

Grace Notes

February 2011



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

With the month of February just around the corner the thoughts of many turn toward Valentine's Day, a season of love, boxes of chocolates, and dozens of roses. Personally, I've never been much of a romantic, just ask my wife, but over the years I've tried to mellow somewhat and seek to be a little more intentional when it comes to this area. Not that I've mastered it mind you, but I am working on it and enjoy the responses when I act out of character.

Why do I mention that you ask? Simply because Win Arn in his book entitled, *Who Cares About Love?*, explains that, "we live in a world and society that is starving for love! You need love. I need love. Your parents need love. Your children need love. Your friends need love. Your enemies need love. We all need love...and we all need to give love. We're in the midst of a love famine of epic proportions that is creating starving, malnourished people right next door.



Statistics indicate that 1:4 people suffer painful loneliness. The average marital life expectancy is just over 7 years – the same length of time Americans keep their automobiles. 50% of children in two-parent families will see their parents divorced by the time they reach 16. And Christians are not immune. Studies show that more people leave their churches today for a lack of love than any other reason. In fact, in a research study that quantified this love quotient among 39 Christian denominations with over 8,000 respondents in America revealed that the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod ranked next to last in its ability to love compared to other churches. Though grim, the statistics do not reveal the heartbreak, the tears, and the hurt that accompanies this love famine."

Which begs the question – can individuals and churches learn to love and truly share God's love with others? I believe the answer is a resounding – "YES, with the help of God!" But I also believe that such love is not natural and comes only

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Soups On!

There are containers of soup available for those in need in the kitchen freezer. Please sign the sign out sheet on the freezer door so we can keep track of how much soup we need. Please contact Joyce Larder at 882-0900 with any questions.

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through the grace and love of God made known in His Word through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As such this type of love must be taught, intentional, and demonstrated unconditionally in our lives. It is nothing less that the love God demonstrated for us in the intentional sending of Jesus Christ to live a perfect life, suffer an innocent death on the cross, and rose again from the dead for our salvation. His love was not only expressed in words, but more importantly, was intentionally put into action on our behalf. I think Paul says it

best in Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!"

As a result, I believe that has huge implications for us as God's people if we really want to become a growing church – love must become our number one priority! When it does Win Arn explains, "sinners repent and become responsible church members, we authenticate our message, contribute to the joy, health, and vitality of the individual members, attracts new families, reduces back-door

losses, operates more effectively, is obedient to the Great Commission, is the best hope for changing our community, nation, and the world." Is it possible there are some things in our church that are actually keeping us from loving? Love is costly. It sometimes calls for us to give up of ourselves, to sacrifice, and to commit ourselves to love – to God's way of love – a love oases that feeds the love famine!

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Blair Clark

A Special Word of Thanks

I just wanted to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to God for you, the members and friends of Grace Lutheran Church and School, who so graciously filled our family's life with many wonderful cards, treats, and special gifts this past Christmas! We truly appreciated your generosity and care in helping us to be a part of this ministry

that we share together as God's people in this place. From our family to yours we pray the Lord's richest blessings upon you, your families, and our Grace congregation as we begin this New Year!

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Blair, Kimberley, Jason, Ashley,
and Austin Clark

Family Assistance Fund

Please prayerfully consider making periodic contributions to the Family Assistance Fund (FAF). The FAF is Grace's only means to provide immediate financial assistance to meet critical needs of both members and those who come to us from outside the Grace family.

Many in our Grace family suffer critical hardships due to unemployment, poor health, and various other reasons, and the FAF is our way of expressing God's grace in these cases. If you have a critical need for which the Grace FAF can help, please contact the church office.



Generations In Faith Together (GIFT)

January was awesome! We had a great time reading, sharing, talking, and praying together with our families. We finished Theme #5 of the Songs of Israel Theme Set. We learned our newest musical verse (Psalm 25:4-7) with sign language and heard the story “The Rich Fool”. Thank you again to Heather Roberts and Deborah Melton for the story and craft! Now, onto February and Theme #6! If you haven’t come to GIFT yet, now is a great time to check it out!

