

Lent, a season for us all.....by Pastor Ken

First let us look at some facts about this season we call Lent.

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days. All churches that have a continuous history extending before AD 1500 observe Lent. The ancient church that wrote, collected, canonized, and propagated the New Testament also observed Lent, believing it to be a commandment from the apostles.

Because Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, we skip over Sundays when we calculate the length of Lent. Therefore, in the Western Church, Lent always begins on Ash Wednesday, the seventh Wednesday before Easter.

In many countries, the last day before Lent (called Mardi Gras, Shrove Tuesday, Carnival,) has become a last fling before the solemnity of Lent. For centuries, it was customary to fast by abstaining from meat during Lent, which is why some people call the festival Carnival, which is Latin for farewell to meat. Our jazz music festival this past Transfiguration weekend is an example of a "Mardi Gras" experience.

As a young boy I recall not eating meat on Fridays in Lent. Can anyone think of why such a fasting would be the case on Fridays? Send me your answer via the Bible study which we are now addressing throughout Lent. Visit the church website at www.gracewoodstock.org and find this years "Lenten Online Bible Study" and let this be the first question of the season to be answered among the many we have listed therein.

Lent can be a time of fasting and prayer and reflection and preparation and it can also be used as a time of service. Consider taking on a new ministry opportunity during this Lenten season, or simply try hard to be an Evangelist in all that you do.

In any event please, as I mentioned in our last Grace for Today, let Lent be more than just another season of the church year. Do Lent! Don't let Lent do you.

In Christ, Pastor Ken

Lenten Soup Cooks Needed - We have a good start, but still need a few more cooks in order to offer a nice hot soup lunch after each of our noon Lenten services. This year more than ever, we are in need of some volunteer cooks. You can make the soup at home and freeze it or bring it in that morning or you can make it here with helpers. Desserts are needed also! For more information or to sign up see the Activity Binder at the Information Center or call Shirley Busse 815-338-9063.



WORSHIP TODAY

Sunday, March 13, 2011 First Sunday in Lent

INTRODUCTION

Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

READINGS

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

Sunday, March 20, 2011 Second Sunday in Lent

INTRODUCTION

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as daughters and sons of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

READINGS

Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17

PRAYERS-Please lift up these

petitions in your prayers—To become a praying member of the Friends in Prayer prayer chain, please submit your name and e-mail address to dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org.

World: Bishop Hanson, Bishop Wollersheim; those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, Arusha Town Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (our companion parish), Amanda Meyer teaching in Yangon, Myanmar (Burma), 2nd Lt. Dennis R. Smith II, serving in Iraq (grandson of Louise & Don Smith), PVT Darryl Wolff, serving overseas (son of Debbie & Darryl Wolff)

Woodstock: Pastor Ken Gibson and his family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Robert Berkholtz, Shirley Berna, Shirley Busse, Frank Davis (friend of Rick & Billie Cornell), Patricia Dunn (friend of the Hoover Family), Anthony Enlow (friend of Kim May-Zelle), Debbie Enseleit (sister of Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia), David Evanoff (brother of Joe Evanoff), Betty Fischer (mother of Connie Fischer), Matt Gerloff (grandson of Bob Gerloff), Lauren Gibson (daughter of Pastor Ken and Jodi Gibson), Olga Grasser, Mary Guyett (sister of Doris Sunday), Ruth Hemmingsen-Case (mother of Tammy Hansing), Frank Holy, Patrice Hoover, Shirley Hubert (niece of Marge Birk), Theopolis Hutchens, Ginger Knowles (daughter of Diane & Rich Knowles), Teddi Martin (sister-in-law of Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia), Evette Nagel (grandmother & great-grandmother of the Karner Family), Kathy Nordin, Gloria Ogle, Richard Petersen, Ann Phillips (sister-in-law of Cindy Meyer), Claudia Poloz (friend of Joe Evanoff), Hazel Powell, Shawn Rank (son of Bert & Carol Rank), Wayne Reckamp (husband of Monica Reckamp and co-worker Nora Combs), Ken Renner, Jeff Roberts, Floyd Rosenquist (father of Sue Beckman), Stanley Russell (father of Sheri Conover), Bud Schulz, Eleanor Setser, Peter Stumpf (friend of the Cornells), Tim Slevin (brother of Elizabeth Karagianis), Carol Thompson (daughter of Marge Dierksen), Josh Tillman, Eileen White, Jack Wienke

Sorrow: Betty Holtfreter

Joy: Birth of Josephine E. Arana, daughter of Ed & Katherine Arana

If you wish to add a prayer request for this newsletter, please call the church office at 815-338-0554. Your prayer concern will run for one week and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* e-mail and phone teams may also be submitted by telephone to the church office or by e-mail to Gracewoodstock.org. Due to confidentiality laws, hospitals no longer notify churches or pastors when a member is hospitalized. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or is admitted to the hospital, please call the church office at 815-338-0554.

