



Good News from Grace

February 2024



Our Purpose

The purpose of our church is to make a difference by serving others through God's love and our faith.

Crossing the Threshold: Epiphany to Lent

This month is one of liturgical transition. We cross the threshold of Epiphany on the Sunday of the Transfiguration, February 11 to Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 14 (also Valentine's Day). Jesus called his disciples and introduced them to a new way of living - to cross the threshold of law to gospel (love). The disciples came to know Jesus as their teacher, healer, storyteller and traveling companion. They had grown comfortable with their master. His ways, including his appearance, are familiar to them.

And then something quite unimaginable takes place. Jesus takes Peter, James and John, his inner circle of disciples to the mountaintop. They witness a change that is both terrifying and awesome. Jesus is recognizable, and yet, at the same time, unrecognizable. The man they thought they knew is suddenly more, suddenly different. He will turn his face to go in a different direction, to cross a threshold that will take him to Jerusalem for death on the cross. This is truly not what the disciples ever expected.

Like the disciples, we will turn our faces from the light of Epiphany to the long shadows of Lent. Beginning with the imposition of ashes on our foreheads, we are reminded who we really are: "dust and to dust we shall return." We do not know what thresholds we will encounter in the wilderness. We do not know the ways that God will invite us to change, to grow, to cross over. We long for changes in our world - a turn to peace in war-torn regions, a shift in political rhetoric and racial justice, and a greater sharing of the way of Jesus (reconciliation, service, justice and love). But

just as the Bible stories of Epiphany bear witness to something true about the life of faith, we can trust the One who invites us to cross over. We can trust that resurrection waits for us on the other side.

The Season of Lent is a penitential season marked by fasting and giving something up as a reminder that Christ gave up his life for us. Instead of giving something up, I take on a spiritual discipline such as studying a book of the Bible or a specific story.

This year, I invite you to join me in reflecting on one of Jesus' best known parables, The Prodigal Son. As explained on page 3 of this newsletter, we will explore this parable using insights offered by Henri Nouwen in his book, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. I first read this book several years ago as one of my Lenten studies, then I picked it up again when the parable of the Prodigal Son came up in the three year lectionary cycle of Luke's Gospel. Although we are in the year of Mark's Gospel (cycle B), this is a thought-provoking, spiritually uplifting parable to study at any time of the year. Henri Nouwen's reflections on his encounter with Rembrandt's painting of the return of the prodigal son, offers profound insights about our behaviors as we grow and change throughout our lives. I am excited about diving deeper into this parable with you during our midweek Lenten services.

We cross many thresholds in our faith journeys. Engage with one another, with your faith community and above all, with God, as we venture from the mountaintop of the Transfiguration to the valley of Lent.

Journeying with you to renew our spirits,

Pastor Lois

Join us for Worship!

Saturdays at 5:00PM

Sundays at 9:30AM

or

[via Live Stream](#)

Sunday School

Sundays at 10:45am

September to May

This Month at Grace...

The Sanctuary Lamp Sponsorship for **February** is given by Judy Zeiders in honor of her daughter, Amy Miller.

The Special Benevolence Offering for the **First Sunday in February** is **Boy Scout Troop 54. Harrisburg Food Pantry** will be the Special Offering the rest of the month. To contribute please list the dollar amount next to Special Offering Ministry and list *BSA Troop 54* or *Harrisburg Food Pantry* under comments.

2024 Sponsorship Opportunities

[CLICK HERE](#) to see available dates for 2024.

If you are interested in sponsoring one of these weeks you can either sign up on the bulletin board across from the elevator or contact Diane in the church office at 717-737-0439 x15 or deppengelc@gmail.com.

Note: Other Altar Flower dates are available for sponsorship at special request by contacting the church office two weeks date you wish to sponsor.

If you sponsor a week, but do not plan to take the flowers home please let the church office know prior to that week. We have a member who will deliver flowers to Grace's homebound members.

Senior Helpers



Grace's Senior Helpers are here to get you where you need to go. Contact the church office Monday - Thursday

from 8am - 12noon at 717-737-0439 or email gelc@comcast.net for a list of members who are available to drive you.

If you'd like to be added to the Senior Helper list to take member places contact the church office.

