

# LIFE TOGETHER

*Grace Lutheran Church*

801 East Willow Grove Ave., Wyndmoor, PA 19038-7907 (215) 836-2366

Sundays 10 AM Holy Communion (& Sunday School in season)

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Web Site at [www.gracewyndmoor.org](http://www.gracewyndmoor.org)

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Issue 2

## PASTOR'S LETTER

### *Is the Gospel Political?*

These are certainly unique times in which we are living. The *tension* and *anxiety* experienced by the vast majority of folks these days is almost palpable, regardless of the age of the individuals involved or the type of encounter involved. There just seems to be an 'edginess' among us, rooted in the pervasive 'uncertainty' that now permeates our present reality.

As a Christian community of faith, we have now entered into the season of Lent, beginning on *Ash Wednesday*, March 1, 2017. As we journey through the Lenten season this year, we will be studying one of the foundational publications of our faith, *Luther's Small Catechism*, written by Martin Luther in 1529 in response to the need for a basic, Christian instructional tool to be used by lay people and with children at home. It remains an important part of Lutheran Christian Education and Confirmation programs, including our own here at Grace. *Luther's Small Catechism* has certainly withstood the "*test of time*."

But this is a turbulent time. Very *different* from the time in which Luther lived, and yet Luther recognized that faith and *works*, faith and *society*, faith and *government*, faith and *occupation* were not isolated aspects of one's life, insulated from one another. When Luther realized that he could never "achieve" God's righteousness

through any merit of his own, he was freed from the grip and weight of sin and guilt with which he had been burdened for years. It was in the New/Second Testament that Luther discovered *justification by grace through faith*: "*But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of*

*God, they are justified by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus... For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law.*" (Romans 3:21-28)

As Christians living in the world today, what part does our *faith* play in our daily lives, living in community, engaging in business, participating in neighborhood groups, advocating for the most vulnerable among us, or providing leadership on school boards and church councils and local, county or state governments? As "issues" arise for us when we serve in any of these roles, does our *faith* need to remain "neutral?" Does the church need to remain "neutral" on all issues, including, and perhaps especially, on "political" issues?



[Continued on Page 2]

I think it is helpful to remember that the word “politics” derives from the Greek “polis” meaning “city-state,” but also “citizenship” or “body of citizens.” Therefore, “politics” has to do with our *communal life together*. Understood that way, there is no doubt that our gathering together as Christians on Sunday mornings to sing, pray, read and interpret Scripture and participate in the sacraments together is “political.”

Quite truthfully, as an ordained woman, my mere presence in the pulpit and standing behind the altar consecrating bread and wine is “political.” There simply is no avoiding “politics” in church, whether in the pulpit or gathered around the table. The mere presence of individual bodies—young and old, rich and poor, gay and straight, black and white, differently abled and able bodied, male and female—all of us radically welcomed and TOGETHER making up the “Body of Christ” is “political.”

The problem arises when those politics become “partisan.” The radically diverse “body of Christ” is shattered when the inclusive message of the gospel is reduced to the platform of a particular “political party” or candidate. Because the church is a community of diverse people, it needs to be the place where we can cross party lines and find space for discussion and conversation *with* each other. But a conversation is not an opportunity for me to prove my points over and against yours. A conversation is an opportunity in which I genuinely try to understand where you are coming from and where I share where I am coming from—an opportunity for both of us to find points of connection, recognizing and perhaps challenging one another at points of conflict, but always remaining in connection.

It seems to me that the gospel is always “political” in the sense that it relates to how a community is organized and how it functions. That has nothing to do with “partisanship.” The gospels present us a clear alternative to the “politics” of any day

and invite us to consider ourselves citizens of a ‘different’ kind of kingdom/nation.

It will not be long before we celebrate *Palm/Passion Sunday* on April 9, 2017. Just consider what an intensely political and subversive act it was for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. Jesus symbolically rode into the city in the same way as a new king in ancient days. He was proclaiming a *different* “political reality” than the one presented by the religious and secular leaders of his day.

