

Light of Grace

A monthly publication of:

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1120 17th street South, Moorhead, MN 56560-5752

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Vol. 34, No. 2

February 1, 2023

Adult Sunday School: 9:00 AM

Sunday Worship: 10:00 AM

Children's Sunday School 10:15 AM

GREETINGS

Reality of the Wilderness

In our sermon series about Moses we took some time to talk about lessons from the wilderness. It's easy for us now to look back at the Israelites and think, 'why did they complain so much, don't they trust God?'. I confess that I can be one of those people at times, yet when I find myself in the midst of my own wilderness I fall into those same patterns. We can talk about the formative moments and lessons experienced in the desert until we're blue in the face, but it's also important for us to recognize the realities of the wilderness.

Specifically for the Israelites, there was no food or water and they did have to put trust in God to provide from nothing. I jokingly talked about Moses Door Dashing some food to them, and while that's a funny thought anecdote, it's a brutal reality for many in our community. In 2020, it was estimated that 7.7% of Moorhead experience food insecurity (Feeding America), and not knowing where their next meal would be coming from, with some statistics now showing that has increased 15-20%. Many of those folks live within walking distance of Grace United Methodist Church, literally our neighbors. Our continued support of the Emergency Food Pantry through donations of food, baby items, and cash are one way we can continue to do our part to help alleviate that burden for others.

As we move closer to Lent, I'm also reminded of Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. The reality of the wilderness is temptation in moments of desperation and need. Each one of us will have a different wilderness experience, even if there are some similarities. Where some may be dealing with food insecurity, others may be battling depression, others facing unstable financial situations, conflicted or abusive relationships, health concerns, or an all out wrestling with faith and identity. Because our experiences are so different, our temptations will be distinct as well.

While I don't know what your temptations are, I know that the temptations can be just as difficult to face as the trial itself. This is where a trusted group of people in life can become a lifeline. We were never meant to face hard-



ships on our own, as Jethro reminds Moses, "The task is too heavy for you, you cannot do it alone." (Exodus 18:18b). This is not a commentary of Moses' abilities, but a reminder of the strength in community. When faced with trials and temptations, we are likely to get tired and worn down. When you are, lean on one another. Lean on one another in worship and fellowship on Sunday mornings, in Bible study or small group studies, groups like the quilters or donut teams, phone calls and encouragements, or start a new group (we will help facilitate any new group you want to get started)!

Another reality of the wilderness that becomes challenging to deal with: we have no clue how long it will last. There certainly are thrilling elements of the wilderness, new beginnings, no particular paths we've trudged a million times before, and unexpected adventures. All of those can quickly turn from excitement to despair when unsure how or when it will all end. Think of it like a mirror maze. It's fun right away, but you run into glass too many times and it can be frustrating that there's no clear end in sight. To that idea, I could preach to you all I want about Paul's words of endurance producing character, which produces hope, which is certainly encouraging and uplifting. But I also want to recognize just how hard it can be to remember that. It doesn't make the struggle disappear, and at times it can feel like a band aid over a bullet wound. So how willing are we to live in that tension? Our past can be full of disappointment AND we remember God was faithful. Things can be challenging in the moment AND we see that God is with us now. The future can be uncertain AND we know God has already gone ahead of us. The beauty of the wilderness is that it doesn't have to be clean and pretty. It is probably the most accurate depiction of the human experience: Life is hard sometimes, we don't have to face it alone, and God is faithful through and through. May we continue to journey in the dust of the wilderness, and remember it is out of that dust that God creates life. Amen.

Pastor Taylor



PRAYER LIST AT Care Facilities

Bonnie Wagner (Fergus Falls)
 Pat Walter (St. Catherine S)
 Don Walter (Pioneer House)
 Jim Jameson (River Pointe)
 Will Wehrman (Eventide)

PRAYER LIST hospitalized or home

Carol Devine Lynette Andel
 Luann Larson Linda Gibson
 John Fraundorfer Naomi Grow



Ministry TEAM Program. A Way of Being the Church at GUMC! The TEAM's mission is to provide ushers, greeters, opening welcome and readers to our congregation. TEAM #2 (Feb/Aug).

