

# Grace Notes

Published Monthly



Grace Lutheran Church  
745 S. Ingraham Avenue  
Lakeland, Florida 33801

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Grace Lutheran Church is to  
Share God's Love  
With each other, our community, and the world.



## Pastor's Column

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Jeremiah 29.11*

I had already decided that this verse would be my theme for 2012 when the music search committee found out that we didn't have as many candidates as we'd thought. The next day, I was having lunch with other Lakeland clergywomen and mentioned that we are in a search process. Just as we finished our meeting, one woman said she knew an excellent keyboard player who mentioned that he'd love to play for a church. I handed her my card, and he called me that afternoon. Upon meeting Michael and then introducing him to the search committee, we all were convinced that he was not only a good fit for Grace but also a gift from God. Brenda Hornickle reminded us that even in the midst of discouraging situations, God is there all along. God has plans for Grace that give us a future with hope.

In that same week, I received a letter from a real estate broker in Lakeland. It was a kind of "cold call" letting us know that an unnamed party is interested in purchasing all of our property on Ingraham Avenue. There was an

offer to appraise our property at no cost to the church. Any possible offers on our property would depend on the appraisal. I consulted a key congregational leader, as well as Bishop Benoway, and it was agreed that we had nothing to lose by meeting with the broker and getting the appraisal. The issue was brought to the Council on January 17, and they agreed. Then we brought it before the congregation at the January 22 Annual Meeting. The voting members chose to go ahead with the appraisal. As of this writing, an appraiser has been contacted, but it may be mid-February before it is done.

If the appraisal is acceptable, this is the process we will follow:

1. A congregational meeting will be called to discuss if we want to go any further.
2. If we decide to test the waters, the property would be assessed.
3. If that is acceptable to both parties, the potential buyer would make an offer.
4. The congregation meets again. Depending on the offer, a pre-contract would be drawn up, with the outcome dependent on inspections, including soil and water.

(continued on page 3)

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5. Another congregational meeting. Should we decide to sell, the closing would take place 30 days after inspections.
6. The Florida-Bahamas Synod and the ELCA Churchwide authorities would need to approve a place to relocate. Relocation may be to an existing property and building or to an undeveloped property with intentions to build.
7. Possession would not be concurrent with closing. We can stay in our property until we have found an acceptable place to relocate, within reasonable limits.

I love surprises, but the arrival of the broker's letter stunned me. When I brought it to the Council and congregation, many of you responded in the same way. Let me assure you that moving Grace is not my idea, nor had it ever entered my mind. However, seeing how God works by giving us challenges we never asked for nor expected, it was my prayerful decision to follow up on the letter. You never know what God has in mind for us. Above all, I strongly believe that if this is part of God's gift of "a future with hope," then everything will work out.

If not, then we have our answer that 745 South Ingraham is where our mission lies.

There are to be no secrets in the workings of the church. Questions are welcome and expected, and straight answers will be given. Please do not make assumptions about the intent of Grace's leadership; we simply want to see if God is leading us in that direction. And whatever direction we take, take comfort in the words of Jeremiah, "*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.*"

Your humble and faithful servant ~  
*Pastor Carol A. Solovitz*

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### ***Grace Notes On-Line: Update***

In the January *Grace Notes*, we reported that the Grace newsletter would be delivered electronically beginning with the February issue. Because more research and footwork needs to be done before this step, you now hold a paper copy in your hand. A test sample will be chosen to receive the February issue electronically; when you receive it, please let Sara in church office know by calling 686-5585 or by e-mail [saraandersonglc@gmail.com](mailto:saraandersonglc@gmail.com)

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***Looking Ahead:***

Please think and pray about participation in these upcoming activities:

- January 30 - February 3 – Pastor’s Continuing Education at Stetson University
- February 7 – Appreciation Dinner for CDC Teachers
- February 18 – “Listening for God” Book Study
- February 19 – New Members Received
- February 22 –Lent begins; Ash Wednesday worship, 7:00 p.m.
- February 25 – Council Retreat, 9 a.m.-5 p.m, T he Abbey [old St. Paul’s Church]
- February 26 – Youth Barbecue Dinner and Cobbler Contest after worship
- February 29 – Leap Day; Midweek Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.
- March 7, 14, 21, 28 – Midweek Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.
- April 5 – Maundy Thursday Worship, 7:00 p.m.
- April 6 – Good Friday Worship, 7:00 p.m.
- April 7 – Egg Hunt – 10:00 a.m.
- April 8 – EASTER Sunday, Sunrise Worship, 7:00 a.m.; Easter Breakfast, 8:00-9:30 a.m.; Festival Worship, 10:00 a.m.