Politics certainly is a subject with the potential to be toxic and divisive, which is something we very much try to avoid in the church, striving always to live as the ‘one’ “Body of Christ” in the world. But I simply do not see any way to escape the reality of the gospel being a political message as it calls us to *care for, stand with and accompany* those who are oppressed, imprisoned and marginalized in society.

There will be times when our Christian witness might be divisive. And although Christ teaches us the value of love over violence, the power of life over death, he never strayed away from necessary conflict. He rebuked his own disciples. He chastised the Pharisees. He cleared the temple of money changers. Christ took a stand against the political structures and leaders of his day when he deemed them contrary to God’s will.

In the midst of our present “anxious” climate, it seems to me, we need to do our best, as the “body of Christ” in the world, and as a community of God’s faith-filled people, to be ready to *give and receive* forgiveness—to work toward reconciliation when the ‘political’ things Christ has called us to do cause tension among believers. But that does not mean we can avoid doing them.

Our Christian faith offers the promise of forgiveness and reconciliation, not just when we neglect to give those we

**Every good conversation starts with good listening.**

*[Continued on Page 3]*

love the very best of ourselves, but when we fall short in any area of our lives. Forgiveness is a vital part of human relationships, but it is also a vital part of relationships between nations. The rule of justice and law among nations depends ultimately on forgiveness and reconciliation within human hearts.

As people of God and followers of Jesus Christ, we have a responsibility to pray for our nation and its leaders. I urge you to pray fervently and steadfastly for both. Prayer shapes who we are and how we



*live and move and have our being* in the world. As we pray, we are molded into the people God has called us to be. Pray without ceasing, please.

Christ was born into and lived *with* and *among* the political realities of his day, and so must we. As baptized children of God, we are called to witness to a new power and a new way for community to navigate that power. Let us be bold and confident in our faith and witness.

Your partner in ministry,  
*Pastor Carol*

# WORSHIP

March

## The Season of Lent

**LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY ON MARCH 1**

<b>Wednesday, March 1</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b> <b>Noon Holy Communion</b> <b>7:30 PM</b>
<b>Sunday, March 5</b>	<b>First Sunday in Lent</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, March 12</b>	<b>Second Sunday in Lent</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, March 19</b>	<b>Third Sunday in Lent</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, March 26</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>

### April

<b>Sunday, April 2</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, April 9</b>	<b>Passion/Palm Sunday</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Thursday, April 13</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday</b> <i>[see Page 4]</i>
<b>Friday, April 14</b>	<b>Good Friday</b> <i>[see Page 4]</i>

## The Season of Easter

<b>Sunday, April 16</b>	<b>The Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Day</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, April 23</b>	<b>Second Sunday of Easter</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, April 30</b>	<b>Third Sunday of Easter</b> <b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>

## Worship in Lent – A Summary

Following Ash Wednesday on March 1, we gather on **five Tuesday evenings** for a soup supper (Fellowship Hall) followed by worship/reflection/devotions (Sanctuary). You may attend either or both!

**Tuesdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28, and April 4**

**06:15 PM Soup Supper/Fellowship Hall**

**07:30 PM Devotions-Worship/Sanctuary**

<b>Sunday, March 5</b>	<b>First Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, March 12</b>	<b>Second Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, March 19</b>	<b>Third Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, March 26</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, April 2</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday, April 9</b>	<b>Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>

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*Triumphal Entry*



*Last Supper*



*Crucifixion*



*Empty Tomb*

+++++|+++++

<b>Thursday, April 13</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	<b>07:30 PM Holy Communion</b>
<b>Friday, April 14</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>12:00 Noon Spoken Worship/ 07:30 PM Tenebrae with Choir</b>
<b>Sunday, April 16</b>	<b>Resurrection of Our Lord-Easter Sunday</b>	<b>10:00 AM Holy Communion</b>

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### MARCH & APRIL ALTAR FLOWERS

