



Grace **ABOUNDS**

February 2024

A Center of Mission and Ministry - Celebrating and Sharing God's Grace!

From Our Interim Pastor



As I write this, we will soon be bringing to an end the season of Epiphany and moving into the Lenten Season. Just as Christmas Eve brought us both to the fourth Sunday of Advent in the morning and Christmas Eve in the afternoon and evening, this year Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day. Someone posted on Facebook that perhaps this year we could impose the ashes in the shape of a heart rather than a cross. In many ways, the cross does indeed say

love. So, while we will practice the traditional imposition of the cross, that connection to the heart does give us something to ponder.

Lent also brings us time to ponder the depth of agape love freely given to us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God's beloved Son and our Redeemer. And I'm convinced the broader church is at a critical juncture in discerning its mission in these post-pandemic, post-modern days of the twenty-first century. That brings us, of course, to the first question before us this year. What is the church? What does it mean to be the body of Christ on this earth in this day and in this time? I encourage you to use these days of Lent to ponder your thoughts on this question. Just this morning I listened to someone bemoaning the fact that the church she knew no longer exists. That's true. The challenge before us in these days is to listen carefully to the story of our Lord's journey to the cross, to pay heed to the stirring of the Holy Spirit (not just individually, but collectively as this body of Christ known as Grace Lutheran Church), and to be open to becoming the church we are newly called to be.

And secondly, Lent is the perfect time for us to focus (individually) on the second question before us. What's the difference between a member and a disciple? Oftentimes our Lenten disciplines invite us to "give up" something for Lent. I think more so Lent provides us an opportunity to "add" something to our faith practices – those things that identify us as disciples and not members. Many challenges lie ahead of us here at Grace. Stewardship is a biggie! And all three dimensions of stewardship – time, gifts for ministry and money - provide opportunity for growth. While it is easy (and common in many congregations) for a few to do most of the work, we are moving toward finding a way for each and every member to serve in some way. Remember that verse from I Corinthians 12: 7 as recorded in The Message, "Each person is given something to do to show who God is." Lent is a perfect time for us to discern those gifts. And needless to say, we need to grow our financial giving so that not only salaries meet guidelines but that all ministry teams have adequate funds to carry out their ministries and so that our facilities can be kept in good condition. So, Lent invited us to ponder our financial giving as well.

May God keep us struggling and growing in the Lenten days before us.

God's Peace,
Pastor Jane

February Worship

Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Holy Communion is celebrated each Sunday.

Our service is livestreamed on Facebook at Grace Lutheran Church - ELCA.

Sunday School

9:30 a.m.



Breakfast begins at 9:15 a.m.

ASH Wednesday Services

Wednesday, Feb. 14

12:15 & 7 p.m.

Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes

SUNDAY EVENING LENTEN SERVICES

You won't want to miss this!

Each Sunday evening in Lent at 5 p.m. with a soup and sandwich meal following the service.

A worship and drama series titled *The People vs. Judas Iscariot ... the punishment phase.*

(See page 3 for more information)

Contact Pastor Jane by cell phone at 803-530-2045 or by email at pjmitcham@gmail.com.

 **FEBRUARY**
Baptisms

- 1 - Billy Ackerman
Steve Bedenbaugh
Jenny Braswell
- 2 - Edna Riley
- 3 - Sandy Lemay
- 8 - Robert Peters
Marysue Rivers
- 11 - Lisa Farr
Jordan D. Jackson
- 14 - Melissa V. Busby
- 15 - Jessica Culbreth
- 20 - Linda Cromer
Taylor Metz
Jay Vaughn
- 21 - Lee Wessinger
- 22 - Frank Summer
- 23 - Chad Frick