Service Opportunity—The Evangelism Committee is looking for several volunteers to take turns staffing the Information Center in the narthex. It only requires about 15 minutes of commitment after the 10:45 a.m. service. This will be a rotating shift of one or two people depending upon how many volunteers are signed up. The only requirement is a friendly smile and warm hand shake. You will be handing out visitor gifts and answering questions about Grace. The sign-up sheet is located in the binder at the Information Center. For more information please contact Billie Cornell at 815-334-0723 or e-mail billie@b-goat.com If you are regularly in attendance at the 10:45 service please consider volunteering for this great opportunity to meet new people and welcome them to Grace!

High School Youth Trip Meeting

All high school youth wishing to go to Grand Rapids, MI, this summer for our service work trip should plan on attending an informational/planning meeting on Sunday, March 13, at 11:45 a.m. in the parlor. The cost for the trip should be minimal, and we are planning a "fun" stop on the way home (dunes, beach, etc.). The dates for the trip will be given at the meeting. A parent should plan on attending the meeting with their student. . If you plan on attending the trip but cannot attend the meeting, please e-mail Deb or Jay at jdandhope@sbcglobal.net.

Rummage Sale—Start saving today!

The annual Grace rummage sale will be the evening of May 12th, all day on May 13th, and the morning of May 14th. Set-up for the sale will be May 9th—May 11th from 8:30 a.m.—8:00 p.m. Items may be brought to the church during these times. Volunteers are always needed to help with set-up and clean-up as well as working during the sale.

Watch future newsletters and Day One inserts for more details. Any questions, please contact Borgie Stenoin.



Adult Coach Bus Trip - Saturday, June 18, 8:30am - 5:00pm— Join us for a fun filled day traveling the USA! We'll start off with a ride on Wisconsin's Last Original Electric Railroad Line as we travel to The Elegant Farmer in Mukwonago. Enjoy time to shop their bakery, deli and market, be sure to pick up one of their famous Brown Bag

Apple Pies! We ride the train back & have some time for the train museum before heading over to Millie's for our fabulous lunch of Tossed Green Salad, their famous Chicken & Dumplings, Carrots, Cheese Bread, Beverage and Coconut Caramel Dutch Pie for dessert. The musical show will feature famous songs from across the USA. After the show enjoy a nice stroll in the gardens and shops before boarding our bus. Cost is \$55 Please sign up in the activity binder and pay by June 4th.

Adult Study Group To Begin—Want to learn informally with a small group of like-minded spiritual buddies? That's what you can do with a study group sponsored by the Adult Education Committee. You can go to one that's already forming or start your own. Topics are tailored to individual interests. They can focus on Bible study, other spiritual study, or explore topics of interest. Groups can meet for the short-term or long. Please contact any member of the Adult Ed committee for more information, including how to start your own group. Committee members: Jane Gerloff, chair; Diana Frisbee, Pamela Gerloff, Howard Hoyt, Roger Oberman.

Holy Week Worship Schedule—

Palm Sunday Weekend: April 16 & 17, 5:00 p.m. (Saturday),
8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. (Sunday)

Maundy Thursday: April 21, Noon & 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday: April 22, Noon & 7:00 p.m.

Easter Vigil: April 23, 7:00 p.m. (Saturday)

Easter Sunday: April 24, 7:00 a.m., 8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.



“Online” Lenten Bible Study With Camano Lutheran—



As Lent approaches there is a desire for us to once again spend time in reflection. Lent leads us to a natural forty day plus period, similar to the time that Jesus spent in the wilderness just prior to beginning in his ministry. Might we find some daily time to read and reflect upon all that God might be calling us to as congregations and as people who claim Jesus as the fulfillment of scripture and our Lord and Savior.

