



Grace Notes

Springs of Grace Lutheran Church
www.springsofgrace.com



Go forward with the Grace of God and the motivation of the Holy Spirit

There is no Future without Forgiveness

A few years ago, a youth director planned a “Stations of the Cross” devotion for a Friday night lock-in before Holy Week. At each station, the youth were asked to do something that would help them to identify with Christ’s journey to the cross. When they got to where Jesus was being nailed to the cross and read his words, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,” the instructions were very specific. They were to think of someone who had offended them in some way. Then they were to take a nail and place the point in their palm until it hurt. While feeling the point of the nail, they were then invited to ask God to help them forgive the person they most needed to forgive.

When I heard about that devotion, it occurred to me that a lot of us older Lutherans would benefit from that kind of painful experience with forgiveness. I believe forgiving those who have wronged us may be the most difficult thing that Jesus ever asked his followers to do. It offends our natural inclination to retaliate or simply cut off all contact with the offensive person. After all, isn’t nursing a grudge, reliving the hurtful conversations over and over again, exploring imaginary put-downs of things we wished we had said, the way most of us choose to respond to a personal offense?

I identify a lot with Peter, who wanted to make a deal with Jesus over a limited number of times one was obligated to forgive. After all, seven was a good biblical number to stop at since even the Lord rested on the Sabbath day. Jesus, however, put no fences around forgiveness. Instead Jesus said there were no limits to how often one needs to forgive another. Going even further, Jesus taught through the Lord’s Prayer, that we are to forgive one another’s trespasses as we ourselves have been forgiven by God. And if we are honest, it seems that no matter how hard we try, we can never forgive one another with the same grace and freedom that God has forgiven us. Yet in such a moment of truthfulness, we begin to realize that to forgive others as Jesus forgives us is possible only through the Holy Spirit’s influence at work in us.

Bishop Desmond Tutu witnessed the painful Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, which was less about punishing the guilty than it was about setting the record straight and exposing the lies of Apartheid practices. Tutu made a startling observation about forgiveness when he said, “There is no future without forgiveness.” Or to say it differently, real forgiveness opens up both the victim and the offender to a different future than either could have imagined.

On January 2 of this year on a Denver television station, the father of 17-year-old Claire Davis, who had been shot and killed at Arapahoe High School, asked the public to forgive Claire’s shooter, Karl Pierson. “My wife and I forgive Karl Pierson for what he did because he didn’t know what he was doing...Unchecked anger and rage can lead to hatred, and unchecked hatred can lead to tragedy, blindness and loss of humanity. As citizens of our community, the state of Colorado, our nation, and the world, we must strive for kindness, compassion, peace, and love to maintain our humanity. We ask you to join us and honor Claire by forever showing compassion, forgiveness, including whatever is within your power to reach out to those around you that might need the light of your love to help guide them through darkness.” (<http://kmgh.mObl.net/w/main/story/106490814/?sp=1>)

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In our Prayers

Gere Ablett, Norm Lewis, Marion Varner, Catherine O., April S., Joe and Tammy L., Susan Logan, Troy, Hunter V., Val V, Imbue family, Judy, Wayne, Jerry, Karen, and those in the current bulletin

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Continued from page 1 — There is no Future without Forgiveness:

I know there are some people in our culture today who might think the Lenten season is unnecessary. They would argue, “Who needs forty days and six Sundays in a row to be reminded of Jesus’ costly and sacrificial death on a cross? Why do Christians think that the discipline of repentance, self-reflection, humility, and forgiveness of sins is such a big deal? Who needs their forehead marked with ashes in the shape of a cross? Who needs to ponder those strange words of ‘Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return?’ Who needs such moments of being caught up in the mystery of a love that is willing to enter into the depths of human suffering, evil, and death to open up a new future for humanity?”

The words of Michael Davis answer these questions by boldly asserting that the power of forgiveness is greater than the power of hate and revenge. By his invitation to forgive his daughter’s killer, he was demonstrating the significance of Christ’s cross for the world. By his refusal to give in to bitterness, he and his wife modeled a different future that God makes possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus. I wonder what would happen if instead of giving up sweets for Lent this year, we intentionally practiced forgiving those who have wronged us – starting with our families, our congregations, and those we work with each day. Would such a Lenten discipline make a difference? Would we find ourselves drawn more deeply into prayer asking for the Holy Spirit’s strength to let go and forgive those who have wronged us? However you answer this question, may we all this Lenten season find ourselves caught up anew in the mystery of a costly, self-giving love and forgiveness that goes beyond all limits.