 **FEBRUARY**
Birthdays

- 1 - Jayden Mitchell
- 5 - Claudia Pollard
- 6 - Anthony Fanara
- 8 - Camryn Shealy
- 9 - Davis P. Till
- 10 - Donna Hall
- 11 - Josh Riley
- 14 - Ashley Ackerman
Wanda Hartman
- 15 - Alison Bowers
- 19 - Tommy Dawkins
Susanne Nelson
- 20 - Holmes Epting
- 22 - Sean Scott
- 23 - Cali Derrick
- 26 - Lois Amick
- 28 - Margaret Kluttz

 **FEBRUARY**
Anniversaries

- 3 - Lynn and Larry Wessinger (57th)
- 14 - Rick and Carol Mercer +
- 25 - Kim and Craig Metz (40th)
- 27 - Margaret and Glenn Kluttz +
+ Memorial Anniversary

Grace People in the News



PASTOR JANE was featured in the January/February issue of Newberry Magazine. This article "A Matter of Faith" is a wonderful conversation all about Faith and Grace Lutheran Church.

RAELYNN WESSINGER made the Principal's Honor Roll for the 2nd nine weeks at Pomaria Garmany Elementary School.

~ **Grace Prayer List** ~

Grace Family: Beverly Merck; Teresa Cooper; Evelyn Harmon; Pastor Al Potter; Wayne Mitchell; Margaret Kluttz; Cissie and Bob Dibble; Glenda and Everett Crafts; Heather and Bob Harris; Marysue Rivers; Faye Hartman; Lois Amick; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

Residential Care: Sadie Epting (*Springfield Place, Rm. 11*); Allene Dawkins (*Springfield Place, Rm. 19*); Wendy/Michael Riley (*J.F. Hawkins, Rm. 221*).

College Students: Zack Frick (*USC*); Hayden Hall (*Piedmont*); Bryce Medlock (*Bluefield University*); Lexi Medlock (*Midlands Tech*); Payton Metts (*Piedmont*); Bailey Stewart (*USC-Union*); Taylor Metz (*MUSC*);

Extended Family: Jimmy Martin (*Robert Martin's brother*); Grey Westbury (*Sue Mitchell's great-niece*); Brittany Merck, Broko Boland (*Melodie Water's cousins*); Mary Ellen Hartzog (*Eddie Rivers' cousin*).

Military: SGT. Anderson Dibble (*Marines/Iraq - Cissie/Bob Dibble's granddaughter*); Everett Crafts V (*Air Force/Guam - Glenda/Everett Craft's grandson*); Walker Eldridge (*Coast Guard/VA*); Caleb Salyers (*US Army Cavalry Scout/Ft. Hood, TX - Rev. Al Potter's grandson*).

Community: Dean Wise; Jackie Perry; Brian Cassady; Amy Frick Wicker; Davida Monsanto; Violet Wilmot; Mary Lawson; Pastor William and Karen Hightower.

God's World: victims of gun violence; Ukraine, Israel, and Palestine and neighboring countries; those affected by wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and other natural disasters; military families; homeless; refugees; jobless/underemployed; those suffering due to unrest and fighting throughout the world; our enemies.

Contact the office by phone (803-364-3331) or email (gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com) to make changes to our List.

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14

Ash Wednesday services will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 12:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. Holy Communion will be celebrated along with the imposition of ashes at both services.



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the church season known as Lent when Christians focus on growing in their faith and connection to God. Don't miss these meaningful services, as we begin our annual Lenten time of faith renewal!

Sunday Evening Lenten Services with Soup and Sandwich Fellowship



This year's Lenten series will be a worship and drama series titled *The People vs. Judas Iscariot ... the punishment phase*. It

takes place in an actual courtroom setting with a judge, prosecutor and defense attorney interviewing various characters from the biblical story. The congregation serves as the jury, and the question for the jury to resolve is this: is God's grace sufficient, even for Judas?

You won't want to miss this!

February 18, 25, March 3, 10 and 17 at 5p.m. The services will also be livestreamed for those who are not able to attend.