Pastor Scott Brents, (my dear friend from seminary and now Pastor in Camano Island) and I, have arranged for us to again offer an online study, similar to what we did last year, with a bit of a twist. This year the study will be based upon the daily lectionary that is always available for us to read and contemplate. The other new item is that there will be a series of questions online that are available for us to consider, pray on, and yes, even comment on and question in regards to where and how we are thinking in this time and place.

Please try this unique opportunity throughout the Lenten season. Thanks to Billie Cornell, you will be able to get to this wonderful opportunity through the Grace Website through Facebook. —Pastor Ken Gibson

Faith In Action— is a volunteer organization that promotes keeping our seniors independent in their homes. We are in need of a few people who would have 1 or 2 hours per week (or month) to help transport a few members of our community.

One person needs to be driven to the VA bus stop at the train station. Another person would like to be taken shopping and to the laundry mat. A dialysis gentleman needs to go for treatment three times per week.

If you can help with even one of these things, please contact Caryn Rigsby at Faith In Action 815-455-3120 x223.

For more information about FIA visit their website at www.fiamchenrycounty.org



MOPS - Mother's of PreSchoolers -

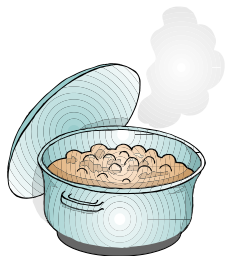
Join us for a monthly gathering from 9:30 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

We have guest speakers, adult activities, inspiring conversations and a lot of fun!

Child care is provided in the nursery for 6 months to 2 years old and the gymnasium for 3 to 5 years old. All moms are welcome to come and enjoy some “mommy time”!

Upcoming dates are: April 13 and May 11. Contact Kelly Tafoya at 815-337-2855 or tafoya5@att.net for more information.

Grace Cooks—Do you like to help others when they are in need? Do you like to cook? Grace Cooks may be the perfect team for you! This group of men and women are called upon to make and deliver one meal to the Grace family that is in need. Our team provides up to 3 meals to those that have experienced a death of a loved one, are recovering from an illness or surgery, or have just brought a new baby home from the hospital. We could use more people on our team. If you think this might be a way for you to serve our congregation, please call Ellen Lohmeyer at 815.338.3562 for more information. * **Cooks are generally only called upon 3-4 times a year! What do you think? Can you help us out?**



Lord's Prayer Study Group to Begin April 16 - The first Adult Education Study Group, to be facilitated by Jane Gerloff, will study the Lord's Prayer, using the book *Prayers of the Cosmos: Reflections on the Original Meaning of Jesus's Words* by Neil Douglas-Klotz. The author has re-translated the Lord's Prayer (and other Gospel texts) directly from the Aramaic-language Bible sources. Because Aramaic was Jesus's native language, the translations shed new light on his thinking and message. Together, we will explore what effect the author's insights can have on our own prayer life.

WHEN: Once a month for four months, beginning Saturday, April 16 at 10:30 a.m. Subsequent meeting times will be set at the first meeting.

WHERE: Church Parlor

STUDY MATERIALS: *Prayers of the Cosmos: Reflections on the Original Meaning of Jesus's Words* by Neil Douglas-Klotz. To look at the book, see the reserve copy in the Church Library. To purchase it, you can order from Read Between the Lines in Woodstock (815-206-5967) by March 30 - they will place a group order; if there are enough orders they will be able to give a discount.

BEGINNING ASSIGNMENT: Please read through page 15 of the book for our first meeting.

QUESTIONS?: Contact Jane Gerloff, 815-338-1649.

Meet Our New Members: My name is Rob Murphy and my wife Jodie and I have finally joined Grace after 18 years of being charter members of the Christmas & Easter club. Growing up together in Crystal Lake, Jodie and I have been married for over twenty years and now reside in Woodstock with our three "kids" Benny and Bella (our 3 yr old & 2 yr old Bernese Mountain Dogs) and Dawson (our cat who thinks he is a dog). I have been in the floor covering industry for 26 years, currently as owner of Midwest Coverings, Inc. in Woodstock as well as working for Flooring and More in Janesville, WI. Jodie has worked in the financial industry for the past twenty years and is currently a home maintenance technician (unemployed, but looking). In our spare time I enjoy playing softball and volleyball with my friends at Grace and Jodie enjoys knitting. We both like music, playing golf and spending time with friends and family. We are looking forward to making new friends within the congregation at Grace.