GIFT: Families with children 5th grade and younger come together on Wednesday evenings during the school year to hear Bible Stories, learn key Scriptures using songs and sign language, and create art to share. It’s a wonderful, fun way to spend time with your family, learn, and have fun all at the same time! Your children will love it and you will too! So, come join us on Wednesdays 6—7:30 PM! For more information contact Heather Roberts (roberts2006@bellsouth.net) or John Mays (jbmays96@yahoo.com).

Kids Praise Team: GIFT children learn to sing and play instruments. We do traditional hymns, praise songs, Bible songs, and other fun music. The kids perform periodically for the congregation. It really is A LOT of fun! Practice is Wednesday evenings during GIFT, which starts at 6PM. For more information please contact John or Emily Willis (430-9537 or mail2ew@gmail.com)

The GIFT Center is located in the Annex across from the Assembly Room and the School Library.

What would it be worth to you to have a teenager some day who won't go to sleep without talking to you about their day? Praying with you? Blessing you? Would it be worth five minutes? Tonight? Every night?"



It's Never Too Late To Join In One Of Our Bible Classes

And we have some great classes! On Sunday morning we have:

- **Exploring Grace** (meeting in the School Library)
- **The Truth Project** (meeting in the Annex Assembly Room)
- **Emotionally Healthy Spirituality** (meeting in the 8th grade classroom)
- **“Life Light” study of Romans** (meeting in the 6th grade classroom)
- **The Bible in 90 Days** (meeting in the 7th grade classroom)
- **Leadership IS for Everyone** (meeting in the 5th grade classroom)
- **College and Career class** (meeting at Panera Bread Co.)
- **High School Class** (meeting in the Youth Room)

We also have weekday classes on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Our Dave Ramsey class in meeting on Tuesday evenings in the church library. All the classes are listed on our website, as well as on the Parish Education bulletin boards at the church. Check them out! And JOIN IN!

The Principal's Corner

There is growing potential at Grace for next year. We are moving forward with an aggressive marketing campaign aimed at getting the word out on what makes Grace a premier school of choice. Open Houses will take place every Tuesday, during the month of February from 9am-2pm. Also, we will be participating in a parade of schools on Sunday, March 6th from 1-4pm and again on Monday night, March 7th from 6-7:30pm. 11,000 mailers will be going out about the event, along with ads on the radio, internet and television. Plus, we will be posted on the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce e-newsletter, Redstone Arsenal information to new coming families in the area, and be the premier school posted on all three websites of channel 48 WAFF's what's in the Huntsville area north, south and west with our very own video and voice over highlighting the benefits of Grace Lutheran School. We are currently preparing our new packet of information highlighting the educational strength of Grace, the many unique clubs, and electives we have to offer, and the special family attention each individual receives. There is none like Grace. A new testimonial DVD of Grace will also be

accompanying the new packets of information detailing how Grace is a small school with a BIG heart, making a difference in the lives of future Christian leaders since 1963. As evident from many of our Alumni coming out to pay their respects to one of our retiring teachers some 10 years after graduating from Grace, we are a mission that is having an impact, affecting lives, and profoundly making a difference.

It takes a village to raise a family, and we cannot continue to fulfill our mission without your help. We will have brochures on hand in the narthex, church office, and school office to take home and give to neighbors, friends, and anyone you know or see who has school age children in the area, who might have an interest in our school. Together, we can bring new families to Christ. Every empty seat is a missed opportunity to teach a child about Christ. We are not just educating for the world of tomorrow, we are helping to build eternity one child at a time.

We are also asking for you to keep in mind our annual fund which is geared to helping sponsor children who need tuition assistance. This helps families who would like to send



Matthew 4:19

their child to Grace but who just can't afford the full tuition price. During this economic situation our country faces, it places even more pressures on families who are just making ends meet. No child should be denied the opportunity to here the life saving message of Christ crucified because they just simply could not afford to attend. Every dollar raised is tax deductible. Together, we can help raise a child in the way they should go. By allowing them the opportunity to gain the firm foundation in Christ that will last them a lifetime. Stop by, or call the office for more details.

Together, we can do all things for Christ who strengthens us. In this new year may we continue to Know Jesus and each other, Grow to be like Him in all we do, and Sow His word in love and deed through the hands and feet of our ministry here at Grace.

Serving His Kingdom,
Joshua Swartz
Principal



Ladies of Grace

Are you using *goodsearch.com*?

