



NEWSLETTER

GRACE
Evangelical Lutheran
Church

February 2020

FROM THE PASTOR

Life is like.... Oh just read the article! The Reverend Heinz D. Raidel

My son, my friend Wes, and I were watching a motorcycle race from Anaheim, CA, on TV. Technology is awesome as my son was in St. Paul, Minn; Wes was in eastern Tennessee, and I was at our place near Etna. We were all three texting back and forth with comments on the race. During the race one of the riders made a mistake and ended up off the track, and then he re-entered the track at a different place. We all three texted...did he just cut course? Nobody cuts course on live TV do they? Because that's considered cheating!

Well, my son has a sense of humor and he is always trying to "trash talk" me in regards to motorcycling; and I knew what would be coming from him quite soon. So I preemptively texted that I had only cut course twice in my life. (In "trash talk" that's called a "defensive move.") Had I not performed that defensive move, my son (he's 32) would have made up entirely false narratives about egregious course cuts I had allegedly committed during off road two wheel events at various times in my past.

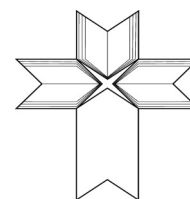
I should detail those two course cutting offenses for the readers: Once during a chaotic and hopelessly flooded off-road event in 1979, I intentionally turned and rode backwards on the trail to avoid a flooded and impassable creek crossing. (It was seriously deeper than I was tall and bikes and riders were flooded and stopped everywhere; and some were being washed downstream.) By going backwards on the trail I was able to cross at a more opportune (and safe) place. Then I rode upstream to where the marked crossing was and rejoined the trail at that point. Shortly, (as in like 200 yards later) I was crossing what looked like a puddle and my bike (a Husqvarna, the single worst machine I ever raced) decided to suck the two-inch deep puddle water in the intake, and I spent the next 25 minutes or so (not like I was in a race or anything) pumping the machine out and getting it underway again. Due to the nature of the event (only 19 of us finished out of 400 who started) my minor (and of course safety motivated) course cut was forgiven.

My next course cutting transgression was a few decades later where I was involved in another long distance off road event which was again testing the endurance and sanity of the participants. At this event I was much older and riding (as opposed to "competing") in

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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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a class for senior riders.

I had a few instances of bad luck early in the event where I ended up stuck in the mud. At these events, three riders started every minute. I had started on the same minute as my son, who was by, the half-way mark of the event quite a ways (and time) ahead of me. (I seemed to be really good at getting stuck time and time again.) So I decided that to improve my time (and to perhaps finish less than an hour after my son), (and to hopefully finish before dark) I would avoid all possible chances for getting the bike stuck in quagmire mud holes again. Somewhere around the $\frac{3}{4}$ mark of the race, I came up to a wide section where the trail crossed a creek. This creek crossing had become a 30 yard long and 30 yard wide quagmire. I decided that if possible I would not park my bike in that quagmire for any period of time. (Any period of time at all, period.)

So before entering that pit of doom I leaned the bike against a tree and walked the creek bank through the woods about 20 yards to the right and noticed the trail looped back across the creek at that point. Aha! I decided that I would indeed cut course and not get stuck again, and then at the end of the event I would own up to that and disqualify myself.

(Seriously, I was riding the event for the fun of it and had no chance, nor intention of winning anything, and cheating in a class against other older riders such as myself was just silly and wrong.)

Well... I did finish the event, and here's the thing, the event was electronically scored, (riders taped a transponder to their helmet) and as soon as a rider crossed the finish point, the electronics flashed their times for the day on a big screen which were visible to the whole world. So, after the finish, out of curiosity, I looked back at the results board, and even with my course cut, I was still clearly and embarrassingly at the bottom of my class of old riders!!!

A person can learn much of right, wrong, and life from motorcycling. And motorcycling can

serve well as both parables, and metaphors for life. Obviously, I learned a lot from my time riding two wheelers of all sorts. And I am referring to a specific life lesson I experienced; that being, that if we cut course, or if we cheat at something, the person we hurt first and most is ourselves. The rewards for cheating are fleeting. We miss something when we cut course. Taking shortcuts never helps us in the long run.

And here is where I am going with this: please don't cheat yourself on a faith journey. Don't cut that course. Don't even cheat a spiritual moment. Instead, live it, embrace it, share it. And remember this from an old rider: when faith life turns into adversity, it's ok to take a second and step back and look around and check for alternative paths. Most of the time, we recognize the places where we'll be slowed down or get stuck on our faith journeys; so it's okay to take what might look like an easier path every now and then. That might be helpful when we need to move through something. At the end of the day, we can remember what we avoided, we can own up to (it's okay if we admit it to just ourselves) and we can deal with it when we're stronger, and more capable of getting through the quagmires of life.

