



# GraceNet

Knoxville, TN

March 2020

## *A Time of Testing*

**T**hroughout the Bible it tells us that God tests His people. For instance, it says the God tested Abraham by telling him to go and sacrifice his son Isaac. In the Book of Judges God tested the Israelites by not driving out all the enemies in the Promised Land. In the book of Revelation, it speaks of an hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth (Revelation 3:10).

Obviously, we are tested by God as well. There is illness, relationship failures, job troubles or loss, financial woes, natural disasters and personal tragedies like a car accident or a house fire. We are greatly tested by such things!

But why? I've always found the idea that God is testing us mystifying. God searches our hearts and minds. He knows everything about us. The textbook answer is that these tests are to refine us, make us stronger and more resilient Christians. It is true that our greatest spiritual growth usually comes when we are struggling or suffering. I find the mysterious part is why God chooses certain tests for this person and a different test for another.

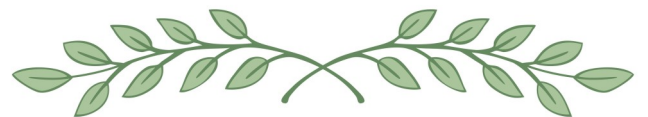
It is when we are tested that it is important that we know God and trust Him. To know Him is to know that He is a loving, compassionate God who has our best interest in mind. To trust Him is to not doubt that in the worst moments of our lives that He is there to help us and save us.

Jesus slept in the stern of a boat while a furious storm rocked the boat and while the waves were breaking over the sides. The boat was being swamped. His disciples were frantic. The disciples woke Jesus and, in their panic, cried out, "Teacher, don't you care that we drown?"

Jesus took care of the storm in an instant. "Be quiet! Be still!" and the storm died down and it became perfectly calm. Then Jesus turned to His disciples, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

Was this said in a rebuking way or was it in an instructive way? I like to think Jesus was teaching His disciples about tests they will face. Storms will come. We will be tested. Shall we have faith in our all-powerful, all knowing and most importantly our compassionate and loving Savior? Yes, we must! We may not know every detail of the why and how of our tests, but we can have confidence in the One who can quiet the storm and bring us through.

~ Pastor Rich



# FAITH



# TRUST HIM



## Quilts and Critters

**L**adies, it's time to come together and help make "Quilts & Critters." Please join us at **10 a.m. on Saturday, March 14**, to tie "Quilts" for Lutheran World Relief and stuff "Comfort Critters" for sick children.

The quilts are shipped around the world to provide warmth, and the critters are given locally to little ones in need of a hug!

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall at Grace for this LWML Quarterly gathering to serve our Lord. No sewing skills are required, but you may learn to do something new and help to share Jesus' love, too!



## A Prayer for Lent

Lent has begun: A time for both walking with Jesus toward the cross and being strengthened in our faith and knowledge of God.

*Lord, we pray that you will help this Lenten season be a time of spiritual growth for each of us and for your whole church. Amen.*

## Grace Prayer Team Welcomes Requests

**T**he Grace Prayer Team is up and running! If you have a prayer request that you would like prayed over by the Grace Prayer Team, we welcome your requests. Please contact **Kristin McGee** at [kdmcgee08@gmail.com](mailto:kdmcgee08@gmail.com) (865-384-9834) or **Ev Brown** ([evbrown@gmail.com](mailto:evbrown@gmail.com) (865-870-5603)). The request will then be passed on to the team. We continue to welcome Prayer Team members as well. If you are interested in praying for the needs submitted by our church family, please contact Kristin or Ev with your interest.



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Articles for GraceNet are due by the **1st of each month** for the following month's edition.

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*If you have a special event you would like to have publicized in GraceNet, please submit the information to*

*Debbie Booher by the 1st of each month for publication in the following month's newsletter.*

## Repentance

I remember family vacations before interstate highways. Numbered highways went through the center of towns and cities. There were no exits and no GPS receivers. There were folded maps and clusters of small black and white signs in shapes to indicate state or federal highways. These signs were mounted on a pole very near the intersection where highways branched off in various directions. Each sign had a number to indicate the highway. Signs were grouped with arrows to indicate which overlapping highways turned to the right or left and which went straight. Sometimes there were as many as a dozen such signs crowded together. Following the continuation of your highway could be confusing and it was common to make a mistake. That usually resulted in an argument between the map reader and the driver.

I remember one particular trip. We had gone a couple of miles after making a turn in the center of a small city. We were outside the town and hints were growing that this road was not the highway we wanted. No one in the car said, "Let's just follow this and see where it goes." Instead, I remember my mother and father had words with each other. The car slowed quickly and turned onto a short approach to a farm field, stopped, backed up, and went in the opposite direction.

That experience from my childhood is a favorite image for the biblical meaning of repentance. It is a combination of two words meaning "a change of thinking." It is a realization you have been going the wrong way in life. You want to change direction, not because you were caught and are embarrassed, but because you realize how harmful to you that wrong direction is. You want to be done with it and go that way no more.