In Christ,

Bishop Herman

Dear Friends,

Hear the Prophet Jeremiah: 29:7 Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Over the next few weeks we are inviting community leaders to our church to ask them, “What can we do?” Our schools and hospitals, our fire stations and food banks, our police and EMTs all have things that we can help them with. We will listen to them and see if there are things we can do to help. In doing so we will be seeking the welfare of the city at the same time finding our own blessing by doing that. We will be asking the ‘city’ to help define our purpose.

Next I would like to get to know you better by discovering your spiritual gifts. We will pick a time to fill out the survey that produces the spiritual gifts God has given you and then describes them from a biblical perspective. The survey was created by the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Haugk. Thank you in advance for taking this survey. It will help me to get to know you. And it might surprise you to find out that you have certain spiritual gifts.

We’ll be putting together a ‘Dream Team’ for first steps in re-development.

Also during this first couple months we’ll have cottage meetings so I can get to know you and you can get to know me.

Please also call me at any time. Let me know when someone is ill or otherwise in need of pastoral care.

This is a critical time for Springs of Grace called ‘a time of Holy Urgency’ when we focus together on God’s preferred future for us for the sake of Him who loves us.

Peace be with you,

Pastor Outten

Shrove Tuesday? Pancakes?

Each year, the Springs of Grace Men's Group helps us celebrate Shrove Tuesday with a pancake dinner. But what is Shrove Tuesday, and why eat pancakes?

The word shrove is derived from the middle-English word "Shrive" meaning to confess and receive absolution. Shrove Tuesday occurs immediately before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and is thus a good day for Christians to prepare for Lent through self examination. In doing this, we can determine what sins we have committed and must repent and what aspects of life or areas of spirituality we need to ask God to help them improve upon during the Lenten season. As such, we name this day "Shrove Tuesday" to remind us of this important task.

But why the pancakes? Lent is a time where we prepare to commemorate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. These preparations often consist of prayer, penance, repentance, atonement, and in some cases, self-denial in the form of fasting or giving up some of the luxuries of our lives. Prior to this period, one popular practice was to indulge in the eating of richer, fattier foods that would be abstained from during the observation of Lent. Pancakes were often chosen because they were a good way to use the rich ingredients of eggs, milk, sugar, and butter before they could go to waste during the 40 days of fasting. This tradition holds over to this day, and is especially prevalent in the Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, and Anglican / Episcopal denominations.

In other traditions, Shrove Tuesday is also known as Mardi Gras, french for "Fat Tuesday", and is the culmination of festivals and celebrations leading up to the beginning of Lent.

Please join the Men's Group and the rest of the Springs of Grace family as we celebrate Shrove Tuesday with a Pancake Supper at the church on March 4 at 6 PM. The meal will include sausage, beverages, and all-you-can eat pancakes for just \$3 per person. Children ages 10 and under eat free, and the maximum cost per family is \$10.

February Lessons

<u>March 2</u>	<u>March 9</u>	<u>March 16</u>	<u>March 23</u>
Exodus 24:12-18	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7	Genesis 12:1-4a	Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 2	Psalm 32	Psalm 121	Psalm 95
2 Peter 1:16-21	Romans 5:12-19	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	Romans 5:1-11
Matthew 17:1-9	Matthew 4:1-11	John 3:1-17	John 4:5-12

Daily Scripture Readings are included in the Parish Update handout available at Sunday services.

Quick Notes

Lenten Meals

We will be once again having light soup and sandwich meals each Wednesday before the Lenten evening services. Please sign up to bring soups, sandwiches, or desserts for one or more Wednesday evenings during lent.

Pastor's New Address

Pastor Outten and his family are settling into their new home just over the border in North Carolina. Their new address is:

77 Chestnut Lane
Columbus, NC 28783

Invite Your Friends!

We are experiencing a new and exciting time here at Springs of Grace. We have a lot of energy and have been welcoming many visitors recently. Please invite your friends, co-workers, and other to join us for a worship service or another event. Many benefits can come from others being aware of who we are and what we do, even if they aren't interested in joining us as members!

Yard Sale Coming this Spring

The Women's and Men's group of Springs of Grace will be combining forces this spring to hold a yard sale. We are exploring some different ideas about how to do this to better benefit our church and community, but please begin to think about / bring in things you could donate for this sale. Date is TBD, but probably late spring.