- |              |    |   |
|--------------|----|---|
| <b>March</b> | 5  | Carole Roman, John & Edward Gibbons, in memory of their brother, William M. Gibbons               |
|              | 12 | Lori Russell in memory and honor of her friends   |
|              | 19 | Gail Garin in loving memory of her mother, Eleanor Garin  |
|              | 26 | Given to the glory of God by WELCA to honor the women of Grace Church                             |
| <b>April</b> | 2  | Paula and Bill Knipe in honor of Chris, Connie, Tim, Kim, Marc, Will and Hilary                   |
|              | 9  | Joan Marcolina and her daughters in memory of their beloved husband and father, Richard Marcolina |
|              | 16 | Sue Samson in honor of her children   |
|              | 23 | Evelyn Alston in honor of her daughters' birthdays  |
|              | 30 | Cathleen Scarpa in celebration of the life of Eileen Connolly.                                    |

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2017

**The congregation's Spring Annual Meeting will be convened following worship.**

This meeting is for presentation of ministry program reports and an update of the state of congregational finances. The present and future of Grace Church's congregational ministry is the focus. Please attend!

**Program/Committee Leaders please note: Copy-ready reports are due in the office by May 21.**

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**2017 Reservation Form – Easter Plants**

**EASTER**

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_ AND/OR

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ pot(s) of Easter Lilies at \$12.00 each.

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ pot(s) of Tulips at \$10.00 each.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to pick up the plant(s) after the service on Easter morning.

\_\_\_\_\_ I prefer that the church distribute the plant(s) to the sick or shut-ins.

Please place reservation form and your check, payable to Grace Lutheran Church and marked Easter Plants, in an envelope and send it to:

Mrs. Joan Marcolina, Grace Lutheran Church, 801 East Willow Grove Avenue, Wyndmoor, PA 19038  
If brought to a Worship Service, please place the envelope in the plate during the offering. Please be certain to write EASTER PLANTS and the amount on both the envelope and the check.

If you are receiving this form in an e-mail version of the newsletter, you can print this page, or you can pick up a copy of the form at church on Sunday, OR you may call the office and leave a message with the information needed.

All reservations must be received by **Sunday, April 2, 12 Noon**. If you have any questions, please call the Church Office at 215-836-2366.

Thank you for your cooperation and help in decorating the church for our celebration of Easter, The Resurrection of Our Lord!

**MARCH & APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

03/01 RG Bistline  
03/05 Robin Liberty  
03/06 Cathleen Scarpa  
03/11 William Ochester  
03/11 Travis Washington  
03/13 Richard Wightman  
03/16 Heather Black  
03/20 Will A Knipe  
03/20 Nicole Washington  
03/22 Christine Killough  
03/23 Cathy Burr  
03/30 Michael Washington Jr.



04/07 Leslie Green Siegfried  
04/12 Gerardo Gonzales, Jr.  
04/13 Shannen Quinn  
04/15 Noah Nicholson  
04/17 Linda Liberty  
04/21 Don Hallman  
04/24 Susan Eames

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

## Residential Events

Montgomery County accepts household hazardous waste on six dates in 2017, each at a different location. Here are the dates and locations of events during the March-April period of this issue of *Life Together*:

### Saturday, April 22

Indian Valley Middle School  
130 Maple Avenue, Harleysville

### Saturday, May 13

Lockheed Martin (by Goddard Blvd)  
230 Mall Blvd, King of Prussia

### Saturday, May 20

Temple U. –Ambler Campus  
Ambler, PA (via 1431 E. Butler)

All events are scheduled **9:00 AM – 3:00 PM**, rain or shine.

Dates to follow:

Saturdays **June 24** (Abington) and **September 23** (Royersford), and Sunday, **October 22** (Penn Valley).

**ACCEPTABLE ITEMS:** gasoline, oil, kerosene, turpentine, paint thinner, oil paint, stains, varnish, pool chemicals, herbicides, pesticides, antifreeze, caustic cleaners and solvents, mercury, thermometers, flares, fire extinguishers, lead acid batteries, rechargeable batteries, fluorescent light tubes and ballast, CFL bulbs, mini propane canisters, electric oil-filled heaters.

**DO NOT BRING:** electronics, appliances, asbestos, explosives, ammunition, medical waste, radioactive waste, smoke detectors, items containing Freon, tires, latex or water-based paint, alkaline household batteries, prescription medications, propane tanks.

For full details, go to [MontgomeryCountyRecycles.org](http://MontgomeryCountyRecycles.org).

