
March 2026 In Touch with Grace



Dear Family and friends of Grace,

We are in the midst of Lent. A few weeks ago, just after Valentine's Day, we heard the words: "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." It's a sobering reminder of the passing of life. No matter how rich or poor someone is, we all face the same fate at the end of our journey on earth. A musician named Kerry Livgren of the American rock band Kansas was practicing his guitar one day and the song 'Dust in the Wind' came to him. The lyrics have a philosophical view of life – money, possessions, buildings, and our mortality all crumble to dust eventually. The song shows plainly the inevitable and fleeting essence of our existence, symbolizing our lives and achievements as mere dust in the wind. The lyrical narrative illustrates the temporality of our dreams, actions, and everything we cling to will eventually be gone. "Dust in the wind; all they are is dust in the wind."

Interestingly, Kerry didn't want to share the song he had composed with his band mates, but at the encouragement of his wife, he shared it reluctantly - and they loved it. Dust in the Wind was recorded in 1977 and became the best-selling record that Kansas ever recorded. Kerry became a Christian a few years later

The theme of this song resonates with many of us at one time or another especially during Lent. We might wonder at times what is this life all about? Why am I here and what difference does my life make? We find the theme of dust or ashes ties into scripture from Genesis and also Ecclesiastes as well as a few Psalms. Even with the truth of these lyrics, we do not give into despair for we know the rest of the story. We are beloved children of God. We matter and have purpose. We have been given gifts

and abilities to make God's world a better place. Scripture tells us that out of the dust and ashes of our lives, God will create something beautiful and at the end of our lives, we are brought to our heavenly home, to the place prepared for us. (John 14)

Our Wednesday evening theme this Lent is hearing from those who have witnessed and believed in the good news we find in Jesus. We will hear the 'I Am' statements of Jesus found in the Gospel of John. Join us for soup suppers and worship each Wednesday in March. Lent is a good time to reflect on our own mortality and the hope we are given in the words of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and the Life, the Way, Truth, and Life, the Bread of Life, the Gate or Door for the sheep, the Vine, and the Light of the World. Join us for soup suppers and a short worship service focusing on one of these attributes of Jesus. Together, we will remember that the Lord has promised us more than just dust in the wind for you are loved and you belong.

God's peace and blessings to you this season,
Pastor Karen



Announcements

The
Season
of
Lent



Lenten Schedule for 2026

Wed, March 4 - Supper 5:45 pm Worship 6:30 pm
Wed, March 11 - Supper 5:45 pm Worship 6:30 pm
Wed, March 18 - Supper 5:45 pm Worship 6:30 pm
Wed, March 25 - Supper 5:45 pm Worship 6:30 pm
Palm Sunday, March 29—Worship followed by Breakfast
Maundy Thursday, April 2 Worship at 10:30 am & 6:30 pm
Good Friday, April 3 - Worship at 7:00 pm at 1st Lutheran
463 Maria Ave. , St. Paul 55106

Easter, April 5 - 9:30 am Worship
Family Easter Egg Hunt after Worship

- Lenten Disciplines include fasting, praying, and giving. Some Fast from meat, eating out, social media, screen time, phone time, and add in exercise, walks, getting outdoors. Praying could include journaling, finding gratitude, noticing where God shows up in your life and the world. Giving could be cleaning out your closets and give away what is still useful, donating to good causes such as our diaper derby, feeding the hungry, supporting ethnic businesses, or even sending cards of encouragement. How will you use this time to grow closer to God?
- Camp Onomia brochures are available with descriptions of another great summer at camp! Pick one up and see where you and your family will fit in. There are programs for all ages. Getting away from the city and experiencing God in the beauty of nature is one of the best ways to refresh and renew your faith. Early bird deadline expires this March so get your registrations in to escape to this wonderful church camp.
- Our Youth Families have two wonderful events coming this month. On March 1st, our annual Pancakes & Puppets will be held after worship. Also, our Palm Sunday Brunch will be served after worship by our Youth Families on Palm Sunday, March 29th Please join us for good food and fellowship while support our youth ministries!
- High Five Wednesdays in Lent! High Fives from God, Five Minutes posted at 5 a.m. each Wednesday during Lent. Watch for them on our church Facebook page
- Good News Fridays are weekly posts on our church Facebook page. These offer a bright spot where God's light shines during troubled times. For March, we will be posting inspirational photos – no words, just beauty. Watch for them and perhaps share some of your own in the comment section of the post. Let's be light and love this season!
- If you have a family member suffering from dementia, there is a Dementia Support Group that meets every third Wednesday of the month from 2-3 p.m. at Cerenity-Marian. (225 Frank Street, St. Paul. All are welcome to attend.
- Do you like to pray? All of us appreciate prayers especially in times of need. Grace has a prayer chain that holds our beloved church family in prayer when prayer requests come in. We could use a few more members. If you are interested in praying, please contact Pastor Karen or Carolyn Hesterberg. Thank you!