Mostly, please, don't forget that life is not about those places where we were temporarily stuck. Life is about the ride, the appreciation for what we experience on our journey. Decades after an event, I remember the awesome trails of the course, the terrain we covered, and the people I rode with. Life is like that- it's about remembering, and cherishing, and sharing faith and stories and experiences (the good stuff, aka the love) with the people around us. Even if some of those people around us can't get through a single TV presentation without texting and razzing us from another part of the country!



Ash Wednesday is February 26th. The Ash Wednesday service will be at **FAITH** at 7:00pm. Our mid-week Lenten services will then begin on Tuesday, March 3rd at 11:30 and continue, every Tuesday morning with the last service being Tuesday, March 31st.

Prior to Ash Wednesday, we will also come together for a Fat Tuesday Dinner on February 25th. This event will be a joint event, held here at Grace and will begin at 7:00pm. More details will be coming, but be sure to mark your calendar and join us for what is becoming a great tradition!

The February council meeting will be the 18th at 2pm.

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 following items are those most needed by local food pantries. Items marked with a * are those that cannot be purchased with assistance programs:

- Bar soap*
- Boxed dinners
- Cake mixes
- Canned beef stew
- Canned fruit
- Canned fruit juices
- Canned meat/fish
- Canned milk
- Canned pasta
- Canned vegetables
- Instant coffee
- Deodorant*
- Diapers (M/L)
- Dish soap
- Feminine hygiene products*
- Gently used cook books*
- Graham crackers
- Hot chocolate mix
- Jam/jelly
- Jell-O
- Laundry detergent *
- Mac & cheese
- Muffin mixes
- Noodles/macaroni
- Complete pancake mix
- Peanut butter
- Potatoes (boxed/instant)
- Pudding mixes
- Saltine crackers
- Shampoo*
- Smoke detector batteries
- Shaving cream/razors*
- Soups
- Spaghetti sauce
- Syrup
- Tea bags
- Toilet paper*
- Toothbrushes*
- Toothpaste*



Youth Sunday School for the month of February will be on Sunday, February 23rd. At 9:45am. Youth of all ages are invited to attend! We hope you will join us!



Attention Good Neighbors, Veterans, First Responders

Use your life-skills and talents to help others! If you are interested in becoming a hospice volunteer, whether at the bedside or behind the scenes, please join us for a special panel discussion. A group of Mount Carmel Hospice volunteers will discuss their roles and contributions, then answer your questions. The information session can help you find out how you can support those who are at end-of-life. Please join us on February 12 from 1 pm to 2 pm or on February 19 from 6 pm to 7pm at the Mount Carmel Hospice and Palliative Care Center. Register by calling 234-LIFE (5433).

Thank you in advance for joining us in the spirit of the Gospel when serving our neighbors who are at end of life.

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.

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.



Birthday Blessings

Hayley Stout	02/01
Cathy Dorian	02/05
Zachary Schmauch	02/07
Doug Jackson	02/10
Wanda Lynn	02/13
Howard Kendrick	02/14
Shaun Styers	02/20
Nolan Bias	02/22
Varney Dunor	02/28



Financial Stewardship Through December 2019

Giving:






December 1	\$2,286.00
December 8	\$1,896.00
December 15	\$1,645.00
December 22	\$1,753.00
December 24	\$1,602.00
December 29	\$1,542.00
Total	\$10,724.00

Year-to-Date

YTD Income	\$109,336.68
Total Expenses	\$9,698.35
Total Expenses YTD	\$115,570.72
Capital Exp & Misc	\$00.00

February Worship Assistants



Date	 Ministry Team		 USHERS	 Altar Guild	 Greeters
Feb. 2	Debbie Klopfer	Tim Bower	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Ann Biri & Mary Lapham	Janet & Phil Dixon
Feb. 9	Debbie Klopfer	Tina Siddle	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Ann Biri & Mary Lapham	Janet & Phil Dixon
Feb 16	Debbie Klopfer	Debbi Dunlap	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Ann Biri & Mary Lapham	Janet & Phil Dixon
Feb. 23	Debbie Klopfer	Jim Esswein	Joe Biri & Craig Norman	Ann Biri & Mary Lapham	Janet & Phil Dixon

****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!

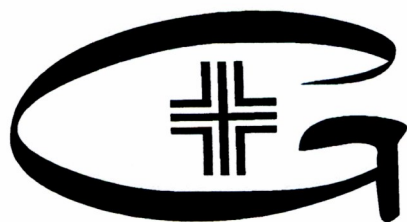


Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
8950 Refugee Road
Pickerington, OH 43147

“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!