “things.” There are too many Marie Kondos out there hoping to profit from loading us back up with things we have already decided we don't need.

Now, let me ask you to think for a minute of spiritual decluttering. What if we could declutter our accumulation of faith “stuff” that isn't helpful? What if we could toss out everything that distracts us from concentrating on the love our Creator God has for us? I'll wager each of us could make a big pile of faith stuff that clogs our hearts and does nothing other than weigh us down and hold us back. All those times someone has said we're not good enough for God's love? Throw those on the pile. All the guilt someone has piled on us based on their faith interpretation? Put it on the pile. Those personal guilt memories we carry from our past, the memories of times we made mistakes, all the guilt from those personal encounters when we were angry and tired and hurt, and not at our best, and we said things we regret? Throw 'em on the pile. Anything that does not reinforce the concept of a loving Creator who sent his son to be one of us and die for us goes on that pile. And light a match to it. Throw a party as that pile burns. (You can call the fire a “refining fire” which is kind of scriptural, eh?)

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church is to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and share God's good news with others with an emphasis on youth and families.

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And then... be on the alert for words and people and thoughts that want to fill your spiritual free space back up with things you have decided you don't need. Look out for gifters and guilt peddlers. Here's a way to keep from cluttering your faith life back up; before you buy into anything, ask yourself if it reinforces the concept of a loving God. If it doesn't, you don't need it.

Marie Kondo's (the declutter celebrity) idea of what stays and what goes is based on what brings joy. If an object does not bring joy...out it goes, according to Marie. That's not such a horrible idea when we put in into perspective. From our perspective as Christ followers we know that nothing of the material creation can bring us true joy. Material things are not necessarily bad; as long as we realize and remember that only things which can give us true joy are the blessings, promises, hope, and unconditional love from the Creator.

Dear Friends at Grace,

A heart felt THANK YOU for your cards, prayers, and well-wishes during my recent surgery and recovery.

All were uplifting and greatly appreciated. Your kindness was a reminder to me: the importance of letting those facing difficult challenges know concerned folks are with them in thought and prayer.

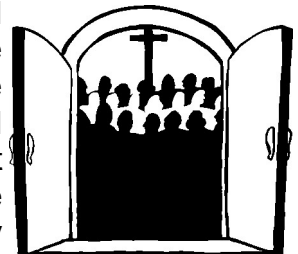
Again, many thanks!

Deborah Klopfer

The next Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at Grace on March 3rd, 2pm-7pm. Come out and help save a life. You can schedule an appointment and skip the wait by visiting the website: redcross.org and searching for drives near 43147.



The congregational meeting will take place January 26th. Please plan on attending! All committee chairs must submit a report to the office by Friday, January 17th. (Emailing your reports is greatly appreciated.) Final Annual Reports will be emailed out this year. There will be one printed copy available to read, in the office, but paper copies will not be available at the meeting. Thank you!



**Congregational
MEETING**



Faith Mission Christmas Party Gifts

Thank you to the members of Grace Lutheran Church for your generous contributions of gifts for the Faith Mission Christmas Party, which benefits their clients during this holiday season. You went above and beyond with your donations and on such short notice too. The members of Grace are indeed a church of very caring people who reach out to help the residents in our community who are less fortunate than ourselves. The total number of gifts donated is as follows:

41 Gift Cards for *Wendy's* & *McDonald's*

120 Individual Packets of

Swiss Miss Cocoa

33 Pair of Socks

10 Bottles of Body Lotion

14 Pair of Gloves

19 Bottles of Shampoo

11 Travel Mugs

15 Tubes of Lip Balm

18 Note Pads

7 Bags of Candy

28 Toys

1 Ear Buds

The January council meeting will be the 21st at 2pm.



THANK YOU!

Thanks to your generous donations, we were able to take the following to LSS during the Christmas season:

49 hats

55 pairs of gloves

35 scarves

7 pairs of socks

Thanks so much for all your help and contributions. The clients of LSS will definitely be warmer thanks to the loving hearts of our congregation.