PK Picks for Lent! <https://bustedhalo.com/lent-resources/> for a great Lenten Calendar.
<https://www.csricebowl.org/recipes> Try a few meatless meals from around the world plus learn about the various cultures surrounding those meals.

*****Don't forget Daylight Saving Time on March 8th. We Spring forward!!**

MARCH MISSION OF THE MONTH

Every Meal is the Mission of the Month at Grace for March. More than 300,000 children in Minnesota live with food insecurity. Every Meal's mission is to change that by filling the food gap school age children face - especially on the weekends.

Through Every Meal's Weekend Meal Program, bags full of nutritious, delicious, and relevant food are placed discreetly into backpacks of students across Minnesota on Fridays so when they return to school on Monday morning they are ready to learn and grow.

The increased presence of ICE has created fear and uncertainty within communities and schools, often preventing families and children from accessing essential resources like food.

At Every Meal, they exist to ensure children have the nourishment they need to learn, grow and thrive. Right now they are seeing a significant increase in the need for food support.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to this charity which works to reach out in Christian love to help feed the children. Sheridan Montessori school is the closest school to Grace which is served by this program. Please use your blue multi-purpose envelope, mark mission of the month and place in the offering or mail to the church office. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.



March 1st is Food Shelf Sunday!!

Do you have an extra couple of hours a month to spare to deliver non-perishable food items collected by the Congregation of Grace to Merrick Food Shelf?

Merrick Food Shelf is housed in Gustavus Adolphus Church located at 1669 Arcade Street across from Phalen golf course. The food shelf is open Monday 3-5 p.m. and Tuesday and Wednesday 10a.m. to 12 p.m. Deliveries are accepted 1/2 hour prior to dispensing times and help is available to unload and accept the donations.

Norm Walby has been doing this task for many years but unable to deliver at this time due to health issues. We are so appreciative of his efforts.

For more information or questions or willingness to take on this task at least for the present, please call Sue Atneosen 651-774-9114.

Music Notes -

One of the advantages to being a member of the American Organist Guild is receiving their monthly magazine, *The American Organist*. It not only has articles featuring new organ installations throughout the U.S., interviews with famous organists, educational articles delving into classic organ literature, but also editorials that don't necessarily fall into any of the above categories. I've taken as a Lenten task to re-read all of the past year's magazines, which are all online. I may even branch out and re-read the hard copies I have stacked up from years past, all containing excellent information.

The latest editorial I've read is by Sarah MacDonald, director of music at Selwyn College in Cambridge, UK and director of the Girls' Choir of Ely Cathedral. It is simply labeled "But What's Your Real Job?". That intrigued me enough to check on the various jobs famous composers had outside of their composing/performing occupations a.k.a. what paid the rent.

One of my all time favorite contemporary composers is a New Yorker by the name of Philip Glass. He wrote an opera called *Einstein on the Beach*, which revolutionized operas. Even after he became famous as a composer, he continued driving taxis around New York City. He also at times worked as a plumber.

The musical *Kiss Me Kate* uses themes by the Russian composer Alexander Borodin. He wrote music on his off time. During the day, he was a chemist. Another science oriented composer was the American contemporary composer John Cage. He was known for altering the inside of pianos to create interesting sounds. It turns out he was an expert on mushrooms. In fact, he founded the New York Mycological Society.

And then there was Camille Saint-Saens, the composer of *Carnival of the Animals*. He used his composing to feed his passion for astronomy. Some of his 1st published music paid for a telescope. He was a member of the Astronomical Society of France. There's even an asteroid named after him.