Soup and Sandwich Supper

We need volunteers to provide soup and sandwiches for our Soup and Sandwich suppers that will follow Sunday evening Lenten worship. Please sign up on the narthex board if you can help.



Shrove Tuesday Fun, Feb. 13

Grace will have our traditional Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, Feb. 13 in the Ministry Center. Activities will begin at 6:30 p.m. with pancakes and sausage served. Donations accepted to cover expenses.

A gospel group from Wightman UMC will be the entertainment. There is a sign-up sheet on the board. Please sign up so we can get an account for how many to prepare for.

Souper Bowl of Caring- February 11



On Sunday, February 11, after worship, our youth will collect donations to support the *Feed Thy Neighbor Kitchen* at O'Neal Street United Methodist Church in Newberry. The *Feed Thy Neighbor Kitchen* serves free, nutritious meals every Saturday to those in need in the community (the program served 9,059 plates of food in 2023!). You are invited to make a \$1 donation (or more) to help. For a fun twist, we are bring back the "friendly competition" between the Angels (last names A-L) and the Saints (last names M-Z)! The Saints won last year; who will win this year?

2024 People of Grace & 2024 Yearbook



The church office will have the **2024 People of Grace** available very soon. It contains mailing addresses and telephone numbers for Grace members and friends of Grace. Please pick up a copy of the directory for your household. If you notice addresses or telephone numbers that are not correct, please let the church office know.



The **2024 Yearbook** should also be available in early February. We are still waiting for a few reports to finish compiling this publication. The 2024 Yearbook serves as our congregation's annual report for 2023 and contains year-end information from our ministry teams, groups, and treasurers. It will also contain information for 2024 relating to ministry assignments and tentative calendar dates.

Please pick up a copy of each of these resources for your household when they are available.

Women's Bible Study

Our Women's Bible Study will resume February 21st for a Lenten Study.

Let Deborah Ruff or Sally Dominick know if you'd like to participate so they can order a book for you.



The Youth Ministry Team will meet on Sunday, February 11, following the congregational meeting and lunch.

All youth and parents (as well as anyone else who is interested) are invited to attend. We need to discuss the Easter Egg Hunt and plan for the next couple of months. If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Wessinger, Mike Shealy, or Jessica Shealy.

BACKPACK Ministry We are now feeding **13** needy children at Prosperity Rikard school. We need your help! Please leave your food donations in the red wagon in the narthex.

Early Preschool Registration

Grace Christian Preschool will open early registration for the 2024-2025 year in February for current students and all Grace families. When registration opens, registration packets will be sent home with current students in their folders. Applications will also be available outside the church office window.



Conference LMM Feb. 15



Heartland Conference Lutheran Men in Mission will hold their quarterly meeting on Thursday, Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. here at Grace. Tom Counts, President SCLMM, will be the Guest Presenter.

The meal will be catered by *Bill & Frans*: "Breakfast for Supper" (Eggs, Sausage, Bacon, Grits, Biscuits, Gravy, Fruit, Coffee, Tea & Water) \$13.50 per person, payable at the door. RSVP to Johnny Merck no later than February 11, 2024 so we can let the caterer know how many meals to prepare.



SC LMM Convention February 17

The SC Lutheran Men in Mission Annual Convention is set for Saturday, Feb. 17 at St. James Lutheran Church in Leesville. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. with the convention starting at 10 a.m. Register in advance online with Eventbrite.

Check SCLMM.org for more information.

BOOK FAIR

Preschool Book Fair & Art Show

Grace Preschool will sponsor a Book Fair and Art Show on February 8 from 5-7 p.m. in the Ministry Center. Everyone is invited! Please come out and support our school.