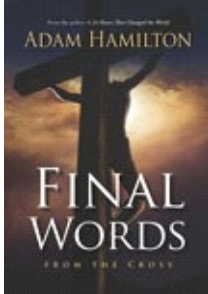
## Barbecue Dinner

On February 26 the youth invite you to a barbecue dinner. Larry Mattson will be making his famous pork butts. We will have pulled pork sandwiches with sides.



We will also be selling whole pork butts so be thinking ahead. They can be cut up and frozen for quick and easy meals when you are in a hurry or don’t feel like cooking. If you want a whole pork butt for \$30.00 each, please sign up in the activity book.

**Lenten Bible Study and Worship Series: *Final Words from the Cross***  
By Adam Hamilton



In life and in death, Jesus' words were powerful and meaningful. Despite the serious effort and increased pain required for Jesus to speak as he hung on the cross, Jesus spoke seven "final words" – statements that have much to teach us about Jesus, his Father, and ourselves.

Father, Forgive Them  
Behold Your Son ... Behold Your Mother  
My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?  
Today You Will Be with Me in Paradise  
I Thirst  
It Is Finished  
Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit

Adam Hamilton explores these final words through the eyes and ears of those who stood near the cross. Each week, we begin with the biblical account followed by a first-person story as might have been told from the viewpoint of one of the characters at the cross. Then we explore the meaning of Jesus' dying words for our lives today. Following the last statement, we go over what Jesus spoke following his resurrection, including what truly were his final words while walking this earth. Join the crowd now and experience the final words from the cross.

Bible, Book and Video Study: Sundays at 9:00 a.m. [Book: Hardcover or Kindle, \$10]

WORSHIP: Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

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## Calling all bakers: Cobbler Baking Contest

Bring your favorite cobbler to church Sunday, February 26, to see who has the best cobbler. A panel of judges will decide the best one and then everyone will enjoy cobbler to finish off our barbe-cue dinner. Prizes awarded for the top three cobblers. Sign up in the activity book so we know how many cobblers to expect.

## THANK YOU!

On behalf of the congregation of Grace Lutheran Church, I wish to offer my congratulations to Dr. Ken Phillips, Desiree Evered, and Barbara Carpanini on their election to a three-year term on council. The council and congregation also thank David A. Kinder and Cleve Hillman for their three years of exemplary service to the congregation. Thank you gentlemen!

- Mary Flekke

## Single Ladies of Grace Dinner

The ladies will meet on February 7 at 3:30 p.m. at Fish City Grill at the Lakeland Town Center. Invite a single lady friend to join you. GREAT food and fellowship. For any questions, you may contact Betty Leitenberger at 647-5253 or Wendy Poffenberger at 868-3973.

**Talbot House Ministries** will present its annual *Have a Heart for the Homeless* concert on February 3 at First Presbyterian Church on Lake Hollingsworth. All proceeds will help to provide shelter, healthcare, and life renewal to those in our area in need of assistance. A silent auction will begin at 6 p.m. and the concert at 7 p.m. A variety of musical styles will be performed by many talented artists – singer/songwriter for Ricky Skaggs and Alabama, Carl Chambers; Southeastern University's premier traveling choir and band; Southeastern Singers; and local recording artists, Billy Needs a Bear; and many more. Free coffee will be provided at intermission by Mitchell's Coffee Shop. Tickets are \$15.00 and can be obtained from JoAnn Herrick or Lois Schrader.



## February Birthdays and Anniversaries



- 1- Matthew Kinder  
Marcia Larrison
- 2- Janet Morris
- 4- Bea Moyer
- 5- Robert Parshall  
John Siddle
- 6- Val Foss
- 9- Caroline Low
- 17- Hap Hafer
- 19- Ted Menter  
Carol Werner
- 21 Barbara Buskirk  
Cody Elms
- 22- Katie Lawrence  
Tim Vettrus
- 27- Marnel Tomlinson
- 28- Amanda Misiak
- 29- Bill Breseman



- 10- Rusty & Arlene Bowles
- 12- Ronald & Marion Bergman
- 13- Joe & Sara Jo Fulmer
- 26- Robert & Margaret Cawood

### Thirty (30) Years of Ministry for Lutheran Services Florida

Thirty years ago, Lutheran Services Florida was resettling refugees fleeing from unspeakably cruel government treatment in places like Uganda, Vietnam, and Cuba. Through the prayers and financial support of Lutherans from across the state, LSF now operates more than 60 programs delivering healing, hope, and help to tens of thousands each year. For more information about this work, visit our website at [www.lsfnet.org](http://www.lsfnet.org).