Council Highlights

The church council met on February 17th. Below are highlights from this meeting:

- Pastor Outten will soon be meeting individually with council members and congregants to get to know everyone and hear our opinions and thoughts about the church.
- Pastor Outten and several council members are participating in an Upstate Cluster of similar sized Lutheran churches facing similar issues and problems. The goal of the cluster is to learn from each other how we can make our churches more successful and a more valuable part of our communities.
- An initial donation was made to establish a new Pastor's Discretionary fund that the pastor can use to benefit individuals in need through food cards, gas cards, etc. Future donations can be made by noting "Pastor's Discretion" in the "Special" section of offering envelopes.
- Preparations were made for the celebrations of Pastor Jim's last service, Pastor Outten's first service, and Pastor Outten's installation with the Bishop. Plans are being made for the upcoming season of lent and Easter.
- Jim Voris is working to get the Sunday School program re-established and has some materials on order. Children's church will also start in February.
- A new faucet has been installed in the downstairs bathroom, and work will be done on the timer on the sign on our property, exit signs and emergency lights. We will discuss possible ramp improvements with the landlord.
- Several regular visitors will be invited to join the church in the coming weeks.

Pictures!



Tom & Mary Ellen Wuerfel celebrate an important milestone by renewing their marriage vows in the church on February 23rd



Bishop Herman Yoos and Council President Diane Ablett install Pastor Hobby Outten in front of a full house on February 16th



Income & Expenses

Income for January, 2014:
\$5,829.14

Expenses for January, 2014:
\$5,384.77

Asset Balances as of
January 31, 2014:

Unrestricted Funds: \$55,653.67

Restricted Funds: \$22,019.17

Total Assets: \$77,589.06

2014 Pledges:
(Expected Income)
\$65,240.00

February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion Transfiguration of our Lord	3 7 PM—Women's Fellowship	4 6 PM—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	5 7 PM—Ash Wednesday Service	6	7	8
9 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion 1st Sunday in Lent	10	11	12 6 PM—Lent Meal 7 PM—Lenten Service	13 7 PM—Church Council.	14	15
16 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion 2nd Sunday in Lent	17	18	19 6 PM—Lent Meal 7 PM—Lenten Service	20	21	22 9 AM—1 PM Women's Retreat & Brunch at S.o.G.
23 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion 3rd Sunday in Lent	24	25	26 6 PM—Lent Meal 7 PM—Lenten Service	27	28	29
30 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion 4th Sunday in Lent	31	1	2 6 PM—Lent Meal 7 PM—Lenten Service	3	4	5

Those Who Serve

Date	March 2	March 9	March 16	March 23	March 30
Refreshments	Betty DeBerry & Patricia Morton	Gail Hackett & Ray Cromer	Larry & Barbara Cantrell	Ron & Liz Crawley	Mary Lou Saville & Kay Otten
Ushers	Norm & Jane Lewis	Jim Voris & Rich Donaldson	Marion Varner & Bob Faulks	Ray Cromer & Melton Roof	Larry Cantrell & Bob Faulks
Greeter	Mary Ellen Wuerfel	Tom Wuerfel	Norm Lewis	Nellie Varner	Barbara Cantrell
Communion Assistant	Betty DeBerry	Kay Otten	Melton Roof	Gail Hackett	Bob Faulks
Counters	Rich Donaldson & Robert Faulks	Melton Roof & John Fancher	Susan Rinkema & Rich Donaldson	Mary Lou Saville & Jane Lewis	Rich Donaldson & Gere Ablett
Altar Guild	Mary Lou Saville & Diane Ablett	Betty DeBerry & Patricia Morton	Helen & Melton Roof	Jane Lewis & Nellie Varner	Diane Ablett & Mary Ellen Wuerfel
Lector	Diane Ablett	Jim Voris	Rich Donaldson	Norm Lewis	Gail Hackett

If there is a change or error in this list, please update the copy of this schedule on the Notice Board.

P.O. Box 161000
Boiling Springs, SC

864-599-8802
Office Hours: By appointment
(Additional hours TBA)

Rev. Thomas H. Outten
Mobile: 704-974-0809

Church Council:

Diane Ablett, President

Richard Donaldson, VP

Gail Hackett, Treasurer

Susan Rinkema, Secretary

Bob Faulks, Property Chair

Ron Crawley, Evangelism Chair

Jim Voris, Youth & Education Chair

Back Page Notes

Special Events

March Anniversary

March 18:
13th Anniversary of
Springs of Grace

Please join us for:

- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, March 4 at 6 PM
- Ash Wednesday Service, March 5 at 7 PM
- Wednesday Evening Lenten Services each Wednesday starting March 12. A light meal will be served at 6 PM with a service following at 7 PM
- Women's Retreat, Saturday March 22, from 9 AM to 1 PM. All women are invited and asked to bring a friend