Serving in February

Assisting Ministers

- 4 - Deborah Ruff
- 11 - Ronnie Cromer
- 14 - Johnny Merck
(Ash Wednesday-7 p.m.)
- 18 - Jessica Shealy
- 25 - Lillie Waters



Altar Flowers/Greenery

- 4 - donor needed
- 11 - donor needed
- 18 - donor needed—Greenery
- 25 - donor needed—Greenery

Acolyte

Camryn Shealy

Crucifer - Feb. 11*

Helena Mewbourn

Torchbearers - Feb. 11*

Thomas Mewbourn, Raelynn Wessinger

** Feb. 11 is Transfiguration Sunday.*

Communion Assistant

Lillie Waters

Communion Preparation

Donna Jacobs

Communion Clean Up

Brad & Melodie Waters

Ushers

Walt Quattlebaum, Bryan Hall,
Hayden Hall, Hunter Hall, Mike Hall

Greeters

Nancy Derrick, Lisa Farr

Offering Tabulators

Johnnie & Beverly Merck,
Brad & Melodie Waters

Front Sign

Mike Shealy

Altar Guild

Beverly Hawkins

Pew Rack Helper

Jessica Shealy

Altar Flower, Lamp Sign Up

The 2024 Altar Flower and Sanctuary Lamp Chart is posted on the narthex board. Sign up on the chart or contact the church office by phone or email to reserve your special dates. These dates will be published in the 2024 Yearbook, which we plan to print very soon.



SANCTUARY LAMP SPONSORS

During the month of February, the Sanctuary Lamp burns to the glory of God in memory of loved ones by Deborah and Phil Ruff.

For honorary or memorial information to be included in the newsletter and bulletin, information and \$30 donation should be received by the office by the last Sunday of the month prior to the month you sponsor.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Sanctuary	* Online	Total
1/7	64	18	82
1/14	55	28	83
1/21	54	20	74
1/28	61	18	79

** Total Online viewers = Peak views x 2 per SC Synod instructions.*



1/7	25
1/14	25
1/21	28
1/28	29

NewsLetter DEADLINE

Deadline for the March 2024 Newsletter:
Tuesday, Feb. 20



Monthly GYM TIME

Sunday, February 25

Noon-1:30 p.m.

**Faith, fellowship,
fun, and food!!**

We need volunteers to provide our February meal of chicken nuggets and mac-n-cheese please! There is a sign-up sheet on the narthex board.


Souper Bowl of Caring - Feb. 11

Grace Youth are sponsoring their annual Souper Bowl of Caring collection on Sunday, Feb. 11. The Youth have chosen to support the Feed Thy Neighbor Kitchen at O'Neal Street United Methodist Church in Newberry. Youth will be holding soup pots after the service and asking the congregation to donate \$1 or more to this cause. (Youth, don't forget to bring your \$1!) We will count the collection after the congregation lunch and meeting so we can report it to the national Tackle Hunger Campaign and to the congregation the following Sunday, Feb. 18.



Don't forget that your friends are always welcome at youth activities.

More Youth = More Fun!




February 11:
Souper Bowl of Caring collection
Youth Ministry Team Meeting following the congregational meeting and lunch. (details- see page 4)

February 25:
Monthly Gym Time 12-1:30 p.m.
 Lunch provided!

March 24:
Monthly Gym Time 12-1:30 p.m.
 Lunch provided!

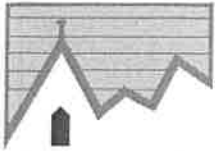
Our Youth Sunday School Class continues to explore the Old Testament of *The Greatest Story*. We've recently talked about Samson and Delilah; Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz; Samuel; and David and Goliath. We've also discussed how these stories of faith relate to us today. Our class continues to grow in number! Come join us!





At our January GYM Time, Youth packed food for Grace's Backpack Ministry, enjoyed a corndog lunch, played a game, had devotion time, and made plans for our Souper Bowl of Caring Collection.