News Shorts...What's Happening At Grace

SENIOR LUNCHEON—Tuesday, March 22 at noon. Our home cooked meal features Easy Pleasing Meatloaf, Scalloped Potatoes, Carrots, Rolls, Applesauce and Banana Pudding Cake for dessert. After eating we will once again enjoy a fun, fast paced game of Bunco - bring your lucky dice rolling and you may win a prize. Cost is \$5. Please sign up in the activity Binder by March 20th.

ELW HYMNALS—Orders are still being taken for the new *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* "cranberry" hymnal. The base price of a hymnal is \$22.50. Members can order by completing the special pew envelopes. Include your check and place it on the offering plate or bring it to the office.

ADULT CAFÉ - We are currently in a series titled "Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith," studying and comparing Christian and non-Christian religions and their differences to the Lutheran faith. March 13—Guest Speaker from Big Brothers, Big Sisters March 20—Buddhism Come join us on Sunday mornings at 9:45a.m.

MEN'S BASKETBALL—Join us for some exercise and fun on Wednesday nights in Luther Hall at 7:00 PM.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE —All *Grace for Today* articles for the March 9th issue should be sent to Lynn Nattress at lnattress@gracewoodstock.org or to the church office by noon on March 3rd.

Here is your link to the Weekend Worship Participants: Schedule:

<http://www.gracewoodstock.org/WeeklyNews/Monthly%20Worship%20Participants.pdf>

THE WEEKS AHEAD AT GRACE

Sunday, March 13

8:30 AM Traditional Worship
9:30 AM Fair Trade
9:45 AM Education Hour
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship
5:00 PM Youthful Spirit Choir
6:30 PM HS Choir/Graceful Ringers

Monday, March 14

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 4 and 4 & 5
5:30 PM Church Volleyball League
6:30 PM Boy Scout Troop 153
7:00 PM Property & Grounds Mtg.
7:15 PM Social Ministry Team

Tuesday, March 15

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 3 and 4 & 5
9:00 AM Sewing Circle
12:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:30 PM Troop 153 Comm. Meeting

Wednesday, March 16

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 4 and 4 & 5
12:00 PM Lenten Noon Service
12:30 PM Lenten Soup Lunch
5:00 PM Messenger Choir
5:15 PM Prime Time Dinner
5:30 PM 2-Yr. Old Class/Cherubs
6:00 PM Revelation Ringers
6:15 PM Joyful Sound Choir
6:30 PM Confirmation Class
7:00 PM Lenten Evening Service
7:00 PM Men's Basketball
7:30 PM Festival Choir
8:30 PM Chancel Choir

Thursday, March 17

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 3, 4 & 5
5:45 PM Adult Ed. Comm. Meet.
7:00 PM Council
7:00 PM Exultation!

Friday, March 18

9:00 AM Preschool 4 and 4 & 5
9:45 AM Adoration
6:00 PM Band

Saturday, March 19

5:00 PM Worship

Sunday, March 20

8:30 AM Traditional Worship
9:45 AM Education Hour
10:45 AM Contemporary Worship
5:00 PM Youthful Spirit Choir
6:30 PM High School Choir
6:30 PM Graceful Ringers

Monday, March 21

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 4 and 4 & 5
5:30 PM Church Volleyball League
6:30 PM Boy Scout Troop 153
7:00 PM Faith Circle
7:00 PM Preschool Committee Mtg.

Tuesday, March 22

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 3, and 4 & 5
12:00 PM Senior Luncheon
12:30 PM Staff Meeting
5:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 1306 Meet.
7:00 PM Women Praise

Wednesday, March 23

9:00 AM Preschool 2, 4 and 4 & 5
12:00 PM Lenten Noon Service
12:30 PM Lenten Soup Lunch
5:00 PM Messenger Choir
5:15 PM Prime Time Dinner
5:30 PM 2-Yr. Old Class/Cherubs
6:00 PM Revelation Ringers
6:15 PM Joyful Sound Choir
6:30 PM Confirmation Class
7:00 PM Lenten Evening Service
7:00 PM Men's Basketball
7:30 PM Festival Choir
8:30 PM Chancel Choir

Thursday, March 24

Parent/Teacher Confs.—No Preschool
1:00 PM Naomi Circle
1:30 PM Food Pantry Meeting

Friday, March 25

Parent/Teacher Confs.—No Preschool
6:00 PM Band

Saturday, March 26

5:00 PM Worship

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