701-630-4343—R. & C. Abel
 701-261-9009—M. Akin
 218-236-0183—J. Anderson
 218-790-9791—L. Dick
 503-568-3285—M. & B. Eisen
 218-233-6915—J. & K. Enkers
 701-361-7571—B. & Z. Hanna
 218-422-6586—T. & K. Johnson
 218-236-7366—S. Mohr
 218-236-5520—W. & M. Port
 218-498-2312—S. Simmons
 701-866-6884—D. Stead
 701-200-4286—D. & W. Walseth
 218-329-9720—M. Wright



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH February Birthdays

- 1—J. Denny
- 2—L. Larson
- 4—R. Lofgren
- 5—C. Welsh
- 8—K. Baker
L. Gedrose
- 12—L. Romanyshyn
- 13—E. Brown
- 15— J. Anderson
- 16—G. Chandler
- 17—J. Miller
K. Beck
- 19—F. Hamm
- 20—L. Denny
B. Burkhardt
E. Fraundorfer
- 22—H. Hamm
R. Murray



DONUTS

Homemade Buttermilk Donuts are being made on February 8th and 22nd and will be available for \$10.00 a dozen. To place an order for donuts call the office, 233-1857, use the sign up sheet on the table in the Narthex, or on the website:

www.graceumcmoorhead.org/donuts.

BY THE NUMBERS

Average Worship Attendance:

	In-Person	Online	Total
January	66	35	101
2022	61	39	100

Financials as of December 31, 2022

93% of yearly budget funded, 101% of yearly budget expended.

This was a great way to end the year! While we did come up a little short on an income to expense ratio, we had enough in reserves to help close out the year well.

Thank you for your continued faithfulness and generosity as we move into the new year. Our goal will be to keep operating costs as low as we can, fund vital ministries, and cultivate generosity in a number of ways including financially.

Year-End Contribution Statements

Contribution statements for 2022 were mailed out the middle of January. Please review your statement and call the office for any changes and/or corrections that need to be made

WORSHIP AT GRACE

10:00 A.M.

WORSHIP SERVICES are livestreamed on Facebook and on the website: graceumcmoorhead.org

Offerings may be mailed to Grace UMC, 1120 17th Street South, Moorhead, MN 56560

Online giving available through Givelify! Go to graceumcmoorhead.org/give and click the button to make your one time or recurring gift.



I'M JUST A...STAYING POSITIVE

Del Larson, CLM

I have been a caregiver for a 96 year-old woman for over a year, as she has no family within 1500 miles. Over Christmas she was hospitalized, and I visited her nearly every day. I am listed on her My Chart so that I can share information with family. Talking with her nurse about the diagnosis, the nurse said she was "just a nurse" and couldn't explain much. I told her you are not "just a nurse." You are a highly qualified, important part of this woman's care team. I believe and trust you.

We have all probably heard, or even said ourselves, "I'm just a..." I'm just a teacher; I'm just a mechanic; I'm just a high school graduate; I'm just a stay-at-home-parent; or I'm just a manager. Whatever the ending, we are more than just a "just a".

You are a unique, special person. A one-of-a-kind person created by God. Each of us has a purpose in life that will benefit other people. We are designed to make an impact, and to help others grow. We are weaved together as a family, neighbors, and community. Unfortunately, there are some who are stuck on being one of those "just" people. I'm just a nobody. I'm just a criminal. I'm just a drug addict. I'm just a lost soul.

God wants us happy and satisfied. He does not want us to act like we have no friends in the world, or everything is against us. God is always offering us opportunities to make progress and find joy. The only time God might trip you up is when you get the attitude that your success is only because of you and your efforts. When we think we are "hot stuff," sooner or later we will be cooled off. When we think that we are the best, God will remind us that He is in control. If this happens, watch out because you will fall, and fall hard. Hopefully, we regain our humility and straighten out our priorities by putting God first. I can't tell you the number of times that God has led me to bright opportunities, that not only advanced my career, but helped me gain more respect in my different roles. Losing my teaching job in 1981, when 150 teachers were cut during a financial crisis in Moorhead is a great example. God immediately opened a new door in Milbank, SD, as I became a manager of a hardware store. Even though interest rates were high, we were very successful. I was the Kerosene King of Milbank. Probably because I smelled like kerosene after pumping as much as 50 gallons of kerosene a day. Going into the fall of my third year, I was having coffee with my minister. I told him how much I enjoyed teaching Sunday school. It helped me fill a void I missed with kids. The very next day, Moorhead Schools called me and asked me to come back as the classrooms were too crowded. We were back in Moorhead by the middle of October and I was teach-