Using *goodsearch.com* as your search engine and designating Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) as your charity will raise approximately one cent for LWML for each search. You can set your home page to *goodsearch.com* or list it among your favorites. Either way will provide easy access when you want to do an internet search.

The donation comes from a portion of advertiser dollars earned (none of your money) as a result of your search which is then passed along to LWML.

Over \$70.00 has already been collected for LWML in 2011 from *goodsearch.com*, and almost \$13,500.00 since its inception.

Will you be using *goodsearch.com*? We hope you do.

Find out more by going to *goodsearch.com* and clicking on “How It Works.”



Spiritual Care of the Abused

"How to Help and Support Victims of Child Abuse and Family Violence" will be presented by the Huntsville Assoc. for Pastoral Care’s School of Applied Ministry on Sat., Jan. 29, 9:00 am to Noon, at Messiah Lutheran Church, 7740 Hwy. 72W, Madison. Presenters: Debra Trumbull, author; Judy

Guerry of Crisis Services of No. Ala.; and the Rev. Kerry Holder Joffrien, Interfaith Mission Service. For more information or to register, email or phone the Rev. Carl Malm, malmcarl@hotmail.com, 256 883-6539.

Do You Know Who Your Elder Is?

The Grace “Board of Elders” cares for the spiritual welfare of the entire Grace family. All members have an assigned Elder. Please feel free to contact your Elder, or any Elder, for any prayer support as you desire. If you do not know who is assigned as

your Elder, please contact the church office or Kenny Ols, Head Elder. Remember, an Elder is always available for you at the Alter immediately following each of our worship services.



Do you see someone in need in our congregation or in our community? Contact Advocate, Karen Crout, (256) 725-2874, for more information about a Thrivent funded project.

Thrivent members and others will be helping make repairs to Bev McCort's home through a Thrivent funded project within the next few weeks. Ask project chair Scott Miller how you can help!

If you are a Thrivent member, you may be eligible to direct *Thrivent* to donate allocated monies to the Church, School or other Lutheran ministries on your behalf. Be sure to go on line at thrivent.com; click on *Thrivent Choice* to direct your dollars. The dead line has been extended to March 31.

The North Alabama Chapter has been selected for the fifth year to be a great outreach project for us at Grace and other area Lutheran Churches through our Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity program. Thrivent provides 65% of the grant monies to build a home for someone currently living in substandard housing. Larry Woellhart serves as our Thrivent Builds Champion. Contact Larry. And, *thank you*, Debbie Linde, for all that you have done to make the Thrivent Builds project such a huge success. Work on the home will begin in late February to early March. Please give at least one day of your time to work on the Thrivent Builds home. You will be blessed!

Grace Family Christmas Offering Exceeds All Expectation!

The members of Grace Lutheran Church and School wanted to do something different to make this Christmas the world changing event it was intended to be and prayerfully considered how we could make a tangible difference in the lives of people throughout their local community and the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a result, we became part of a conspiracy – “The Advent Conspiracy” – a movement focused on replacing the consumption mentality that has crowded its way into the season with a renewed focus on Christ and living out the Christian faith. As part of our celebrations, we were challenged to consider giving one less Christmas gift for each member of our family and donate the money that would have been spent to the first-ever Grace Family Christmas Offering.

The Grace Family Christmas Offering sought to significantly benefit both a local and international

mission organization. The beneficiaries included the local St. Mark's Lutheran Church Food Pantry in Huntsville with a goal of \$1,000.00 for restocking their shelves after the Christmas rush, and a \$4,000.00 goal for the LCMS World Relief and Human Care: Building Homes and Hope in Haiti for sponsoring a two-bedroom home.

God's grace was certainly at work among us for making this Christmas a world-changing event. The response of God's people was just phenomenal and doubled our human expectations for which we praise and thank God! We have received offerings in excess of \$10,000.00 with some \$4,000.00 designated for the Food Pantry and a second-level international sponsorship of \$6,000.00 for a one-bedroom home with a bath and kitchen in Haiti through LCMS World Relief. Some members even commented on how exciting it would be for a Mission Team from

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Foster Community Update

LWML / LOG Grant

Some Sunday during the month of February LOG will be presenting a check to Iglesia de la Comunidad to go towards playground equipment. Thank you LOG for considering the Foster Community as a worthy cause. This is another way Grace is **Making a Difference** in the lives of Huntsville community. THANKS!

