

# Amazing Grace

March, 2020

Volume 39, Issue # 3



Our mission to the Inland Empire is to be **heralds** of the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ, **healers** to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and **upholders** of God's will and Word.

## A MESSAGE from Pastor Maggard

Dear Saints of Grace,

We are in Lent once again. You are familiar with the spiritual disciplines of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. These are worthy disciplines to engage in at any time, but especially during Lent when we focus on what our salvation cost our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. What is the aim of these disciplines? What is the true discipline of Lent? Consider what Luther wrote in the Large Catechism about the Third Commandment:

<sup>91</sup> God's Word is the true "holy thing" [*Heiligtum*; relic] above all holy things. Yes, it is the only one we Christians know and have. Though we had the bones of all the saints or all holy and consecrated garments upon a heap, still which would not help us at all. All that stuff is a dead thing that can sanctify no one. But God's Word is the treasure that sanctifies everything [1 Timothy 4:5]. By the Word even all the saints themselves were sanctified [1 Corinthians 6:11]. <sup>92</sup> Whenever God's Word is taught, preached, heard, read, or meditated upon, then the person, day, and work are sanctified. This is not because of the outward work, but because of the Word, which makes saints of us all. Therefore, I constantly say that all our life and work must be guided by God's Word, if it is to be God-pleasing or holy. (LC I.91-92)

The Old Testament saints had turned the Sabbath day into a day of works instead of a day of rest in God. Paradoxically their "works" were ways not to work. They honored the Sabbath by inventing ways to abstain from any kind of labor.

Now it is true that when we labor, we need rest. This is how God has made us. Unfortunately, nowadays, we seem to have turned resting or leisure activities into a pursuit of their own. We all have reason to repent for turning leisure into a kind of god. Luther rightly reminds us that the true rest of the Sabbath Day is God's Word. And the pursuit of God's Word is not just a Sunday activity but a daily activity. And this is because we have true, eternal life only by the Word of God. Luther reminds us of the danger of ignoring the Word of God:

<sup>100</sup> Let me tell you this, even though you know God's Word perfectly and are already a master in all things: you are daily in the devil's kingdom [Colossians 1:13-14]. He ceases neither day nor night to sneak up on you and to kindle in your heart unbelief and wicked thoughts against these three commandments and all the commandments. Therefore, you must always have God's Word in your heart, upon your lips, and in your ears. But where the heart is idle and the Word does not make a sound, the devil breaks in and has done the damage before we are aware [Matthew 13:24-30]. <sup>101</sup> On the other hand, the Word is so effective that whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, it is bound never to be without fruit [Isaiah 55:11; Mark 4:20]. It always awakens new understanding, pleasure, and devoutness and produces a pure heart and pure thoughts [Philippians 4:8]. (LC I.100-101)

I encourage you to take time this Lent to focus on the Word of God. Take time to read, mark, learn, and take it to heart. God will bless your labors as He sanctifies you with His Word.  
Pastor

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Come In, We Are Closed - Part 5

#### A Little History \_

The author of the book, Rev. Bramwell, offers a little history about the origins and practice of Closed Communion. It is not a Lutheran practice, but a practice that goes back to our Lords' Supper with his Apostles in the upper room. When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper with his Apostles, He didn't let just anyone in the room, He made sure that the only people to witness this monumental event were those people that were His closest followers.

Today, many churches don't revere the Sacrament as they should. In the first centuries of Christianity, if you were not a member of the Church, you could come and hear the Bible readings, sing hymns, listen to the sermon and pray but you could not attend the Service of the Sacrament if you had an unconfirmed faith. The deacons would stand guard at the closed doors, which is where we get the term Closed Communion from.

In the years of the early church, when Christians traveled, they were given a letter that they could present to the Pastor of the church they were visiting that stated that they were in good standing with the Orthodox Church and they were allowed to take communion. Members in good standing have been taught the faith, repent of their sins and are baptized. One of the tests of good standing was whether they knew the teachings of the Nicene Creed.

Many years ago, I attended a church service with my brother at what I would call a "mega church." They had a communion service but with no confession and absolution, no creeds whatsoever and no preface or preparation to receive the elements. I partook in the communion event, but right after I did, I felt empty as if I had done nothing. Right then and there I decided and instinctively knew that my brother and I could not

commune together because our core beliefs about the meaning of the body and blood were not the same. I do believe that he believes, is baptized and his faith is fed with the teaching of the gospel but the Lutheran understanding of the literal body and blood at communion is the proper way to receive the Sacrament.

