



NEWSLETTER

GRACE
Evangelical Lutheran
Church

March 2021

FROM THE PASTOR: Pastor Heinz D. Raidel

Lent Simplified: A Lenten beginning based on 1John.

As you read this, the season of Lent will be here and we will be joining millions of Christ followers world-wide who are practicing this spiritual discipline at this time. Now that may have come across as being a bit officious, and so can many descriptions or guidelines for Lent. Stick with me, I think we can, as the British say, sort this out properly.

Let's start with the epistle 1 John, which is a true "epistle" a letter written to a group of people. 1 John is a formal letter, written in a formal style, and it is meant to inform or teach. It is actually quite useful as it:

- teaches the reader how to tell true teachers of the Gospel from the fakes (the true teachers proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and they preach love).

- it teaches the reader to always be on the look-out for good vs evil, and the Light vs the Darkness.

- and it teaches and stresses that relationships (between Christ followers and God, and between fellow Christ followers) are the most important things in a faith life.

I would like to draw your attention to verses 5-10 from 1 John: **5** This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; **7** but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. **8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

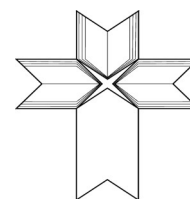
This might sound familiar; it is the scriptural basis for the confession we use in worship. It also very nicely sets us up and helps us sort out the Lent season, as the writer teaches that Lent (and a faith life) is more than repentance.

Repentance is certainly the foundation of a faith life, and that's why we stress repentance at Lent. And as much as repentance is the basis for a faith life, then walking (in the light) with God is also a part of a faith life. I think we can make the mistake of seeing Lent as a somber procession- and in doing so we walk mostly in the darkness and shadow of sin. We put too much emphasis on repentance and darkness, and we forget

Continued on next page

Inside this issue:

From the Pastor	1
Church News	2,3, &4
Birthdays,	4



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.

or neglect that the reason for the Lent season is to prepare us for the Light of the risen Christ at the end of Lent, Easter Sunday and the celebration of the Resurrection. So Lent is the understanding and practice of repentance; along with the realization that we are forgiven and freed from sin by the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter.

One more thing, I call this the "Commutative Property Of Forgiveness" (and in doing this I incite the ire of my wife the mathematician) but it works: our need to repent is as much a part of God's plan as God's promise to forgive us through Jesus. Without the light of God's love and promise of forgiveness, repentance would be of no value. And without repentance, God's love and promised forgiveness does not add up. We repent, knowing and trusting in God's promise to forgive us through his Son Jesus Christ. And God forgives us with the same love God shows by allowing His Jesus to be crucified and resurrected so we would be forgiven and set right before God.

As my dad would have said: "It's simple arithmetic." Lent is a season for us to understand our sinfulness. It is every bit as much a season for us to celebrate the love of God shown through the forgiveness for our sins in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God!

Office Hours:

Elaine is in the office Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30pm-3:00pm. You are welcome to stop in or call the office at this time.

Also, please know that unless you mention it to me otherwise, your newsletters will continue to be sent in the form they have been since July (electronic or print). Thanks!

If you are attending worship virtually, you can still get a copy of the bulletin! The bulletin is emailed out to our member list every Thursday, or it can be accessed through our website: gracecolumbus.com, and then visit the "info" tab. You can print the bulletin from either of these access points. If you want to make adjustments in what you receive, either through email or USPS, please talk to Elaine. Thank you.



"These are vegetables, mother. You wouldn't want me to eat something I've given up for Lent, would you?"



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A WAY TO HELP OTHERS?

The Pickerington Food Pantry is in desperate need of donations and volunteers. Volunteers are greatly needed as many of their regular volunteers have had to isolate during the pandemic. Currently they need volunteers to:

- Unload the MidOhio delivery truck on the second Tuesday of every month (this does include heavy lifting).
- Donate reusable grocery bags, or even sturdy plastic ones
- Food/health care items are always welcome.
- Cash donations are also greatly appreciated!

For every dollar you donate, the pantry can purchase \$11 worth of food. So monetary donations are appreciated.

If you are interested in volunteering or donating, please contact Renee Roberts at the Food Pantry,

renee@pickeringtonfoodpantry.org.

Grace is also still collecting money and goods for the Lancaster. You can drop things off Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, (when Elaine is in the office) or leave them outside the main doors labeled as "Lancaster Food Pantry."

We also have a Blessing Box outside the church that is available to those who need it any time of day and needs to be restocked sometimes. You can stop by anytime and leave something inside the Blessings Box.

Articles for the April newsletter should be into the office by March 23rd at noon. Thank you!

Create in me a
clean heart,



and renew a
right spirit
within me.

Psalm 51:10, ESV

Midweek Lent services are on Facebook, Wednesdays at 7:30pm. Please join us!

Due to the midweek services, there is no Wednesday night Bible Study during the season of Lent.

Please contact Elaine in the office if you have questions.



Lent



Evelynn Kelley	03/05
Faith Kelley	03/11
Donna Maibaum	03/12
Joe Biri	03/16
Jacob Dunlap	03/20
Robert Styers II	03/29

A note on Kroger Community Rewards

Just a note to all of you that Kroger is NOT putting Grace's name on the bottom of your receipt. If you signed up for Kroger Community Rewards, you ARE still donating 5% to Grace, you are just not seeing our church name on your receipt. If you are not sure that you signed up, just visit Kroger.com and check out Community Rewards, or call 1-800-576-4377. Our account number is **QS108**. This is free money for Grace!

PRAYER CONCERNS: Kathy Snyder; Coletta Sneddon; Ann Biri; Paul Klopfer; Peggy Holtzberger; Bernie Cantrell; Lucille Ables; Barbara Heinlein; Rev. Siggy Benedict-Shields; Michael Styers, Jr.; Cancer Support Groups at Zangmeister; and members of our military.~~

If you have specific prayer requests, please feel free to email them to the office, or leave them on the office voicemail. They will be publicized to the congregation.



Thank you for your contributions!

We still have bills to pay coming in monthly. We are controlling our expenses but we do still have expenses. So please keep those contributions coming! Thank you Grace Family.