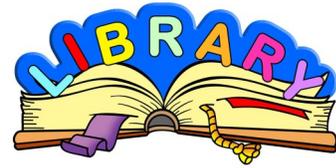
Not all composers holding secondary jobs were spending time in the fields of science. Some held desk jobs, for example the American composer Charles Ives. He was a top insurance agent, writing music as a hobby. The Russian composer of *Flight of the Bumblebee* came from a wealthy family that felt being a composer was not an honorable profession; therefore he became a high ranking Naval officer, writing music while at sea.

But the most high ranking composer/musician having a second job was Ignace Jan Paderewski. In his day, he was known as the best interpreter of Frederic Chopin's piano music. He became involved in politics, leading to him becoming Prime Minister of Poland. In fact, he was a signer of the Treaty of Versailles which officially ended World War I. He later helped found the League of Nations.

Musicians having extra employment besides using time exercising their musical talents has been the norm throughout history. Creativity continues to bloom, whether through a full time profession or as a joint endeavor. It's interesting to see how these famous composers spent their time when not in front of a piece of manuscript paper.

If you attended either of the Ash Wednesday services this year, you would have heard a portion of the "Chichester Psalms" sung by our Director of Music, Sabe Dunlap. The choir Sabe sings with, The Singers, is doing the entire piece in a concert presented on March 14th and 15th. You can log onto their website to find the places and times they are performing.

FROM THE LIBRARY:



BOOKS FOR SALE:

The "Books for Sale" basket has gotten a refresh!

Due to some recent donations of brand new or like new books, we have a great selection in our basket! Feel free to browse and if you find one you just need to have, all donations are welcome!

Grace Book Club -

For discussion on:

March 5 - All The Glittering Stars Mark T. Sullivan

April 2 - The President's Daughter is Missing James Patterson

May 7 - Fall to Grace Kerry Casey

June 4 - Still Life Louise Penny



The Easter Garden at Grace is growing in a new way this year.

We will not be ordering plants for you as we have in the past. Instead we are encouraging you to buy your plants at your favorite retailer (Gertens, Bachmans, Sam's Club, Costco, etc) and bring them to church on Easter morning no later than 9 am. You may also bring a non-flowering green plant if that is your choice.

We will have the garden site ready to add your plants. We realize that Easter is a time that many of you remember and honor loved ones and we want you to be able to do that. We realize that this is a different system of beautifying our chancel area and we hope that it will work for everyone.

You will pick up your plant at the end of the service as usual to take home.

Happy Spring!

Sunday School

We continue our journey of learning about the amazing things Jesus did and what he teaches us on how to trust God and to love one another. Some activities and crafts we have done include catching fish and people to be disciples and making a calming jar. For the calming jar we taped a coin to the bottom of our boat for stability on the glittery shaky waters, but the coin reminds us to trust God to keep us strong and stable because the coin says "In God We Trust" right on it already.

Food for thought:

Would you rather talk with people already In heaven,
Or be able to talk to your friends on earth after you die?

Would you rather be missing for three days as a child,
Or be followed by crowds everywhere you go?

Would you rather see Jesus dunked underwater at his baptism,
Or see him walk on water towards the disciples?



Calming jars -



Catching and being caught!



Solomon & Amelia got their fidget fish for reciting the Lord's Prayer by memory!

Upcoming:

Puppets and Pancakes 2026

The youth families have will do Puppets and Pancakes on Sunday, March 1st this year. Mark your calendars for some good food, great puppet performances and jokes and lots of fellowship after worship!

Tickets are available Sunday morning of the show!

Palm Sunday Breakfast Sunday, March 29, 2026

Mark your calendars for our annual Palm Sunday Breakfast served by our Youth families! Always a good meal and lots of fellowship just before Holy Week & Easter! Tickets will be available 2 weeks before and the morning of the breakfast!

Family Easter Egg Hunt!, Sunday, April 5th, after Worship! All are welcome

XYZs will be traveling to Laos this month! On March 12th at 12:30 p.m., we will be traveling east across the parking lot from Grace to our neighbors at Xieng Khouang Restaurant and Banquet Hall. We will sample the rich flavors of Laos while learning about their food and heritage from the owners, Spencer and Macy. This experience of warm hospitality and authentic Lao cuisine will be offered buffet-style. Have you been curious about our neighboring restaurant and its food? Join us for a taste of Laos! (We will be collecting donations to help the restaurant in these difficult times. Suggested donation is \$10).



And since we are talking about traveling . . .

An Alpine Adventure Awaits!!

We are taking a group trip to Switzerland, Austria, and northern Italy this coming September 2026. Brochures are available in the Good Shepherd Lounge. Questions? Ask Pastor Karen. We hope you will join us!