## STUDY GROUP

Tuesday, February 28, 7:30 PM

**Charity: How can we best contribute our time and resources in today's troubled world?**

Home of Marie and Roy Powell, 8320 MacArthur Road, Wyndmoor, 215-836-1463. Marie will serve supper between 6:45 and 7:00, with discussion to begin at 7:30.



Tuesday, March 28

We participate in the Grace Church Lenten Soup/Supper this evening. Supper at 6:15 PM, worship/devotions 7:30 PM.

Tuesday, April 25, 7:30 PM

**TBA!!!**

Group Leadership is by Gail Garin (215-576-0269), [ggarin@verizon.net](mailto:ggarin@verizon.net), Rosella Heilemann (215-233-3275), [rosellach@comcast.net](mailto:rosellach@comcast.net), and Marie Shafer (215-884-7351)

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Saturday, May 20**

is the date for the annual **Attic Treasures Sale by Grace WELCA** (Women of the ELCA), AKA “The Spring Sale.” This event is a chance to share your attic treasures, and to buy and eat! Details coming in the May-June issue of *Life Together*.

## TRIBUTE GIFTS

Make an **unrestricted** donation to Grace Lutheran Church called a “**Tribute Gift**” -- a donation **in addition to your regular giving** in support of the daily ministry of the congregation. Just enclose your check or cash in an envelope with the information requested below and submit it in the Sunday

offering or by mail to the church office. This is a way of memorializing, honoring, or celebrating a person or an event important to you at the same time that you help meet the costs of our current ministry.

### TRIBUTE GIFT

\_\_\_ In honor of, \_\_\_ In memory of, \_\_\_ In celebration of, \_\_\_ In thanksgiving for

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name/names of person(s) or event(s)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name(s) of donor(s)*

make(s) this unrestricted gift in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the daily ministry of Grace Lutheran Church of Wyndmoor. This is in addition to regular giving by the donor.

### RECENT TRIBUTE GIFTS

**In thanksgiving for, and in honor and celebration of, Pastor Carol Ficken**

from the Horning and Krol families.

**In thanksgiving for the support given to the Nyiri family this past year,** from the Nyiri family.

**In thanksgiving for Pastor Carol Ficken,** from Barbara Bernstengel.

**In honor of Pastor Carol,** from Paula and Bill Knipe.

**In memory of Jo Samson,** from Sue Samson

**In honor of Pastor Carol,** from Ellie Ziegler.

**In memory of Maria Eames,** from Fred, Sue, Chuckie, and Jack Eames.

**In honor of Pastor Carol, Sheridan Seyfried, RG Bistline, and Alli Samson,**

from Fred, Sue, Chuckie, and Jack Eames.

## GRACE DIRECTORY

The newest edition is **dated January 2017**, with copies available in the Narthex or Gathering Room, or from the Office. You may also request an electronic copy by e-mail to

[gracewyndmoor@verizon.net](mailto:gracewyndmoor@verizon.net). Send directory updates (phone, address, e-mail address) to the Newsletter Editor by e-mail or US mail, or deliver to the office.

### Addition

**Raffauf, Cheryl,** 7034 Lincoln Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19119, 215-247-2505

*[Embarrassed Editor omitted Cheryl's listing from the last two editions of the directory!]*



*Embarrassed Ed.*

### New address

**Antinucci, Lisa** (and Dominic), 1614 Clive Road, Oreland, PA 19075.

## DISTRIBUTION OF MONTHLY CALENDAR

The Grace calendar, issued every month,  
is distributed apart from this newsletter by e-mail and by paper copies at church.

## 2016 FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Full Year 2016 (January 1 – December 31)

### INCOME AND EXPENSES

Comparison of income and expenses for the years of 2015 and 2016.

	2015	2016	%
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>\$153,389</b>	<b>\$139,540</b>	<b>-9%</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$185,929</b>	<b>\$173,289</b>	<b>-7%</b>
<b>DIFFERENCE</b>	<b>(\$32,539)</b>	<b>(\$33,749)</b>	<b>4%</b>

Thus, income was **down** by \$13,849 compared to the preceding year, but also expenses were **down** by \$12,640. The deficit was greater than that of 2015 by \$2,227, close to the deficit anticipated in the 2016 budget.