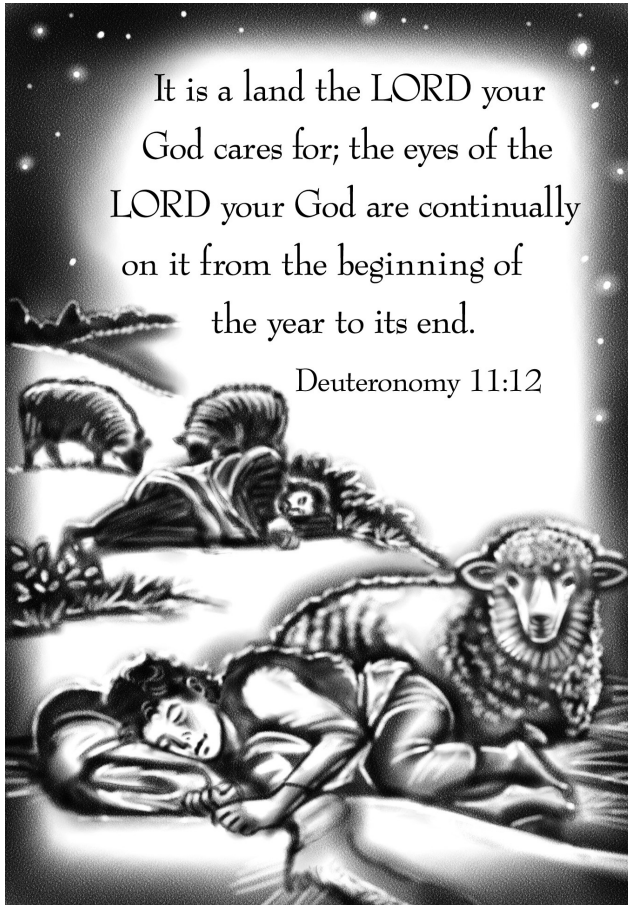


The office is collecting 8.5"x11" paper in different light colors (yellow, salmon, cream, light green or blue, etc.) in addition to 11"x17" white paper for printing purposes. Thank you in advance for any donations!



Youth Sunday School for the month of January will be on January 26th at 9:45am. All youth are welcome!

Special thanks to Angie Bias and Tina Siddle for their help with the Christmas program!



Kroger will donate a percentage of all purchases to Grace Church! All you need to do is call 1-800-576-4377, or go to Kroger.com and click the community rewards link. To register you will need our account number: QS108. Last year, we earned \$1200 through this program and we can earn up to \$4000. Register yourself, friends and family!

If you have not yet linked your Rewards card to Grace, please do so ASAP, our account number is QS108. Let's see how much we can earn in the next three months.



Office Hours:

Elaine's hours are Mondays, and Wednesdays 11:30am-3:30pm and Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Fridays 9:30am-1:30pm.

****The office will be closed January 1st, and 20th.****

Please review the "Prayer Concerns" list in the Grace Notes. If you have placed someone on the list that no longer needs prayers, please contact the office.



Craig Norman	01/05
Dorothy Wilson	01/07
Landon Bias	01/15
Rev. Siggy Benedict-Shields	01/17
Ed Thomas	01/19
Ann Biri	01/22
Patti Heinlein	01/27



Financial Stewardship Through November 2019

Giving:






November 3	\$1,478.00
November 10	\$1,624.23
November 17	\$3,072.00
November 24	\$2,427.00
Total	\$8,601.23

Year-to-Date

YTD Income	\$96,281.92
Total Expenses	\$13,942.45
Total Expenses YTD	\$105,865.86
Capital Exp & Misc	\$00.00

January Worship Assistants



Date	 Ministry Team		 USHERS	 Altar Guild	 Greeters
Jan. 5	Ed Thomas	Gary Bohrer	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Wanda Lynn & June Bohrer	Linda & Larry Frazee
Jan. 12	Ed Thomas	Doug Jackson	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Wanda Lynn & June Bohrer	Linda & Larry Frazee
Jan. 19	Ed Thomas	Kim Norman	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Wanda Lynn & June Bohrer	Linda & Larry Frazee
Jan. 26	Ed Thomas	Debbie Kelley	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Wanda Lynn & June Bohrer	Linda & Larry Frazee

****If any of the assistants or readers have a conflict with the dates they have been asked to participate, please contact Doug Jackson.**

Did you know that you can receive your monthly newsletter by e-mail? This way you don't have more clutter on your kitchen counter. Help Grace save the additional costs of paper and stamps by signing up to receive your newsletter online. Just email Elaine (office@gracecolumbus.com) and let her know!

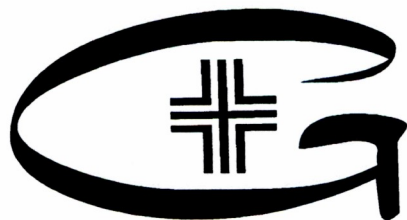


Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
8950 Refugee Road
Pickerington, OH 43147

“Return Service Requested”

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Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

8950 Refugee Road
Pickerington, OH 43147
(614) 868-3397

Pastor Heinz Raidel
Office: 614-868-3397

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

Education Hour - 9:45 am

Worship - 11:00 am

Email for the Office:
office@gracecolumbus.com

We're on the Web!