The Lutheran Church is an orthodox church meaning "Right Praise," and my brother's church is a heterodox church meaning "Different Praise." My brother's church simply believes differently about the literal body and blood present in the bread and wine.

In using the same teaching about "Closed Communion" applied to my brother, I would not want him to join me at the communion rail at Grace because that would be placing him at odds with the teachings of his pastor and church doctrine. Closed Communion isn't so much about restricting participation, but about teaching Orthodoxy – Right Praise. Until next time.

In His Service,

Chuck Stringham, President

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

**Tuesday, March 17th**

## EVANGELISM

### The Fruit of Love

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Galatians 5:22-23

"Have you ever considered that the order in which Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit implies that the first fruit is love and that all of the other qualities

associated flow from the presence of His love in you?"

**Joy** is delighting in God's love and the wonders of His creation. **Peace** is resting on His promises and trusting they will be fulfilled because you know your Beloved wouldn't let you down. **Patience** is waiting for the Lord because you trust that in His love, He always gives you His best. **Kindness** is reacting lovingly to those around you. **Goodness** is choosing to do what is right out of your love for God, and His love for you.

**Faithfulness** is remaining true to the Lord out of gratefulness for the love He's shown you. **Gentleness** is lovingly empathizing with people in need or pain. And **self-control** is actively resisting temptation out of obedience and love for Him."

"As you open yourself to the fullness of God's love, these character qualities are going to flow from your life. So, receive the Savior's love with a sincere, open, and humble heart." And be open to share these gifts with your friends, neighbors, and all those you come in contact with every day.

(From the devotional Jesus, Our Perfect Hope, by Charles Stanley, February 12)

*Kathy Holm, Evangelism Chair*



**Ash Wednesday Service** at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>. **Soup Supper** preceding the service at 6:00 p.m.

**Lent Services will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. - March 4<sup>th</sup> through April 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**Soup suppers will be at 6:00 p.m. preceding the service.**

UPCOMING EVENTS continued -

**Daring Diners – Movie/Meal, Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>** at **Studio Movie Grill**. Please see article in this newsletter.

**Church Work Days – Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>** at 8:00 a.m.  
Everyone is welcome, Jobs for all!

**Convocation at Grace Lutheran, Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.** Please see article in this newsletter.

**Faith and Family Night, May 8<sup>th</sup>** at *Inland Empire 66ers*.

**Fontana/Rialto Relay for Life, May 30<sup>th</sup>**  
*Fontana High School*

Since no one has come forward to volunteer as Team Captain this year, we encourage members who want to participate in the **May Relay for Life** to sign up with the team - *Scouting for a Cure*. Meeting dates for the event are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway outside the kitchen.

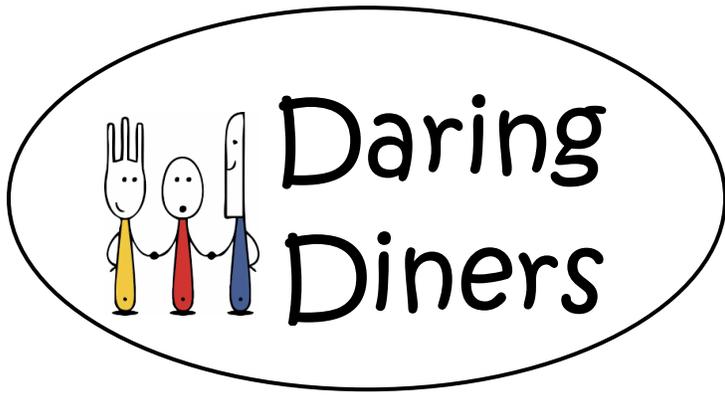
Others, who just want to donate, can indicate donations to American Cancer Society on the memo section of offering checks made out to Grace Lutheran Church or in designated envelopes. The church will then make one large donation as a sponsor for the event. Thank you very much for your support!!

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# Thank You so much!

***To all of YOU that work so hard in the yard and at our church to make it a beautiful place to worship!!***





# 2020 Pacific Southwest District Catechism Convocation

DARING DINERS is planning a Movie/Meal Event on **Saturday, March 21, 2020**, at *Studio Movie Grill* (formerly The Krikorian), 340 N. Eureka Street, Redlands. The show time will be announced later since show times and the movie are not confirmed until the Tuesday of each week.