An Alpine Adventure
*Visiting: Vienna, Salzburg and Innsbruck (Austria),
 Lucerne and Zermatt (Switzerland), Bolzano and Stresa (Italy) and more!*
12 Days ~ September 21 - October 2, 2026


Salzburg


Innsbruck


Chapel Bridge, Lucerne


Zermatt

hosted by:
Pastor Karen Williams **Pastor Jan Mehlhoff**
Grace Lutheran Church *Retired Pastor*
St. Paul, MN *Minneapolis, MN*

Community Connections - ongoing projects!!

Internal, Local and Global

If you would consider serving treats on a Sunday morning, we would appreciate your help. Please take a look at the sign-up schedule in the South Tower room and see if there is a date that works for you to help out! If you would be willing to bring treats but would prefer to not serve, please speak with Linda Sackreiter and we can arrange that as well.

Thanks for your help!!

2026 Collections

Quilts, baby care kits (Note: soap size accepted for baby care kits is 3.5 or 4 oz gentle soap; soap in each kit has to total 8 or 9 oz)

Other on-going collections at Grace - used eye glasses and cancelled stamps. Please find the small collection baskets on the library shelf. Also, Sandy Abernathy will take any American Flags that need to be disposed of properly. These can be left in the collection area in the library. She will also take any plastic bags for a neighbor doing mats for the homeless in town. (We are not currently saving soup can labels) Thank you for all donations!

Miles of Pennies The large collection jar in the library is always accepting donations toward giving to the LSS fund for helping homeless Youth in St. Paul. Our goal was \$250.00 for 2025 and we sent \$275 to LSS this year! Let's exceed that again in 2026! Thank you to everyone who participates in this important mission. Your generous donations of coins and paper money are appreciated.

Quilt Days— We will be meeting again in March on the 2nd Saturday (14th). All are welcome to join us. No skills necessary, we will teach. Most months we meet on the 2nd Saturday in the Tower rooms. Come join us this month for some good conversation and to put those hands to use for a wonderful cause. Lutheran World Relief distributes donated quilts all over the world including in the US.

A REQUEST FROM ALICIA RUNQUIST (ECSE) and the CCCommittee:

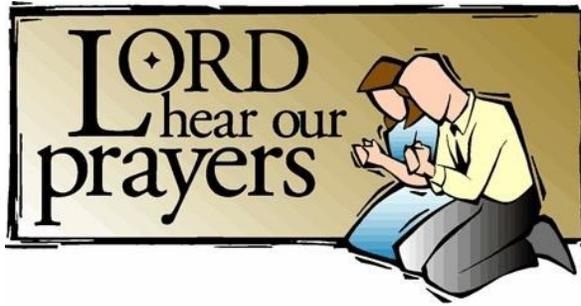
As an Early Childhood Special Education teacher in Saint Paul, I work with children and families weekly in their homes and early learning centers. Due to recent immigration activity, many of our neighbors are currently sheltering in place. These families are facing immense pressure to meet basic needs, especially for essentials like diapers and wipes.

We are collecting donations to ensure children stay clean, dry, and healthy during this crisis. All sizes of diapers are needed, particularly sizes 3-7. Pull ups are also requested in sizes 2T-5T.

Please consider donating:

- New or Opened packs of diapers
- New or Opened packs of Pull ups
- Diaper Wipes
- Financial contributions (payable to Grace Lutheran Church) to help us purchase supplies

Donations can be dropped off at Church. Our Early Childhood Special Education staff will deliver these items directly to Saint Paul families in crisis. Thank you for being a lifeline for our community - your support makes an immediate difference. Every diaper helps!



We lift our prayers to God in times of thanksgiving and times of need, in times of joy and times of sorrow. This month we especially pray for Norm Walby, Josie Meyer, Phyllis Armstrong, Paul Hesterberg, Butch Nelson, and all those we name in our hearts.

How to donate other than in the offering plate:

There is always snail mail. The office is open to receive the mail and our bookkeeper will count what comes in each week and deposit it in the bank. Our address: 1730 Old Hudson Road, St. Paul, 55106.

To donate electronically: You can schedule a transfer of funds with your own bank if they have bill pay available and it will come automatically on the date you choose. Otherwise, you can go to our website (www.gracelutheranstpaul.org) and click on the GIVE page.