English Classes

English classes started Thursday, January 13, 2011 because they got snowed out Tuesday, January 11. If you can assist, get in touch with Jack Renfro (256-652-6073). We are **Making a Difference** in the quality of their lives by teaching them English. There is even some opportunity to share the love of Jesus and bring new members to Iglesia.

*The members of Iglesia de la Comunidad would like to thank Grace for **Making a Difference** in their lives.*

Grace Lutheran School Endowment Fund

This the second of a series of articles on Charitable Giving presented by the

Grace Lutheran School Endowment Fund Committee...Jim Baumann, chairperson

Can I Leave My Home to Charity and Continue to Live in it During My Lifetime?

Yes. Making a gift of a remainder interest in a personal

residence vacation home or farm can provide a donor with income tax benefits from the newly created charitable gift without affecting his or her current income or standard of living.

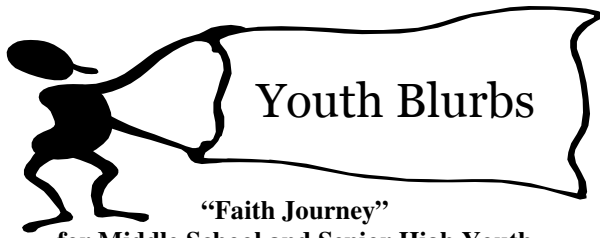
In this arrangement, a donor deeds his or her personal residence, vacation home or farm to charity but, in the deed, reserves a life estate in the property. At the time that the gift is made, the donor is entitled

to a charitable income tax deduction for the present value of the charity's remainder interest in the property. During his or her lifetime, the donor continues to enjoy the full use and possession of the property. This includes paying taxes on the property as well as other maintenance cost. Up the death of the donor, the charity takes possession of the property without a probate proceeding.

Grace Family Christmas Offering continued...

Grace to hand-deliver the check in Haiti and personally build the house in witnessing God's love! Given the initial response – nothing is out of the question when God's involved in this conspiracy

A special word of thanks and appreciation to all of those who so graciously contributed to the Grace Family Christmas Offering and helped to make it such a success. Through your generosity, lives will be touched both locally and internationally with the grace and love of Jesus Christ!



**"Faith Journey"
for Middle School and Senior High Youth
Wednesday Nights
6:00-7:30 p.m., in the Annex
(Wed. Night Supper, 5:15-5:45 p.m.)**

- Jan. 26 DREAM TEAM & 8th Grade with Pastor
- Feb. 2 Learning Night: God the Spirit
- Feb. 9 Learning Night: Sacraments
- Feb. 16 Learning Night: Church & Saints
- Feb. 23 SERVANT EVENT #4
- Mar. 2 DREAM TEAM & 8th Grade with Pastor
- Mar. 9 QUIZ BOWL! & Ash Wed. Service

Each Wednesday night, Faith Journey kicks off with: a guest-speaker with a faith story, a drama by some of our high school youth, a basics-of-the-faith Bible lesson using hands-on visuals, and small-group time for parents and youth to share some "faith talk" on what it means, and a special "Youth Night" for our 8th-12th Grade Youth! Faith Journey is open to any family, (with a 6-12th Grader,) who wants to grow in their faith in God and have an awful lot of fun in the process!

**SUPER SATURDAY NIGHT !
For Middle School & Senior Youth, Grades 6-12+**

- Saturday, Jan. 22 & Feb. 12; 7:00-9:30 p.m.**
In the Family Life Center Gym & Youth Center !!!
***FREETIME IN THE YOUTH CENTER!**
*Open gym, basketball, games, friendship, food, fun!
*Christian Growth & Prayer
*Video games, foosball, pool, Rock Band, Wii!
*Everyone in Grades 6-12+ is invited to come and bring friends!
*Please bring brownies, cookies, or a snack to share.

RECENT YOUTH SERVANT EVENTS

Thank you to 9 youth & adults who did 27 hours of work on a snow day, Jan. 12:
*Un-decorating and storing the FLC Christmas Tree
*Painting the entire FLC Cafeteria interior

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR:
ANNUAL SENIOR YOUTH SKI RETREAT
at WOLF RIDGE, NC
Jan. 14-17, 2011**

May God bless our Senior Youth and parents as they travel next month to the Ski Retreat; may they have a safe and enjoyable growing experience.

