

# GraceFull Visions

MARCH 2017

## CALLED TO DISCIPLESHIP GIVING CAMPAIGN

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Lenten greetings to you, members and friends of Grace Lutheran Church!

When was the last time the people of Grace Lutheran Church were asked to make a pledge for a certain level of financial giving to the mission and ministry of the congregation? A specific date is not needed to realize that it has been several years since this important action was taken by the congregation.

Between this reality and the commitments made in both the Call to Discipleship goals and in the approval of the budget/spending plan by the congregation at the last Congregational Meeting, the new Stewardship Team for Grace met and decided that the time was right to place before you an opportunity. I am pleased to announce the *Called to Discipleship Financial Giving Campaign of 2017* for Grace Lutheran Church.

This campaign will take place over the course of this month, culminating in a Consecration Sunday on March 26<sup>th</sup> at which time we'll collect and then bless the cards representing our financial giving commitments to the mission and ministry of this congregation. The primary goal is to increase our financial giving by 10% versus last year. The stretch goal is to increase our giving so that we gather enough to meet our total spending plan for this year.

This is a significant time to be undertaking such an effort, especially considering that this year marks the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation. Why is this significant? Because Luther posted the 95 Theses in response to abuses surrounding the sale of indulgences, partly to fund the construction of St. Peter's Basilica. In other words, the Reformation was sparked by a "bad"

Stewardship campaign.

As Lutherans then, it is in our DNA to try to avoid using certain tactics to raise financial resources, tactics that might otherwise be employed with success. These tactics include using fear (including fear of damnation), guilt, gimmicks, and sometimes even downright dishonesty.

But since we are who we are, we boldly appeal instead to such things as a sense of gratitude to God for our salvation and all the blessings we have received, faithfulness to our baptismal calling as disciples of Jesus, and/or hope and excitement about what we can accomplish by working together as brothers and sisters in Christ. These may not always be as successful as the other tactics, but we know that they are more honorable, and of course more faithful to the Gospel.

So as we move into this month, into this season of Lent, and into this campaign, we will hear about things like sacrifice, discipline, gifts from God, the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, and tithing. I hope and pray these things touch your heart and strengthen your faith, so that indeed out of a sense of gratitude, faithfulness to our baptismal calling, and hope and excitement, we may respond with a sense of generosity for the mission and ministry of the Gospel by increasing our financial giving to our congregation.

Peace,

Pastor Jeff

Discipleship  
Worship  
Give Serve Pray  
Witness  
Study

## Walking with the Cross During Lent

After Ash Wednesday, at 10am on each Wednesday in Lent Pastor Lydia Villanueva will lead our Mid-Week Lenten experience. She will present an object related to the events that surrounded the crucifixion of our Lord, which we will add to our cross display, and we will have a conversation about the event. There will be a light soup lunch following.

### March 8th

Stone

Luke 22:39-46, Matt. 26:38-46

### March 15th

Purse and coins

Matt. 26:14-16, Mark 14:10, Luke 22:3-6

### March 22nd

Purple cloth

Luke 23:6-12

### March 29th

Nails and Dices

Matt. 27:35, John 19:23-24

### April 5th

Sponge

Matt. 27:33-34 wine and myrrh,

Luke 23:36-37 sour wine

Let's walk this journey together and grow in our knowledge of the crucifixion and our faith!

## Thank You !

### Men of Grace

The Men of Grace will resume meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. This means that in March the Men of Grace will meet at **9am at Sunset Grille on March 21st.**

I want to thank everyone at Grace for all of the prayers, calls & cards. Your kind words & well wishes have brought me much comfort while I have been at home. Thanks again for being such a blessing to me! -

Betty Daege

## Thank you from Miriam Glating

Miriam Glating called Grace to thank everyone for the thoughtful gifts and cards she has received. She is so appreciative!