Lost & Found



Don't forget to check the Lost & Found tub & coat rack in the Library if you are missing items. Grace will

hold the items for one month. If they are not claimed by then the items will be donated.

Unable to stop in then call the office (717-737-0439) and we'll look for you.

Coffee Hour

*Sundays 9:00 - 9:30am
before worship and
10:30 - 11:00am after
worship in the Library*



Youth Food Cards

Karns, Weis and Giant grocery cards in the dollar amounts of \$25, \$50, and \$100 are available at the church office Monday - Thursday from 8am - 12noon.

EPIPHANY COMES TO A CLOSE...

Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

February 4, 2024

The Healing of Peter's mother-in-law.

**The Rev. Deborah Brumbaugh,
Presiding**

While Pastor Lois is engaged in a continuing education event.



**The Transfiguration
of Our Lord
February 11, 2024**

LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY...



Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024

12:00 pm and 7:00 pm

**Service of Holy Communion with
the Imposition of Ashes**

Midweek Lenten Services of Evening Prayer—7:00 PM

February 21 & 28, March 6, 13 & 20

March 27 Service of Holy Communion

with the Rite of Healing

"The Prodigal Son"

In Person & Live Stream

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| February 21 | The Painting |
| February 28 | The Younger Son |
| March 6 | The Elder Son |
| March 13 | The Father |
| March 20 | Becoming the Father |
| March 27 | Forgiveness & Healing |



Henri Nouwen, a Dutch born Catholic priest, professor and pastor, gained international renown as the author of thirty-nine books on the spiritual life. *The Return of the Prodigal Son* is by far his most powerful writing. His chance encounter with this painting led to a long spiritual adventure which is shared in this book.

Join Pastor Lois in a brief liturgy of Evening Prayer and messages that explore the different characters in this well-known parable, as portrayed by the artist Rembrandt in his painting, Return of the Prodigal Son. Let us reflect on the ways that this parable speaks to each of us as it challenges us to seek forgiveness and to grant forgiveness as our heavenly Father does for us with abundant love and boundless grace.

Sunday School

Sundays 10:45 - 11:30am

The classes are: Kindergarten - 2nd grade and 3rd grade - 5th grade
Both classes meet in the Sunday School Wing, except for the weeks that JYG is in the Youth Room.

You are welcome to bring a friend or invite your neighbor or extended family. Please note we are welcoming 5 year old preschoolers in the younger class.

The **Winter/Spring** Sunday School schedule is available [HERE](#).



Grace Youth Update

Our senior high youth had a great time at Winterfest, January 5-7. They gathered to play, pray and grow in their faith while participating in object

learning bible studies to see how God is at work in their daily lives. Besides our youth attending, we had three young adults serving in leadership positions during the weekend as well. The synod is super thankful to have our youth participating and our adults leading this event! GYG thanks you for your support to make this happen.

We, also, had a great group of youth and young adults help put some "finishing" touches on the Kentland project on January 14. While there is still some work to do and help needed, the youth helped install flooring, floor trim, build bunk beds and do some deep cleaning. The youth are excited to get the doors opened back up so they can meet there this Spring!

Jesse Woodrow
Coordinator of Children, Youth & Family Ministry



Children & Youth Classes

**Sunday, February 11,
Transfiguration
9:30 am in Fellowship Hall**

Join Hope Pankake for a special class about Ash Wednesday. Then, go to the parking lot entrance to burn palm branches from Palm Sunday 2023 so that we have ashes for Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024.

**Ash Wednesday
February 14, 7:00 pm**

All children and youth are encouraged to attend the worship service on Ash Wednesday, 7:00 pm, to receive ashes and to experience the start of our Lenten Journey.

GYG & JYG Upcoming Events

February

- 4 10:45am - 12:00pm JYG
- 18 5:00pm GYG Night
- 25 10:45am Family Lent Event in Social Hall

March

- 3 10:45am - 12:00pm JYG
- 10 10:45 - 11:30am Camp Sunday Event
5:00pm GYG Night
- 17 National Youth Gathering Meeting
via Zoom
- 24 11:00am Bunny Potluck
- 29 8:00am - 1:00pm Beautify the Church

You can view complete GYG schedule [HERE](#).

**ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
Sundays, 10:45 am—Conference Room**

The Adult class is turning its attention to The Ten Commandments with a video series by Sister Joan Chittister. Sister Joan offers an honest and refreshing approach to the “Ten Commandments: The Laws of the Heart” unlike anything present today. She invites us to think deeply about the moral fibers of our society and presents the idea that the Ten Commandments are an adventure in human growth – that we are not so much convicted by them as we are transformed by them. Ann Hoffman will lead the discussions while Pastor Lois is away on January 28 and February 4.

Date	Topic
Jan 28	Prologue: What are the Ten Commandments? The First Commandment: The Law of Reflection
Feb 4	The Second Commandment: The Law of Respect
Feb 11	The Third Commandment: The Law of Remembrance
Feb 18	The Fourth Commandment: the Law of Caring
Feb 25	The Fifth Commandment: The Law of Life
March 3	The Sixth Commandment: The Law of Commitment
March 10	The Seventh & Eighth Commandments: The Laws of Sharing & Speech
March 17	The Ninth & Tenth Commandments: The Law of Self-Control & Assurance
March 24	Epilogue: The Two Laws of Love



**“Breathing the Word” Bible Study
Tuesdays, 1:00 pm—Conference Room**

At the request of the Bible study group, a new series begins on January 23, Jesus’ “The Sermon on the Mount.” This series offers a “detailed and colorful overview of Matthew 5-7” by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies and Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School and College of Arts and Sciences.

Marti Bert has graciously offered to lead the studies on January 23 and 30 while Pastor Lois is away. The topics are shown below.

Date	Topic	Date	Topic
Jan 23	The Beatitudes	Feb 13	Our Father
Jan 30	The Extensions	Feb 20	Finding Your Treasure
Feb 6	Practicing Piety	Feb 27	Living into the Kingdom

Kentland Project Progress Report

Grace members were busy over the holidays. The Kitchen Island surround was installed, interior doors were painted and installed, a new mantle was stained and installed, new electrical outlet and switches were installed and installation of the new floor began.

Appliances arrived, flooring is completed and the volunteers (among them Grace's own Youth Group) moved on to building new bunk beds. As of January 22 the bunk beds have been built, primed and painted.

Grace is now taking reservations (in fact the first group is scheduled for the weekend of January 26) by contacting the church office at 717-737-0439 or gelc@comcast.net. Note: If you have rented Kentland in the past please be advised of changes to the pricing schedule. To view the new pricing [CLICK HERE](#).



[CLICK HERE](#) to view update images of the progress at Kentland. [CLICK HERE](#) if you'd like to contribute towards the costs of the remodel.

From the Church Council

Council Actions January 2024



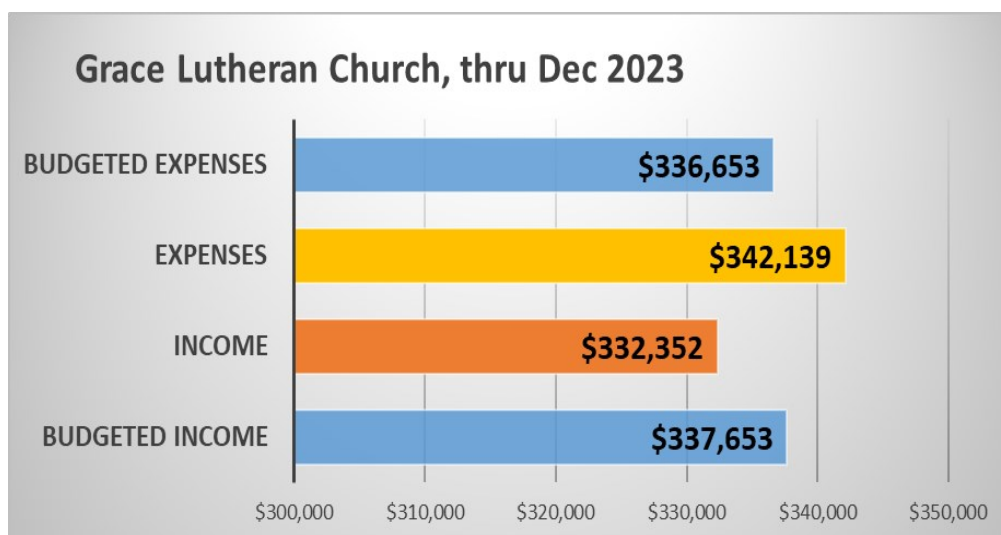
- Council approved a new fee schedule for Kentland rentals.
- Council approved a proposed 2024 budget to be presented to the membership at the January 21 Financial Congregational meeting.
- Council approved the agenda for the Congregational meeting.