ing sixth grade. This is just one example of how God has worked in my life. There are many more. I'm sure you can remember some of those God moments. Today we live in a world of so much anger and hate. Our only hope is that our positivity will turn the course, and bring us back to the love of Jesus Christ. How many times have you remained silent when someone puts you down? How many times did you not put up your hand to share because you weren't not certain? Have you every been reluctant to ask for a raise, or to be promoted? Did you ever regret not asking someone for a date because you weren't certain you were good enough? We all have probably faced those moments of uncertainty, when we know what we want, but are afraid of being rejected or failing. The sooner we realize that God is in control and guiding us to a bright and wonderful future, the sooner we can live our dreams and destiny. This will help us realize how important we are by loving and serving God. Stay positive and live a life of love. God wants you to be successful and will open doors, and give you opportunities to continue your journey. Amen. P.S. How did you do with a God driven greeting, rather than saying happy new year?

ASH WEDNESDAY



Join us for worship on February 22 as we begin the season of Lent. There will be several opportunities for you to choose from to receive an ash that day. There will be a prayer service at 12 noon, as well as a service at 6pm. If you are unable to join us for worship and would like someone to come to your home or residence for an ash, please contact the church office to schedule a time. Please call by February 20th to get signed up.

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT



We are once again having soup suppers on Wednesdays starting on February 22. All meals are 'pay as you are blessed', and open for all! Meals will be served from 5-6pm, followed by a 30 minute worship service with song, prayer, and a meditation based on material from the book *Toward the Cross* by Taylor W. Mills.

LENT STUDY



Are you looking for additional devotional and study material for Lent? Sign up to get a copy of the book *Toward the Cross* by Taylor W. Mills. Not only will this material be used for our Wednesday night services, but there will also be digital materials available to follow along.

Grace United Methodist

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:00 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries 7:30 pm Confirmation	2 9:00 am Bulletin Deadline	3	4
5 9:00 am Adult Sunday School 10:00 am Worship w/Communion 10:15 am Children's Sunday School 12:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries	6 1:00 pm Maybe Quilting	7 7:00 pm AA	8 6:00 am Donut making 6:00 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries 7:30 pm Confirmation	9 9:00 am Bulletin Deadline	10	11
12 9am Adult Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Children's Sunday School 11:00 am Youth Sub Fundraiser pick up 12:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries	13 1:00 pm Maybe Quilting	14 7:00 pm AA	15 6:00 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries	16 9:00 am Bulletin Deadline	17	18
19 9am Adult Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Children's Sunday School 12:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries	20 1:00 pm Maybe Quilting 6:30 pm Vision and Operations and Resources	21 7:00 pm AA	22 6:00 am Donut making 12:00 pm Ash Wednesday Prayer Service 5:00 pm Soup Supper 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries	23 9:00 am Bulletin Deadline	24	25
26 9am Adult Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Children's Sunday School 12:00 pm Latter Rain Ministries	27 1:00 pm Maybe Quilting	28 7:00 pm AA				