## January Congregation Council Highlights

The Congregation Council met on Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. President Mary Flekke opened the meeting by leading the group in the Mission Statements of Grace and the ELCA. Those present included Mary Flekke, Barbara Carpanini, Kristen Storms, David A. Kinder, Wendy Poffenberger, Cleve Hillman, Jim Sawyers, Pat Blanchette, Pastor Carol, Barbara McPeak, treasurer and JoAnn Herrick, recording secretary. Sara Jo Fulmer was excused.

JoAnn led devotions by citing some thoughts from the Epistles of John with the assurance that if we believe that Jesus is truly Christ we are the children of God and then led in prayer. (I John 5:1)

The Minutes of the December meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's report - Barbara McPeak noted that our tithe to the Synod would be paid in full by the day after the meeting. The monthly summary report showed a deficit for the month of \$13,024.12. It was placed on file for audit.

Pastor's report - Pastor Carol presented her written report noting that hospital and care visits had been particularly heavy this month thus making it difficult to call on all potential new members. We will wait until February to receive

new members. She was grateful that giving increased so that we will begin the new year with strong finances. The final section of Crossways Bible Study began this week and will finish the three-year course the week after Easter. Lent was discussed. The Search Committee for a music director and organist has met a couple of times. Bill Stahl is temporary choir director and Michael Hromadka was hired as accompanist.

The Pastor's continuing education is at Stetson University on January 30 through February 3; she will take vacation time in March. Tim Vettrus will be honored on January 22 as he leaves to take his call to ministry in Wisconsin. The congregation will present him with a white stole and a multicolored one in appreciation for his service in our midst. Rob King has reported that our lawsuit with the air conditioning company continues; he has had to hire a legal assistant who will be handling our case and has asked that we pay \$20 per hour for this assistant's time.

Wendy moved we grant his request, seconded and carried.

President's report - Mary reported on meetings with Alicia, our bookkeeper,  
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and with Barbara McPeak as they developed the 2012 Spending Plan.

The Spending Plan for 2012 was lifted for discussion. It was decided to increase the CDC reimbursement figure in the revenue section from \$17,000 to \$26,000 since this is what we are expecting from them this year. Cleve moved the Spending Plan for 2012 as corrected be recommended to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation. It was seconded and carried.

The Pastor presented a letter received from a realtor with a blind offer to purchase the Grace Church property. The first step in such a decision would be to get an appraisal of the property which would be paid by the realtor. Pat moved we take this step before further consideration of the offer, seconded. After much discussion, the motion carried. The plan is to share the information with the congregation at the annual meeting, clearly stating no recommendation or decision would be in order until after the appraisal is made. The proposal to send Grace Notes by email was again discussed. The result of a small test last month did not get proper response. Cleve contacted several churches who send their newsletters by email. They use a paid service to do the mailing for them and were happy with their decision.

It was decided to send the February Grace Notes by email to a select group, for responses from that group. The others would be sent by regular mail. This will then be discussed at the February Council meeting.

Committee Reports:

Youth - fund raiser meals are planned for February 26, March 18, and April 8 (Easter Breakfast).

CDC - they are working on the re-arrangement of rooms to increase nursery space and should be finished by February 4.

Worship and Music - the choir director position will be posted online in order to find a permanent director.

Nominating Committee - the following have agreed to have their names placed in nomination for council at the Annual Meeting: Barbara Carpanini, David A. Kinder, Desiree Evered, Tim Milliken, and Dr. Ken Phillips. (Three to be elected.) Cleve moved the slate of nominees be recommended for vote by the congregation at the Annual Meeting, seconded and carried.

Social Ministry - The Love Offering will be the cause for February and the visit by the Blood Mobile will be in March.

Annual Meeting - Sunday, January 22, 2012 following worship and a fellowship meal.

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Other items:

A task force was appointed to look into the matter of having a meal prior to the Wednesday evening services in Lent to include Wendy Poffenberger, Desiree Evered and Mary Flekke.

The council annual retreat is scheduled for Saturday, February 25, place to be announced. This will include the monthly council meeting so there will not be a meeting on February 21.

The meeting closed with prayer by Pastor Carol and the group praying the Lord's Prayer.

-JoAnn S. Herrick,  
Recording Secretary

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**Special Note from Church Office**

The email address for Sara Anderson in the church office has changed to: [saraandersonglc@gmail.com](mailto:saraandersonglc@gmail.com).