Dear members and friends of Grace,

Now that 2023 is complete, I'm encouraged to see how close we were to our targets. Expenses outpaced income, but only by 1.7% of our actual total income. Predicting an entire year's worth of operations, activities and needs is a great challenge and an imperfect science and yet we finished the year much like we expected.

Thank you for all your pledges, your prayers, and all your encouragement through this budgeting process.

Susan Dickinson
Treasurer





Prayer List Additions

Everyone appreciates prayer but not everyone wishes to be added to the “out loud” prayers.

If you are aware of a member of Grace who could benefit from being added to the prayers, please let one of the pastors know. They will contact the individual to find out whether they wish to be added to the “out loud” prayers, ongoing prayers or prayed for “quietly” by the Community Prayer Group.

We hold in prayer especially this week...

Pen Hoover, Tom Hall, Dameian Duwe, Yvonne Gettys, Mike Hillegas, Susie Hopper, Joyce Thomas (Ohio) & son, David, Russ Weber, Brigitte Storey, Debbie Aldridge, Pete Psichogis, Paul & Linda Glance, Dr. Robert Little, Kelly Ackley, Al Hughes, Shirley Davis, Dale Swenson, Bob, Shana Funk, and Dean Jury.

We hold in ongoing prayer...

Donald Gardner, Lynn Royal, Bonnie Peechatka, Marcie, Luke & Wesley Beam, Eric Rome, Dana Moore, , Ed Yoffee, John McNichol, Kay King, Justin Minnich, Michelle Hillegas, Darlene M., Eileen McCann, and Mike Lutz.

We also hold our homebound in prayer:

Betty Bennett, Gladys Cline, Sue Gasswint, Yvonne Gettys, Joan Harman, Janice Hench, Frank Hills, Sis Hoffman, Shirley Hughes, Howard Lauver, Janice Light. Lou Lore, Patti Reed, Bob & Ruth Rhodes, Mary Louise Shetter, Dorothy Shreffler, John Shuey, and Sandy Yetter.

Praying for our Homebound Members

The pastoral staff wishes to lift up this special group of members on a regular basis during the prayers. Each week, a group of homebound members will be included in the out loud prayers.

...sometimes we forget to tell others that someone has healed...

Let's be good stewards of our prayer list. If someone has healed, or if someone has moved on to eternal life, please let the church office know. Names will automatically be moved to the ongoing prayers after a month on the weekly prayers, which are read out loud during worship. They will then be removed from the ongoing prayers after another month unless you let us know to keep praying.

For Pastoral Assistance or At Home Communion

Pastor Lois, Interim Pastor
717-579-1875
prvo2005@gmail.com

*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
Romans 12:12*

Valentine's Day/Ash Wednesday Mashup

Because Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday fall on the same day this year, February 14 gives us a real clash of messages!

As stewards of both our personal lives and our greater world, what can we make of a day that, on the one hand says sweetly, "I love you," and on the other hand says sternly, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return"? How should we observe a day with such disjointed messages?

Putting them together, we can come up with some interesting responses.

Ash Wednesday tells us that our lives are finite and fleeting, a truth woven throughout the Bible. Psalm 103:15 says our lives are like the grass that flourishes and then is gone. Ash Wednesday also reminds us that we are in the hands of the creator God who decreed that our earthly lives begin and end in dust.

And although our culture revels in romantic love, the Bible gives us a wider vision of love that we can aspire to: love through care and concern for the world, for creation and those around us.

Putting the two messages together, we know there is no delaying our call to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31) and to provide for the least among us (Matthew 25:31-46).