This site is secure for financial transactions through Vanco which is the Simply Giving program. At the GIVE page you can go through the steps as directed and give whatever amount you wish to several different categories (general, other, etc.) This works best on the Firefox or Edge browsers. This does get to us electronically in a very timely manner. If you are comfortable using the QR, it will take you directly to the GIVE page on the website. **Please call the office if you have any questions.** Thank you.

Give QR



Financial Snapshot for GLC-2026

	<u>January Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund	\$ 33918.69	\$ 33918.69	\$26,162.50
Expenses	\$ 32,490.35	\$ 32490.35	\$27,664.14
Deficit/Overage	\$ 1,428.34	\$ 1,428.34	-\$1,501.64



- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|----------------|
| 2 | Luke Runquist | 25 | Barb Kinney |
| 5 | Anne Oberlander | 26 | Kathleen Voss |
| 6 | Isaiah Ray-Taylor | 27 | Carol Westling |
| 7 | Wyatt Wood | 28 | Jan Steingas |
| 8 | Christiana Ray-Taylor | 29 | Karen Olson |
| 10 | Roger Mathison | 31 | Cynthia Wood |
| 11 | Peter Hultgren | | |
| 12 | Sally Pearson | | |
| | Nancy Zitzewitz | | |
| 14 | Paul Hesterberg | | |
| 16 | Olivia Childs | | |
| | Patricia Flores | | |
| | Lexi Revier | | |
| 19 | Dakota Reed | | |
| 21 | Sue Atneosen | | |
| | Luke Christie | | |
| 22 | Margaret Swenson | | |
| 23 | Danita Hanson | | |
| 24 | Thomas Rose | | |



Worship Leaders for March 2026-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgist</u> or	<u>Communion Asst.</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>
1	----	Sue Atneosen	?	Karin Nikula
8	Jan Steingas	-----	Amanda Christie	Peg Mathison
15	Kris Mohwinkel	-----	Kim Childs	Kris Mohwinkel
22	-----	Lana Alleman	Cami Alleman	Lauren Alleman
29	Monique McClure-Hegge	---	?	Jeff Oberlander

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Greeters</u>
1	Tom Studiner, Adam Revier, Amanda Christie	Stacy & Gabby Studiner
8	Greg & Kris Mohwinkel	Stacy Studiner
15	?	Dick Gunderson
22	Tom Studiner, Adam Revier, Amanda Christie	Kayla & Lexi Revier
29	Jeff Oberlander team	Kim Childs

<u>Date</u>	<u>Money Counters</u> - (we could use some additional volunteers on our counting teams)
1	Lana Alleman team
8	Amanda Christie team
15	Monique McClure-Hegge team
22	Kate Pray team
29	Lana Alleman team



Please see sign-up sheets for Sunday jobs in the Narthex, and the Sunday Fellowship sign-up in the S. Tower Rm.

Come Be a Part of the Worship Team!

Here are descriptions for each opportunity to join the Worship Team.

Greeters - all ages, arrive by 9:10, greet people at the lower level before the service

Ushers - all ages, arrive by 9:10, hand out bulletins, gather offering, help direct Communion, tidy Sanctuary after worship

Acolyte - all ages (with adult assistance if younger than 5th grade), arrive by 9:15, robe for festival services, light candles before the service, assist with communion during service, extinguish candles at end of service,

Lay Reader - all ages, arrive by 9:15, read the scripture lesson during worship

Liturgist - Confirmed members, arrive by 9:15, robe for most services, assist with leading the service, help serve Communion

Communion Assistant - Confirmed members, arrive by 9:20, robe for festival services, assist serving communion during service

Money Counter - Confirmed member, count offering money after the service

Chancel Care Assistant - all ages (with adult supervision if younger than 5th grade), after the service, assist in tidying up the altar area, putting away communion ware.

Grace Lutheran Church
1730 Old Hudson Road
Saint Paul, MN 55106

Palm Sunday is March 29th



Phone: 651-774-9617

FAX: 651-774-0006

www.gracelutheranstpaul.org

gracelutheranstpaul@gmail.com

Pastor:

Rev. Karen Williams

Custodial Staff:

Linda Denson

Office Staff:

Linda Sackreiter

Music Staff:

Sabe Dunlap—Director of Music
Ministries

Kathleen Hollar—Organist

Jan Steingas—Triple G's

Connie Smeby—Joyous Juniors