Date	Psalms	OT	Epistle	Gospel
Feb 1	am: 56, 57, 58, pm: 64, 65	Isa 51:17-23	Gal 4:1-11	Mark 7:24-37
Feb 2	am: 61, 62, pm: 68	Isa 52:1-12	Gal 4:12-20	Mark 8:1-10
Feb 3	am: 72, pm: 119:73-96	Isa 54	Gal 4:21-31	Mark 8:11-26
Feb 4	am: 70, 71, pm: 74	Isa 55:1-13	Gal 5:1-15	Mark 8:27-9:1
Feb 5	am: 69, pm: 73	Isa 56:1-8	Gal 5:16-24	Mark 9:2-13
Feb 6	am: 75, 76, pm: 23, 27	Isa 57:3-13	Gal 5:25-6:10	Mark 9:14-29
Feb 7	am: 93, 96, pm: 34	Isa 57:14-21	Heb 12:1-6	John 7:37-46
Feb 8	am: 80, pm: 77, 79	Isa 58:1-12	Gal 6:11-18	Mark 9:30-41
Feb 9	am: 78:1-39, pm: 78:40-72	Isa 59:1-15a	2 Tim 1:1-14	Mark 9:42-50
Feb 10	am: 119:97-120, pm: 81, 82	Isa 59:15b-21	2 Tim 1:15-2:13	Mark 10:1-16
Feb 11	am: 146, 147, pm: 83, 85, 86	Isa 60:1-17	2 Tim 2:14-26	Mark 10:17-31
Feb 12	am: 88, pm: 91, 92	Isa 61:1-9	2 Tim 3:1-17	Mark 10:32-45
Feb 13	am: 87, 90, pm: 136	Isa 61:10-62:5	2 Tim 4:1-8	Mark 10:46-52
Feb 14	am: 148, 149, 150, pm: 114, 115	Deut 6:1-9	Heb 12:18-29	John 12:24-32
Feb 15	am: 25, pm: 9, 15	Deut 6:10-15	Heb 1:1-14	John 1:1-18
Feb 16	am: 26, 28, pm: 36, 39	Deut 6:16-25	Heb 2:1-10	John 1:19-28
Feb 17	am: 95, 32, 143, pm: 102, 130	John 3:1-4:11	Heb 12:1-14	Luke 18:9-14
Feb 18	am: 37:1-18, pm: 37:19-42	Deut 7:6-11	Titus 1:1-16	John 1:29-34
Feb 19	am: 95, 31, pm: 35	Deut 7:12-16	Titus 2:1-15	John 1:35-42
Feb 20	am: 30, 32, pm: 42, 43	Deut 7:17-26	Titus 3:1-15	John 1:43-51
Feb 21	am: 63, 98, pm: 103	Deut 8:1-10	1 Cor 1:17-31	Mark 2:18-22
Feb 22	am: 41, 52, pm: 44	Deut 8:11-18	Heb 2:11-18	John 2:1-12
Feb 23	am: 45, pm: 47, 48	Deut 9:4-12	Heb 3:1-11	John 2:13-22
Feb 24	am: 119:49-72, pm: 49, 53	Deut 9:13-21	Heb 3:12-19	John 2:23-3:15
Feb 25	am: 50, 59, 60, pm: 19, 46	Deut 9:23-10:5	Heb 4:1-10	John 3:16-21
Feb 26	am: 40, 54, pm: 51	Deut 10:12-22	Heb 4:11-16	John 3:22-36
Feb 27	am: 55, pm: 138, 139	Deut 11:18-28	Heb 5:1-10	John 4:1-26
Feb 28	am: 24, 29, pm: 8, 84	Jere 1:1-10	1 Cor 3:11-23	Mark 3:31-4:9

SERMON SERIES

The Story of Moses

February 5: The Ten Commandments

February 12: The Covenant Continues

February 19: Passing It On

This series will look at the life of Moses using various scriptures from Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Not only will we learn more about a historical figure of the Bible, but hopefully we will learn something about ourselves and obedience to God, even when it's difficult.

YOUTH SUB SANDWICH FUNDRAISER



Help Grace Youth raise funds for their mission trip to Omaha, NE this summer! For just \$10 on Super Bowl Sunday our youth will make you a sub, chips, and a cookie for gameday. Order forms are available at the Connection Center at church or online at graceumcmoorhead.org/youth, and needed back by noon on February 10. Payment will be due at pick up anytime from 11am-1p on February 12th. Thanks for supporting Grace Youth missions!



NEW LIFE CNETER

Praises:

- * Genesis Recovery Program now has 14 men
- * 24 additional beds arrived bringing our emergency shelter capacity to 114

Updates:

Shelter: 2022 Impact

- * 105 men sheltered nightly on average
- * 51 guests moved into housing
- * 65,862 community meals served.

AGNUS DEI



Agnus Dei is a Latin term meaning Lamb of God. It represents the risen Christ who triumphs over death. In John 1:19, John the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." The lamb carries a white resurrection banner with a cross of red. The banner, representing the body of Christ, is attached to a cruciform staff, representing the cross on which Christ died.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Grace United Methodist Church
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Moorhead, MN 56560