With wars raging in Ukraine and Gaza, refugee crises across the globe and Covid on the rise (to name just a few problems), perhaps this can be the year you can send a "Valentine" someone who needs not only love, but food, medicine, shelter and clothes. Many reputable church charities would gladly use your contribution to help the neediest.

Who are the people in your church and community who need your love and your care? How can you, both individually and congregationally, love and assist them?

The diverse messages of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day give us a prime opportunity to grow in faith, love and discipleship –while there's time.

–Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2024, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com.

The Community Meal at Grace



2nd & 4th Wednesday of the Month

Join us for the Community Meal on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday each month from 5:30 - 6:30pm in the Social Hall.

February 14
&
February 28

More information at <https://www.gracecamphill.org/service>

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE



GELC Endowment Committee at Work

The GELC Endowment Committee is one of many means through which we make a difference by serving others through God's love and our faith. The Endowment Committee is responsible for the administration and management of nine endowment funds. These funds were formed through the generosity of past and present members of our church. Some of these members are remembered for their endowment as their names are in the title of the endowment, they established years ago. Other funds were established by the Endowment Committee and our church leaders to aid organizations, who through their work, extend the mission of our Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. In most cases the principal from each of the funds cannot be used, however the interest generated from the investments is able to be generously given to these organizations.

At their Dec. 11, 2023, meeting the Endowment Committee disbursed funds to the following:

*From the Grace Lutheran Evangelical Church General Endowment Fund the following organizations received money to help their causes: New Hope Ministries, Community Check-Up Center, Bethesda Mission, Medard's House, Family Promise, Christian Churches United and St. Barnabas Center

*From the Arthur and Ellen Neal Endowment Fund, Silence of Mary Home and West Shore Meals on Wheels received funds.

*From the Food for the Needy Fund Endowment Fund the Central PA Food Bank received a donation.

*The Ashway Family Endowment Fund made a donation to the Lutheran Camping Corporation and Diakon Wilderness Program.

If any of our church members would like to request a contribution be made to a favorite charity or service organization, they can submit a written request to any of the current members of the Endowment Committee. The current members are Michelle Knight (Chairperson of the Endowment Committee), Larry Hoffman (Secretary), Tracy Alfano Douty (Treasurer of the Endowment Committee), Gloria Boyer, Pastor Lois VanOrden (Intentional Interim Pastor), Alan Gabel, Don Barlup and Susan Dickinson (Church Council Liaison).

Also, if anyone is interested in learning more about establishing a new endowment here at Grace Lutheran, please contact Michelle Knight who will be happy to provide information about how to proceed with making this valuable contribution to our church.

The Endowment Committee is actively seeking a new Chairperson due to the resignation of Michelle Knight effective the end of June 2024. Any church member who has experience with budgets and some time to devote to the Endowment Committee work would be welcome to join the committee. Please contact Pastor Lois for more information.

Larry Hoffman
Secretary



Greetings Grace,

We have a few updates that we would like to provide you with. First of all, following the congregational meeting to approve the organ purchase, our contract was signed and sent to Allen Organ Company/Susquehanna Organ company. We reached out to our organ sales representative, who has confirmed their receipt of that contract. The process is now in motion! We await eagerly as they gather the necessary parts to create this organ for Grace. We will keep you updated as we receive information.

We hope that you have had a blessed Christmas Season and Happy New Year! We wanted to extend our heartfelt thanks to Karen Jury, Bonnie Barton, and Carolyn Houck for their musical talents that have enriched our Saturday Sabbath services.

We are also incredibly grateful to the Hoff Fund for generously sponsoring the St. Paul's Brass Ensemble at our December 17th, Advent Lesson and Carols service. The Hoff Fund also sponsored Rob Starrett, the soprano saxophone player, who accompanied the Grace Chancel Choir on Christmas Eve. Thank you to the Hoff Fund for enhancing our worship experience with these community musicians.

A special note of appreciation goes out to our bells and choir members for their dedicated efforts during the Advent and Christmas season! We deeply appreciate your commitment, preparation, passion, and dedication to the music ensembles of Grace! We enjoy working with both ensembles and are truly blessed to share musical experiences with you!