A vivid story of repentance in the New Testament is the story Jesus told about the Pharisee and the tax collector (Publican) in the Temple from Luke 18. The Pharisee was from a group that believed God would make His kingly rule a reality if they could get one-tenth of the population to follow God's laws for one day. He was full of himself and his own virtue. But, the tax collector stood nearby ashamed of what he had done and said, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" (Tax collectors were despised as traitors in the service of a foreign power who held a license to steal by extortion.) The tax collector received God's forgiveness. The Pharisee did not.

God does not forgive because repentance is a virtuous work we perform. Rather, it is an attitude that turns away from sin and is fully open to God's forgiveness. Luther spoke of God's *opus alienum* (foreign work of showing wrath [Isaiah 28:17-21]) and His *opus propter* (fitting work of showing mercy). It is His desire to forgive. But, forgiveness is impossible until we are ready to turn from our sin.

~ Rev. Phil Bohlken



***Don't Be Late!!!!***

***Daylight Savings Time***

***begins***

***Sunday, March 8***

***Set your clocks ahead 1 hour.***

# MARCH

## Birthdays

3/1	Isaac Smith	3/17	Alli Duenckel
3/2	Sarah Anderson	3/17	Erik Kabela
3/2	Nicole Cox	3/17	Cole Turner
3/2	Gary Pruett	3/18	Olivia Baserman
3/2	Mack Webster	3/20	Kenny Blankenship
3/3	Mitchell Meyers	3/20	Scotty Krempasky
3/3	David Plummer	3/20	Mary Stoner
3/3	Levi Smithey	3/20	Grace Williams
3/4	Penny Perry	3/20	Rich Wolfe
3/4	Rachel Rogers	3/21	Abigail Baserman
3/5	Pam Baker	3/21	Dawson Daenzer
3/5	Isabella Daenzer	3/21	Erin Kragenbrink
3/5	Mike Donnelly	3/22	Andrew Harter
3/5	Mary Belle Early	3/22	Nicholas Mackley
3/6	Jenni Wylie	3/22	Morgan Schmidt
3/7	Kylie Hatfield	3/24	Gloria Blackwell
3/9	Robert Brearey	3/25	Elizabeth Augustus
3/11	Kaylee McIlwain	3/26	Scott Suprenant
3/11	Teri Stoddard	3/26	Carol Voorhees
3/12	April Calcutt	3/28	Dale King
3/12	Gary Krohnfeldt	3/28	Katha O'Hatnick
3/12	Deborah Rowlands	3/28	Alyssa Riggs
3/12	Brianna Stock	3/29	Sandra Arnold
3/12	Becky Strickland	3/30	Elaina Riggs
3/15	Jacob Curtis	3/30	Evan Thompson
3/15	Rheagan Haynes	3/31	Amy Baserman
3/15	Mike Murphy	3/31	Christian Collins
3/16	Pastor Phil Bohlken	3/31	Nancy May
3/16	Anne Smeltzer	3/31	Sherry Schoolcraft
3/16	Patricia Strickland		

## March Scripture of the Month

*When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?*

~ Psalm 56:3-4, NIV

# MARCH

## Anniversaries

3/1	Craig & Chris Emerson
3/3	Les & Jan Grebe
3/3	Larry & Diana Holden
3/13	Don & Holly Mings
3/22	Don & Nicole Cox
3/25	Jerry & Maggie Geithman
3/26	Eric & Suzi Schmidt
3/28	Byron & Linda Mahan
3/31	Andy & Marilyn Caddle

## Lenten Worship

Wednesday Evenings—6:30 p.m.

Preceded by dinner at 5:15 p.m.

There will be no Noon Lenten services this year.

## Bible Quiz

**W**ho came to Jesus by night to ask him questions, and what famous Bible verse was part of Jesus' answer?

- Martha; "I am the resurrection and the life ..."
- Peter; "Do to others what you would have them do ..."
- Thomas; "I am the way and the truth and the life ..."
- Nicodemus; "For God so loved the world ..."



Answer: D (See John 3:1-16)

## March Children's Curriculum Themes

In an attempt to connect the adults and children of Grace just a bit more, I will be letting people know the theme and verse of the week in our children's Sunday school classes. I would love it if the adults would join in memorizing or at least talking about it to the children as they see each other in the halls. Listed below are the themes and scripture for March.

~ Frieda Guthrie

DATE	THEME	VERSE
March 1	<b>We can pray to God.</b>	<i>This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."</i> (Matthew 6:9-13)
March 8	<b>God meets our needs.</b>	<i>And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.</i> (Philippians 4:19)
March 15	<b>Jesus gives us eternal life.</b>	<i>For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.</i> (John 3:16)
March 22	<b>Jesus loves everyone.</b>	<i>He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.</i> (1 John 5:12)
March 29	<b>Jesus says to love others as ourselves.</b>	<i>Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.</i> (Ephesians 4:32)



## 2020 Operation Christmas Child



Our congregation has always been very supportive of "Operation Christmas Child" but this year, we would like to increase that support in a big way. So, **the 4th Sunday of every month has been designated as "Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Sunday."** We would like to ask each family to consider filling one shoebox each month during 2020 to support this ministry. Just think what we could accomplish if every family in our church gave just one box per month!!