If you have moved or changed your address, phone, or email address, please be sure to let the church office know of the change.

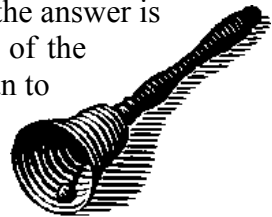
Thank you so much for your cooperation in keeping our records up to date.



**MAKE A  
JOYFUL  
NOISE!**

If you can sing (or make a joyful noise) you are invited to join the choir. They meet on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. under the direction of our interim director, Bill Stahl. He will welcome you to join them.

Do you play bells or would like to learn to play? If the answer is yes to either part of the question, then plan to attend the bells rehearsal on Wednesday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. Mary Flekke is the director and she will be happy to meet you.



*Serving in the Church  
in February*

**Assisting Ministers:**

- 2/5 Barbara McPeak
- 2/12 Pat Blanchette
- 2/19 Lynda Mack
- 2/22 Paul Tart (Ash Wed.)
- 2/26 Barbara White

**Greeters:**

Immie & Bill Beck

**Ushers:**

Joe & Sara Jo Fulmer  
Mac & Barbara McPeak

**Altar Guild:**

- 2/5 Marnel Tomlinson  
Brenda Hornickle  
Larry Lawrence
- 2/12 Sue Stark  
Barbara White
- 2/19 Mary Lou Hansen  
Carla McGee
- 2/26 Mabel Carreira  
Phyllis Whidden

**Sound Technicians:**

Paul Tart & Dick Venable

Women of the ELCA

*Morning Circle*

Tuesday, February 7 at 9:30 a.m.  
Bible Study - Immie Beck  
Hostess - Barbara McPeak



*Afternoon Circle*

Wednesday, February 8 at 2:00 p.m.  
Bible Study - Carol Sawyers  
Hostess - Kathryn Campbell

**Morning Circle News**

Our project for the last few years has been to send care packages to our troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of the articles that are needed are small toiletries, like things you might get in hotels. Some suggestions are: conditioner, shampoo, shaving lotion, deodorant, lotions, beef jerky, Slim Jims, small bags of trail mix, hard candies (no chocolate). The reason for the small articles is that they travel and cannot get these things in the PX. If you have any questions, please contact Immie Beck, Sara Jo Fulmer, or June Clark.

## CHURCH CAMPING



Church camping will be held on March 2-4 at Highlands Hammock State Park, near Sebring. This is always a lot of fun and a good excuse to sit around, relax, and have great food. The park has biking and you could bike the scenic 3-mile loop drive or hike along the park's nine trails. It has an elevated boardwalk that traverses an old-growth cypress swamp. We have reserved five camp sites (that's 40 people). Everyone is welcome to camp. Visit the Florida State Park website for more information. To sign up call Rusty Bowles (686-6822) or David W. Kinder (682-2518) OR sign up in the activities book in the narthex. The deadline to sign up is February 19. There will be an informational meeting closer to the date.

**The Child Development Center** will hold a yard sale in March. Congregational members wishing to donate to their cause are asked to see or call Cathy Bozeman at 682-6192 about where and when to bring your items, and also what types of items they are receiving for the sale.

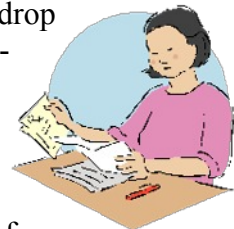


## TAXES...

Alicia & Robert King have offered again to prepare your tax returns for \$30.00. If you would like to have them prepare

your return, please drop off all of your information in a sealed envelope to the church office. Also, there will be a form in the narthex for

you to complete and include with your paperwork. You will be able to pick up your completed return at Grace Lutheran Church on Saturday, March 3 from 10 a.m. to Noon.



## Child Development Center News

“Purge out the old leaven” 1 Cor.5:7

An interesting devotional that I recently came across told the story of a tradition in China. Many Chinese families give their home a thorough cleaning before the New Year. The Cantonese saying that goes “Wash away the dirt on ninyabaat”. They practice this tradition because it is believed the cleaning sweeps away the bad luck of the preceding year and makes their homes ready for good luck.

Paul uses this example for us to prepare ourselves for the New Year and remove any leaven (sin) from our lives. (Exodus 12:1-28, Deut. 16:3-4, and 1 Cor. 5:9-13).

We have moved and cleaned three rooms in preparation for new children. We swept away the old to move in the new. Let’s prepare our hearts in the same manner.

Thank you to everyone who came the past three Saturdays to help with the cleaning and painting. Stop in and look at the rooms, they look great!