### RESERVES

These are funds available to meet shortfalls in the income for expenses (funds in this report include unrestricted reserves and the checking account):

<b>January 1, 2016</b>	<b>\$125,689.00</b>
<b>December 31, 2016</b>	<b>\$ 95,200.66</b>
<b>CHANGE</b>	<b>(\$ 30,488.34)</b>

## THANKS FROM SILVER SPRINGS-MARTIN LUTHER SCHOOL

A letter from Lynn Unipan, Development Director, addressed thanks to Ray Bistline and Grace Church.

*Our thanks to you and our friends at Grace Lutheran Church, for the donation of a terrific collection of Christmas gifts for the children of Silver Springs-Martin Luther School that they enjoyed during the holiday season! The boys and girls were thrilled to receive toys, cards, puzzles and so much more that was delivered to us for the children.*

## WILL YOU PRODUCE LIFE TOGETHER?

Editor of *Life Together*, Bill Shafer, will be moving with Marie to southern Delaware County PA this Spring. We need someone to take on the role of editing (more like producing) this newsletter. It does NOT have to be this complicated (one of Bill's "gifts" is complication!). Speak up, and join Bill in producing the May-June issue to learn what the deal is.



**MARCH-APRIL FOR KIDS**  
*(and curious uninhibited adults!)*

Subscribers can download these children's activities from our Web site:  
[www.NewsletterNewsletter.com](http://www.NewsletterNewsletter.com)

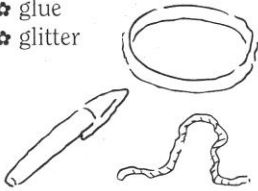
**The Newsletter** Newsletter®

**C H I L D R E N**

Make a "Son" Catcher

*You will need:*

- ✦ round, clear plastic, food container lid
- ✦ hole punch
- ✦ yarn
- ✦ permanent markers in a variety of colors
- ✦ glue
- ✦ glitter

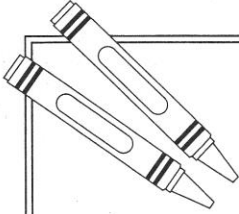


*How to make it:*

- ✦ Using the markers and glitter, decorate the lid with the name of Jesus and some bright colors and shapes.
- ✦ Punch a hole in the top.
- ✦ Put a piece of yarn through the hole and tie it to make a hanger.
- ✦ Hang in a window to catch the sun.



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**Just for KIDS**

**One of a Kind**

The scrambled words and phrases below are all found in the Bible. They all have something in common. Find what that is. First, unscramble the words. Next, transfer the circled letters in order to the lines at the bottom of the page.

- 1) eiVn \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_
- 2) ilLy fo teh elaVly  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 3) abLm fo dGo \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 4) estMar \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 5) eJuss \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 6) okRc \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 7) rdBea fo eiLf \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 8) higLt fo hte dorWl  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 9) voaSir \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 10) doLr \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 11) ishCrt \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 12) ehSprhed \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 13) Teh doWr \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 14) rncPie fo cePae  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (o) \_ \_ \_ \_

What do all these words have in common?

" \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ , \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ."

Answers: Vine; Lily of the Valley; Lamb of God; Master; Jesus; Rock; Bread of Life; Light of the World; Savior; Lord; Christ; Shepherd; The Word; Prince of Peace; Names of God's Son.

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**AFFIRMATION OF WELCOME**

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, Grace Lutheran Church and its members believe that Christ makes us all one. We affirm that people of all sexual orientations and gender identities share the worth that comes from being unique individuals created by God, that they are welcome within the membership and leadership of this congregation and that we encourage and expect them to share in the sacramental and general life of this community of faith.

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**March-April 2017**

The Newsletter of

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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**The Rev. Carol L. Ficken, Pastor**  
**Sheridan Seyfried, Minister of Music**  
**Charles Horning, Office Manager**  
**Joseph Romito, Sexton**  
**Sheree Tucker, Nursery Attendant**  
**William Shafer, Editor, *Life Together***

From:  
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Wyndmoor, PA 19038-7907

**TO:**

**FIRST CLASS US MAIL**