As we embark on the journey through Lent and approach the Easter season, we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to make more beautiful music together. Let us continue to use our collective gifts to enhance our worship! If you, or someone you know is interested in being a part of these ensembles, please join us or reach out to k.e.hartman11@gmail.com.

Blessings,

Kris and Emily Hartman



Dear Members of Grace -

We thank you for all the wonderful and uplifting notes, cards, emails and calls during my recent surgery and the bout of health issues we both had afterwards.

Our days were certainly blessed by all!

In Christian Love,

Barry & Judi Fenicle

Dear Friends at Grace Lutheran,

Thank you so much for the beautiful job that you did for St. Barnabas Murder Mystery. The food was great. We had very many compliments on how wonderful the food and service were. We realized a profit of over \$2000.00.

Also, thanks for all of the support you have shown to St. Barnabas over the years! I cannot thank you enough.

Dot Wise

Co-Chairperson St. Barnabas



- 2/1 Emily Hartman
- 2/2 James Hoover
Star Peiffer
Mason Russell
- 2/3 Thomas Boyer (Gloria)
David Hawkins
- 2/4 Alyssa Sweeney
- 2/5 Susan Gasswint
- 2/6 Christianna Hyde
- 2/8 Nancy Whitcomb
Molly Youse
- 2/9 Leah Allewelt
Melinda Bechtel
Gregory Kincaid
- 2/10 Dorothy (DJ) Landis
- 2/11 Jeremy Eck
Landon Flook
- 2/12 Judith Zeiders
- 2/13 Youbo Woodrow

- 2/14 Ellen Savastio
Yvonne Sultzaberger
- 2/16 Jesse Woodrow
- 2/19 Beverly Lerew
Mya Sheesley
- 2/20 Noel Caron
- 2/22 Mark Brandt
Samuel Hartman
- 2/23 Ian Fry
- 2/24 Jeff Painter
Lori Small
- 2/25 Sarah Erb
Lauren Weber
- 2/26 Mary Banaszewski
Lauren Labell
Dylan Moser
Aaron Shenck
Regan Wharton

Let's Celebrate Some Monumental Birthdays!

***Nancy Whitcomb** turns **92 years old** on **February 8**. Take a moment to wish her a happy birthday with a telephone call or mail a card to:*

*Nancy Whitcomb
335 Wesley Drive
Apt. 403
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055*

Let her know you are thinking of her on this very special occasions.



Grace's Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, we post closings or delayed openings on the church phone 717-737-0439 x14, on the website, and most will, also, appear on CBS 21 and ABC 27 as well.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ice Art Fest

February 2-4 | Carlisle Historic District (46 N East Street)

The 8th annual Ice Art Fest will take place the first weekend of February in downtown Carlisle. Take a leisurely stroll along the sidewalks, which will be filled with creative ice sculptures. There will also be sculptures in the pocket park located next to the Cumberland County Historical Society on West High Street. Starts 4pm on Friday and ends at 3pm on Sunday.

Parkside Harmony Show

February 17 | 3pm | The Forum Auditorium (500 Walnut Street, Harrisburg)

Join Hershey's own award-winning acapella group, recreating familiar tunes from Pot to Doo-Wop & Barbershop to Broadway! Cost: \$10-\$30 [CLICK HERE](#) for Tickets.

Winter Fun Day

February 18 | 1-5pm | FREE | Camp Kirchenwald (1 Cut Off Road, Lebanon)

Bring your family and enjoy an afternoon on Kirchenwald's award-winning toboggan run, ice-skating on the lake, or drinking hot chocolate in the lodge. Free will offering accepted.

SAVE THE DATE :

**Lent Event in the Social Hall
Sunday, March 25 at 10:45am**

Mark your calendars to join us for the Lent Event on Sunday, March 25 in the Social Hall. All ages are welcome to join us. There will be stations that you can participate in at your own pace and we once again will be making soft pretzels.

SAVE THE DATE :

**Easter Bunny
Potluck in the
Social Hall
Sunday, March 24 at
11:00am**



All are welcome.
Sign-up coming soon!

Good News from Grace articles are due by **12 noon on the 15th of the month** for the next month's newsletter. Grace Notes information is due by **12 noon on Tuesdays**.

Email to deppengelc@gmail.com

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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