## Military Personnel w/Grace connections...

-Heather Burson, granddaughter of Anne and Ralph Burson is stationed in Norfolk, NC for further training as a Lance Corporal.

-Kyle Wassen, grandson of

Connie Puls, is stationed in San Diego, CA as a quartermaster on a destroyer.

-Marc Calhoun, nephew of Wayne and Yvonne

Hauschild in the Air Force in Albuquerque, NM.

-Aldo Granados, 19 year old son of Pastor Lydia and member of Grace, completed Army Reserve Boot Camp.

## Prayer List

Linda Almond, Eloisa Villanueva, Marion Voltz, Stephanie Adamitis, Pastor Lou and Barbara Haseley, Kyle Metzger, Robert Durhan, Taryn Zimmerman, Duke Tieman, Galen & Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Hilda Taylor, Karen Bacher, Betsy Kitzman, Norma Melzer, William McLaughlin, Dianne Willian, Wayne Hauschild, George Clark, Phyllis Clark, Rosemarie Smith, Gary Neal, and Bishop Robert Schaefer.

## Young @ Heart

Reminder to all: The Young @ Hearts event on will be on Thursday, March 23 at the Early Bird Dinner Theatre...Please let Florence Bencivenga (773-2766) know by Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> if you are planning to attend. Please feel free to invite your friends and family. Be at the theatre by 10:30-11am

and you can pay the \$36. by cash or check...The show is, Ain't Retirement Grand, a musical....

Our April, Young @ Hearts will be at the Ivory Bistro... Remember how good it was last year!... same great deal. \$12.00 per person for Soup, Egg Roll, Chicken,

Beef and Pork dish with lo mein...Please give me exact amount in cash when you come on Thursday, April 13. It is Holy Thursday and I did check with Pastor and we are okay to have our luncheon on that day!! Service is that night.

- Florence Bencivenga

## Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle is meeting the 5th Thursday in March, which is the 30th. They use the study from Gather Magazine. If you want a copy, call Connie Puls at 727-446-4091. All women are invited. Coffee and dessert is provided!

## Work Day

Our next WORK DAY will be on Saturday, March 11th. We start at 8am and end at 12noon...Lunch will be provided. It is important that we have people to help us out with various tasks...we have lots of weeding, power washing, lots of painting too. We have inside jobs for those who like to work inside... Remember our congregational goal of 20 people participating!

## Bishop's Lenten Visitation

This year's learning focus will be led by Pr. Wally Meyer, and is titled "Small Catechism -- Into the Next 500 Years." At Lenten Visits this year we will review--in the concise form of the Catechism--the teachings that split the church 500 years ago, but which now call us to common worship. We will share our stories of this little book we love, and rejoice in the story of Christ's grace that lives and breathes in the Small Catechism. The closest visitation will be at Grace in Lakeland on March 11th starting at 9:45 am.

## United Faiths Walk of Peace Event

Our congregation will be participating in the United Faiths Walk of Peace Event in Dunedin, FL on Sunday, March 19th at 2pm. The Walk will begin and end at the same place near downtown Dunedin. Free parking will be available. People may leave or join at any point on the Walk. There will be gatherings along the route for reflections on peace from lead-

ers from Jewish, Muslim, Taoist Tai Chi, and Christian perspectives. This event will fulfill our congregational goal of participating in a Dunedin community event in 2017. For more information contact Pastor Jeff or the organizer, Pastor Becky Robbins-Penniman of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd at 727-733-4125 x206 or email her at revsbrp@gmail.com.

## Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet

Our next Community Breakfast and Lydia's Closet will be March 25th from 9:00 am to 10:30 am.

Grace Lutheran Church  
1812 N Highland Ave.  
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*God's Work. Our  
Hands.*

Grace Lutheran Church

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Rev. Jefferson Cox, Pastor

*ASH WEDNESDAY,  
March 1  
Service with Holy Com-  
munion and Imposition  
of Ashes - 10am  
Imposition of Ashes -  
6:30pm*