Thanks to Josh Beck, Carol Grzegorzcyk Wendy Poffenberger, Joy Becker, Kelly Smith, Grace Ramirez, Ana Sanchez, Lydia and Todd Taylor, Liz Reese, Dawn Swanner, Michele McMullen, Cathy Browning, Matt Bozeman,

Jennifer Stocker, Charlie McMullen, Wendell Browning, Christy Hicks, and Tionna Stevens for all your help.

Special thanks to Helen Ann Kinder for redoing and painting my new office. A big thanks to Jim and Vera Hall for all the moving of shelves, rebuilding and much more. Thanks to Ryan Ellerbee for the help with plumbing and installation of a sink in the new nursery.

Shudong Braamse, a parent in our VPK room and professor in music and voice at Southeastern Bible University, has been accepted to sing at the Augsburg Music Festival in Germany in June. She is required to have an 80-minute program, which involves memorizing at least 20 songs. We are very proud that she has received this honor.

On to the new... Mark these dates on your calendar:

**February 10**, at 6:30 p.m. will be our first Princess Dance. Dads, uncles, grandfathers, brothers, whoever can grab your little princess and bring her for a night of dancing and fun.

**March 17** from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. will be our “Spring Fling and Yard Sale.” Clean your closets, garage, and anywhere else that you have things you do not need or want. We will store the

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## ALOA SeniorFest 2012

items until March if needed. The Fling will be games, bouncy houses, and fun on the front lawn for the kids. Hot dogs, chips, and a drink will be available for purchase. Come one come all!

**April 21** from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. will be our first fundraiser for Feed America. Yes, there are children here in America that go to bed hungry every night. More details will be coming in the next few months.

**May 25** at 7 p.m. will be our VPK graduation. Everyone is invited. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Many things are happening at CDC. Volunteers are always welcome. Come and be blessed.

“If a church loses its heart for outreach, then they are living out their final hours.” Anon

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In His Service,  
Ms Cathy



This year's ALOA SeniorFest will be held February 13-18 in six locations in the state. The closest to us is at the Florida Leadership Center in Haines City. Registration is now open. Those who have attended previously should have received a postcard.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. David Rhoads, a retired professor from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, who gives an engaging and meaningful dramatic presentation of New Testament Scripture. Also, speaking will be Mark Schoepp of Wheat Ridge Ministries. In addition to the main speakers there will be several break-out sessions and worship with one of the leading musicians of the Synod, David Ludwig.

SeniorFest will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. and close at 4 p.m. In addition to the Haines City location on Friday, February 17, there will be Leesburg - February 13, Sarasota - February 14, Fort Myers - February 15, Palm Harbor - February 16, and Boca Raton - February 18. To register you may go to the website at [www.aloafloridaseniorfest.com](http://www.aloafloridaseniorfest.com).

	<u>January Attendance</u>	
Me Instead of You	Date	Total
	1/1	128
There's one odd fact in life I've found	1/8	149
'Tis sad but very true	1/15	152
The faults that lie in each of us	1/22	166
Seem so much worse in you.		

If you tell me a thing or two,  
 You're heartless as can be,  
 But when I tell you all your faults,  
 I'm honest, don't you see?

When tests and trials come your way  
 And you feel very low,  
 "Why be so weak and spineless?"  
 Is what I'd like to know.

But when it's me down and out  
 Somehow it's not the same;  
 It's just that folks don't treat me right  
 I'm really not to blame.

When you set out to tackle  
 The impossible it seems,  
 You're trifling and careless  
 And full of idle dreams.

But when I do the very same,  
 It's faith I'm clinging to;  
 Now isn't it strange the change it makes  
 When it's me instead of you?

- author unknown  
 Church Bulletin Bits #4  
 George W. Knight, Compiler



Counting the days & hours  
 till your Grace Notes  
 information is due on  
**February 19**

**GRACE NOTES**  
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**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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**Lakeland, FL 33801**

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**The Council Representatives**

Mary Flekke	President
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Barbara Carpanini	Corp. Secretary
Barbara McPeak	Treasurer
Ruth Neidinger	Financial Secretary
JoAnn Herrick	Recording Secretary
Wendy Poffenberger	Child Dev. Board
Kristen Storms	Christian Education
Ken Phillips	Finance
Jim Sawyers	Memorial
	Outreach
Barbara Carpanini	Property
Sara Jo Fulmer	Social Ministry
Mary Flekke	Stewardship
Desiree Evered	Worship & Music
Pat Blanchette	Youth

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