**Church
FINANCES**

Our Offerings
for January

*Through Jan. 28
(Does not include Jan. EFTs)*

MINISTRY BUDGET *Our Monthly Need: \$13,634*

Given during month	\$8,571.00
Given year-to-date	\$8,571.00
Goal through Jan. 29	\$13,634.00

MAINTENANCE/UPKEEP FUND

Given during month	\$4,399.44
Given year-to-date	\$4,399.44

PARSONAGE FUND

Given during month	\$0.00
Given year-to-date	\$0.00
Fund Balance, Jan. 29	\$4,640.38

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Given during month	\$124.00
Given year-to-date	\$124.00

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Given during month	\$0.00
Given year-to-date	\$0.00

CAMPERSHIP FUND

Given during month	\$0.00
Given year-to-date	\$0.00

COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND

Community Assistance	\$0.00
Given year-to-date	\$0.00
Bookbag Food Ministry	\$0.00
Given year-to-date	\$0.00
Thanksgiving Meal	\$0.00
Given year-to-date	\$0.00
Total year-to-date	\$0.00

SPECIAL 2024 OFFERINGS

Scholarship Fund Match 2023	\$386.38
Bereavement Meal Fund	\$0.00

World Central Kitchen Offering

Thanks to your generous giving, we sent a check to World Central Kitchen for \$1,471.45. This will help them feed hungry and starving people in many countries of our world.

BUDGET Update	MINISTRY BUDGET
	Needed Thru Jan. 31: \$ 13,634.00
	Given thru Jan. 28: \$ 8,571.00
	Amount Behind Goal: \$ 5,063.00

2023 Financial Statements

Financial statements for the 2023 calendar year are available on the table outside the office window. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.



Electronic Giving Option

As you plan your 2024 contributions, please keep in mind that Grace offers electronic giving as a way to make your regular offerings or a one-time gift. It's easy - just visit the Grace website at www.graceluth.org or scan the QR Code at left with your mobile device.



**January
Memorials and
Honorariums**
(Through Jan. 28)

Maintenance Fund

In honor of Pastor Jane and Pastor Mitch Mitcham by Heather & Bob Harris

In honor of Deborah and Phil Ruff by Heather & Bob Harris

	<p>February Manna House Item of the Month Canned Pork & Beans</p>
	<p>Donations can be left in the Manna House box in the narthex. Thank you for supporting Manna House food pantry!</p>



Congregation Council Meeting Jan. 20

Congregation Council held its annual retreat meeting in the ministry center January 20, 2024 from 10am-2pm.

**Next Scheduled
Council Meeting
Monday, Feb. 19
6:30 p.m.
Ministry Center**

There will be a congregational meeting held with Bishop's team on February 11, 2024 after church to discuss our Vitality Survey to

move forward with call process. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex for members to help provide soup and sandwiches for lunch. Also, a Call Committee was chosen to contain 5 members representing all age groups.

The Community Hope Team and Good News Team will get together to discuss stewardship program started at Grace with the help of Pastor Ozzie Herlong. Council will continue the Vision Team's work to update Ministry Teams through out the year.

Finance Team will decide how to get church financial information out to members quarterly.

All Reports were approved as presented.

Personnel Team will meet to discuss treasurer candidate and a representative for Valerie.

Celebration for Livestreaming of worship service and pay-off of Building fund to be combined. Worship Team to appoint task force for this celebration.

All church bank accounts approved to be moved from First Citizens to First Community as small business accounts to avoid fees.

Recipient of Lenten Offering to be the SC Lutheran Retreat Centers Campaign.

Facilities request for the Christopher Shealy Family for birthday party on Feb. 3rd approved.

Robert to check on roof estimates and Brad to check on AC problems/leaking in lounge and men's restroom.

Council Representatives chosen for Ministry Teams. Teams will have to meet to choose chairs.

Supply Pastor pay moved from \$150-\$200 per synod guidelines. Next year's budget will be increased accordingly.

Next Council Meeting will be moved to Monday February 19th at 6:30 because of Shrove Tuesday supper.