If you would like to participate, boxes are provided and can be found in the hallway of the Fellowship Hall or on a cart in the coffee area. Completed boxes can be returned to the same two areas. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact Frieda Guthrie at [childrensmin@visitgrace.org](mailto:childrensmin@visitgrace.org) or Paul Guthrie at [pgvint3@gmail.com](mailto:pgvint3@gmail.com)

Watch for updates on how we're progressing throughout the year!!

## Via de Cristo

**W**hat is *Via de Cristo*? It is a structured, 3-day weekend retreat designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people and bring them to a new awareness of living in God's grace. It is a weekend of spiritual renewal based on Lutheran teaching, but also open to others. It is a weekend of letting God's grace and love flow over you through others. It is a weekend of growth, study, and yes, surprises. It can be life changing.

Through *Via de Cristo*, we are encouraged to persevere and grow in our faith, to become an effective channel of God's love to others, and to strengthen a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

*Via de Cristo* is meant to inspire, challenge and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches and communities.

The purpose of *Via de Cristo* is based on the fundamentals of Christianity, concentrating on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. The focus is not on *Via de Cristo* but on the local church.

Any Christian adult attend, but we ask that you be totally open to God at work in you.

*Via de Cristo* is held twice a year in April and October.

For more information about attending a weekend of *Via de Cristo*, please stop by the welcome desk in the Family Life Center and pick up a brochure.



## Lent is Here

**S**ince the fourth century, Lent has been observed by Christians as a period of spiritual preparation for Easter Sunday—the greatest day on the Christian calendar. We observe Lent for 40 days (excluding Sundays) to examine our spiritual condition, to repent (if needed), to strive to improve our relationship with God and to walk more faithfully with Him.

During Lent, some Christians give up something that hinders their relationship to God. Others do something extra special for their spiritual growth or to make a special sacrifice.

When presiding as bishop of the Episcopal Church, Arthur Lichtenberg quoted the following Lenten advice, which we can also take to heart today:

- Fast from criticism, and feast on praise.
- Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy.
- Fast from ill-temper, and feast on peace.
- Fast from resentment, and feast on contentment.
- Fast from jealousy, and feast on love.
- Fast from pride, and feast on humility.
- Fast from selfishness and feast on service.
- Fast from fear, and feast on faith.



## HealthLine

**P**lease note that everything written in this column will be backed by research, various studies, and facts. There will be no personal opinions.

~ Sheila Wittke



## Not All Sitting is Equal: TV Time is Worse for Heart

**F**or years, research has shown that sitting increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and early death, but a new study indicates that not all types of sitting are equal. The study, which was published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, found that sitting while watching TV was a greater heart risk than sitting at work, but that moderate-to-vigorous exercise may reduce or eliminate its harmful effects.

Participants who watched TV four or more hours a day increased their heart risk and death risk by 50 percent compared to those who watched less than two hours a day. However, there was no increased risk seen in those individuals who watched TV for four hours a day, but also exercised 150 minutes a week (30 minutes a day for five days).

## Good St. Patrick

**O**n March 17, many churches, especially those with a large Irish population, will celebrate the life of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. He was born in 387 and died in 493. He grew up in a Christian home in Britain, but wasn't very religious until a major event changed his life. As a teen, he was captured and sold into slavery in Ireland, but escaped to Gaul (France) after six years. The years of enslavement strengthened his faith. He later wrote, "In that strange land [Ireland], the Lord opened my unbelieving eyes." He was led by God's voice to return to Ireland where he converted people to Christianity tribe by tribe.

St. Patrick was a unique servant of God who led thousands into Christianity. Here is a small portion of St. Patrick's statement of devotion to God:

I bind to myself today  
 God's Power to guide me,  
 God's Might to uphold me,  
 God's Wisdom to teach me,  
 God's Eye to watch over me,  
 God's Ear to hear me,  
 God's Word to give me speech,  
 God's Hand to guide me,  
 God's Way to lie before me,  
 God's Shield to shelter me,  
 God's Host to secure me,  
 Against the snares of demons,  
 Against the seductions of vices,  
 Against the lusts of nature,  
 Against everyone who meditates injury to me,

St. Patrick's  
Day



*Trust Me --  
I'll explain later!!*

*~ God*



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Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. (Traditional) and  
9:30 a.m. (Blended)/11:00 a.m. (Contemporary)  
Wednesday Worship: 6:30 p.m. (Blended)  
Sunday School & Bible Classes @ 9:30 a.m./11:00 a.m.*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

TO:



***“Connect ~ Grow ~ Serve”***