The movie time would more than likely be 1:00-2:30 p.m. The movie we are planning on seeing is "I Still Believe" (PG)... "The True-life story of music star Jeremy Camp and his journey of love and loss that looks to prove there is always hope." More details on cost of admission will be announced in March bulletins. Details are still being finalized. A sign-up sheet will be posted in March and the last day to sign up will be March 15<sup>th</sup>. See Carol or Mike Draney if you have [questions or you can email Carol at \[cjdraney@hotmail.com\]\(mailto:cjdraney@hotmail.com\)](#).

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Jesus  
loves  
you

*The annual "Servants of the Word" Catechism Convocation is coming and we are hosting!* This is our chance to gather around the Word with our brothers and sisters in Christ and to show them our wonderful hospitality.

**When:** Saturday, April 25th starting at 9:30 A.M. with a concluding Divine Service at 2:15 P.M.

**Where:** Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church!

**What:** The theme of the day is baptism.

**Who:** Many congregations in the Southern California area who are confessionally minded, like we are.

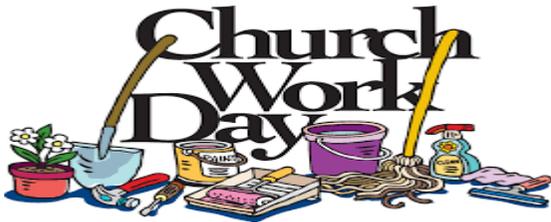
**Teachers:** Rev. Matthew Payne  
(Trinity Lutheran - San Dimas)  
AND  
Rev. Kevin Kolander  
(First Lutheran - Lake Elsinore)

We will be providing lunch and snacks. Please plan to attend and help.

→ **Please see Pastor if you are willing to be the coordinator for the food and volunteers.**

## OUR TITHES FOR THE LORD'S WORK

JANUARY	OFFERING	ATTENDANCE
5 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 3,697.00	36
12 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 6,400.00	50
19 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 2,442.00	?
26 <sup>TH</sup>	\$ 1,609.00	?



It's time to do some Spring cleaning! Easter is coming and two weeks later we will host the Convocation. Let's sparkle and show off our Great Little Church. We have scheduled two work parties on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, starting at 8:00 a.m. each day. The more who volunteer, the quicker we can get done. I will have a list of tasks both inside and outside. If you can't make it to a work party but want to help, just contact me. Some of the work can be done independently on your schedule.

You may notice that our church has a nice new, clean look! It is in the process of being painted and should be completed before Palm Sunday!



Thank you for remembering our "shut-ins" *Margaret Dickenson, Bette Howard, Jan Mansell, Jane Mathews, Joyce McFarland, Dick & Margie Nelson, Evelyn Smith, Charlie Thompson and Joyce Waters.*

This month's added prayers – Greg Nelson's student in ICU; Kurt Wampole's brother-in-law, Mike Tolen; Ron Pickinpaugh's co-worker – Rosie's son; Kathy Holm's brother-in-law, Rob McMahan; Kurt Wampole's friend – Martha Buchannan; Mick Mathews; Jane Mathews; Nancy Telizyn's Friend – Hilary and her mom, Helen and friend – Linda's son, Shane; Alma's Granddaughter – Kindra and her baby, Charlette; Kim Franzen, her friend – Trey and her friend – Debbie; Barbara and Allan's brother-in-law, Tom Huskey; Debbie Schwartz and family; Brian Smith.

We keep in prayer - Tony Mantz, Larry Maudlin and Dave Nehls, Dave Weir and their families.

We pray for all of our troops overseas and their families, and for our own young people in uniform:  
*Kurt Wampole, Jr., Noah Nery, Jeremiah and Summer Hart, Jacob Blanton and Jacob Livoni.*



7	Isaac	Smith
8	Carol	Draney
12	Katryn	Mantz
18	Larry	Adams
	Bette	Howard
23	Noah	Holm
30	Dale	Telizyn

### MARCH BAPTISMS

Gail Picado                      Joe Guerra

Do you know when you were baptized? Just send a quick email to the church office at: [gracelutheranrialto@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheranrialto@gmail.com)

### MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

17	Ted & Gail	Picado
22	Mike and Maletta	Miller
29	Justin and Tiffany	Izzo
30	Joe and Patti	Guerra

### FUNNY CORNER

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity.



→It's impossible to put down!