**SENIOR YOUTH - SUB SANDWICH MAKING
Sat., Feb. 5, 6:00 p.m.
in the FLC Cafeteria.**

Both youth and parents are needed to help assemble sandwiches.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:
Confirmation Sunday is May 1, 2011**

**Recognizing High School, College,
& Advanced Degree Graduates!
Coming May 2011 !**

Please see Kevin Brandon if someone in your family is graduating from high school, college or with an advanced degree!

* * * * *

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR YOUNG ADULTS:
as they attend their first Ski Trip** to Wolf Ridge, North Carolina, Jan. 21-24, 2011. May God bless them with safety and a great weekend together.

Those Serving in the Month of February

8:00 AM

Elders

Dexter McClure

Ushers

Charles Bradburn

Shane Jenks

Greeters

Feb 6 Bill & Sandy Robinson

Feb 13 Kay Davis

Feb 20 Steve & Nancy Rice

Feb 27 Phyllis Sierk

Sound & Video Operators

Feb 6 Tommy Presley

Feb 13 Harvey Lange

Feb 20 Bill McFerrin

Feb 27 David Zecher

Acolytes

Feb 6 Julianna & Justin Speck

Feb 13 Kristin Thoms, Zachary Burhans

Feb 20 Sophie Thorsen, Jeremiah Burhans

Feb 27 Julianna & Justin Speck

10:45 PM

Wes McElveen

Cameron Muelling

Michael Huhlein

Jackie Huhlein

Doug & Susan Keegan

Jason & Jessica Adams

Matt & Billie Hurst

Wes & Essie McElveen

Anthony Howard, Jim Hartmann

John Mays, Kathryn Bradshaw

Ken Ols, Bob Drensek

Bob McCutcheon, Paul Drensek

Emma, Josh & Sarah Miller

Christopher Drensek, CJ Creel

Helen Steeve, John Bloom

Brooke Boirun, Maddie Denis



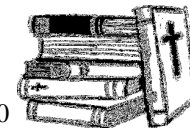
Saints Alive February Events

On February 2nd we will welcome author Austin Boyd who will speak to us about, "Understanding Islam: Equipping the Saints". Lunch location will be at Valley Hill Country Club and will include guitar serenades by our own Larry Woellhart. Watch the sign up board and bulletin for details. On February 16th the group will travel to the new site of the Downtown Rescue Mission for a tour of its new facility. Lunch will follow. Once again do plan to join us and watch the sign up board for details. If you have questions contact Ron Schmitz or Ruth Jurenko



Christian Book Club Meeting

The Book Club will be meeting the 2nd Wednesday of February (February 9th), at 10:00 AM to discuss *The Iman's Daughter*, by Hannah Shah. If you have any questions, please contact Millie Sallo. We will go to lunch afterwards for those who attend.



**Christian
Book Club**



3321 S. Memorial Parkway
Huntsville, AL 35801

Church Phone: 256-881-0552
School Phone: 256-881-0553
Fax: 256-881-0563
glc@gracelutheran-hsv.org

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Leaders for Liberty

Nurture Liberty!

Biblical worldview gives us our freedom!

February 18-19, 2011

at BB&T, 6th floor, 305 Church Street

Speakers: 1. Stephen McDowell, Providence Foundation, (www.providencefountdation.com) "Founding Biblical Principles for Liberty",
2. Darcie Gill, Voice of the Martyrs, "Restricted Liberties in Closed Countries",
3. Major General Thomas Moore, US Marine Corps, in Iraq as that democratic government was being formed, "Cost of Freedom", and
4. Kitty Werthmann, president of South Dakota's Eagle Forum who lived in Austria when Hitler came to power, "Parallels in Austria and Our Nation Today".

Please visit the website for more information.
Website: www.LeadersforLiberty.com

Facebook address:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Leaders-for-liberty/180321788664879>

Super Bowl Submarine Sandwiches



**Available Sunday,
February 6, 2011**

After Both Services and Sunday School
Fresh Bakery Bread
Lean Ham, Lean Turkey, Salami, Cheeses
Crisp Lettuce
Pickle Slices, Black Olives, Peppers
Your \$10 donation helps our High School Youth
to finance their trips and retreats!