Meeting adjourned with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted, Candace Frick, Council Secretary







December Financial Reports

	<u>Balance, 12/1</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Disbursed</u>	<u>Balance, 12/31</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
Current/Budget Fund	\$ 51,327.47	\$ 19,081.67	\$18,820.86	\$551,588.28*	\$11,218.68 Annuity
Building Loan Fund	\$ 35,077.46	\$ 5,797.58	\$38,034.60	\$ 2,840.44	<i>Loan Paid Off!</i>
Maintenance Fund	\$ 8,420.70	\$ 34,480.09	\$ 348.00	\$ 42,552.79**	n/a
Sunday School Account	\$ 3,143.32	\$ 174.00	\$ 169.83	\$ 3,147.49	n/a
Christian Schools Account	\$ 20,196.67	\$ 5,067.06	\$ 6,442.20	\$ 18,881.53	n/a
Schools Educational Fund	\$ 7,118.97	\$ 731.00	\$ 1,762.92	\$ 6,087.05	n/a

◆ Current Fund Balance does not include designated monies for the LED Bulb Fund (\$534.37); Bereavement Meal Fund (\$1,460.45); Adult Choir Fund (\$325); or Sydney Shealy Memorial Gift (\$307.74) contained within the Current Fund Checking Account.
 **Maintenance Fund balance does not include Parsonage Fund (\$4,640.38) contained within the Maintenance Fund Checking Account.

February 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 	3 Ministry Center Reserved
4 Breakfast - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 a.m. Confirmation - 9:30 a.m. Worship - 10:30 a.m. <i>Live Stream Dedication</i> Choir Rehearsal 6:00p.m.	5	6 School of Religion 7-9pm	7	8  Preschool Book Fair & Art Show 5-7 p.m.	9	10
11 Transfiguration Sunday Breakfast - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 a.m. Worship - 10:30 a.m. Souper Bowl Collection - after worship <i>Soup & Sandwich Lunch</i> Vitality Survey review w/ SC Synod 12:00 p.m. Youth Ministry Team	12	13 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 6:30 p.m.  SHROVE TUESDAY	14  ASH WEDNESDAY Service - 12:15 p.m. Service - 7 p.m.	15 Heartland Conference LMM 7pm @ Grace	16 SCLMM Past President's Dinner St. James - Leesville, SC	17 SCLMM Convention St. James - Leesville, SC
18 First Sunday of Lent  Breakfast - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 a.m. Confirmation - 9:30 a.m. Worship - 10:30 a.m. Lenten Service - 5 p.m.	19  PRESIDENTS DAY Congregation Council Meeting 6:30	20 March Newsletter Articles Due	21 Women's Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	22	23	24
25 Breakfast - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 a.m. Worship - 10:30 a.m. GYM Time -12-1:30 p.m. Lenten Service - 5 p.m.	26	27	28 9:30 a.m. Newsletter Team Women's Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	29	1 	2



Grace Lutheran Church

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Prosperity, SC 29127

www.graceluth.org

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gracelutheran2@att.net

Ministers: The People of Grace

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Jane P. Mitcham

Online Giving

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with your smartphone
to be connected to our
online giving page.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

February Highlights



Youth
Souper Bowl
Collection
Feb. 11



**SHROVE
TUESDAY**

Shrove
Tuesday
Pancake
Supper
6:30 p.m.
Feb. 13th



Ash Wednesday
Services
Feb. 14



First Sunday
in Lent
Feb. 18



Lutheran Men
State
Convention
Feb. 17

preschool registration



Preschool
Registration
Begins for
Grace
Members and
Current
Students
this month.



Congregation
Council
Feb. 19
6:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead



Feb. 18, 25,
Mar. 3, 10,
& 17 at 5pm
followed by
Soup &
Sandwich Supper



Daylight
Savings Time
Begins March
10



Palm Sunday - March 24
Maundy Thursday - March 28
Good Friday - March 29
Easter Sunday - March 31
Service Times & details
coming soon.