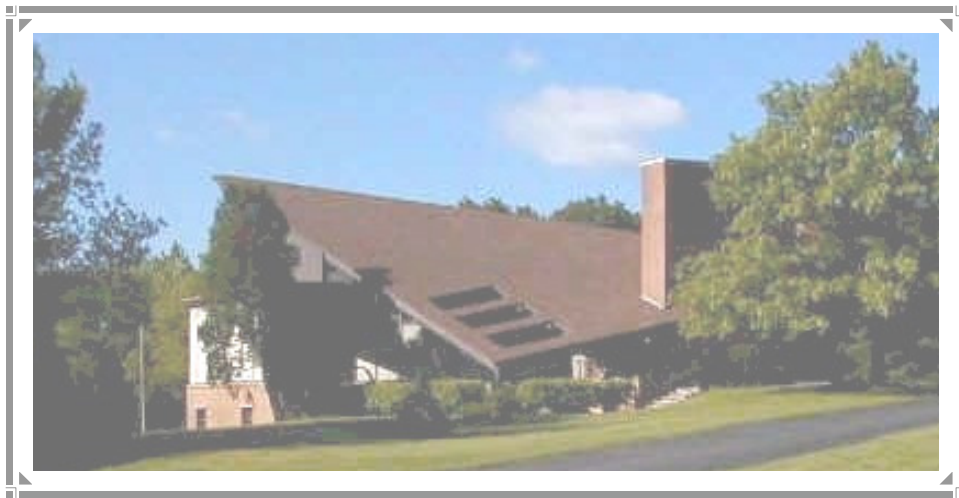


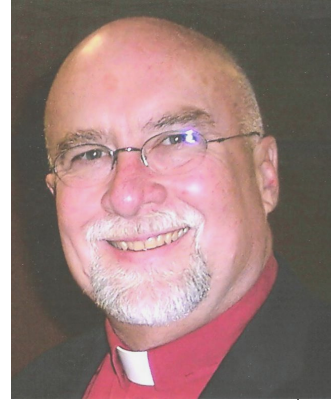
# *Grace Happenings*

*April 2011*  
*Newsletter*



# Grace Happenings

Pastor's column – April 2011



I am writing this on St. Patrick's Day, 2011, and I reflect on the irony that this particular Saint's day, which always falls in the midst of Lent, has become a cultural excuse for self-indulgence. For us Christians, this is a season of reflection, of quiet. For all too many revelers at Albany's Kegs & Eggs riots last weekend, for one extreme example, not so much. It's a good thing those beer-sotted vandals were stupid. I understand the Albany County District Attorney's Office is following up on the Facebook braggers, and the YouTube videos are being scrutinized also. Talk about leaving your confessions where everyone can see!

We are in the midst of Lent, and I do not know whether tomorrow will look anything like today. This week alone has seen a double eclipse of the top news stories. Just one week and a day ago, March 9<sup>th</sup>, the Wisconsin State Senate passed the law ending most collective bargaining rights for unionized public employees, excepting in wages, in a maneuver immediately dubbed "The Ash Wednesday Ambush." That was big, big news, soon to become no news. Just two days earlier, al Jazeera television reported that Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was looking for an agreement allowing him to step down, but that the offer was rejected by rebels because it would have amounted to an "honorable" exit for Gaddafi and would offend his victims. That's when things got really bloody in Libya and Wisconsin fell off the evening news. Of course, in Japan on Friday, a 9.0 earthquake pushed the Libyan butchery aside, especially when a horrific tsunami resulted from the already horrific earthquake, and an emerging nuclear catastrophe resulting from the tsunami eclipsed everything else. Looking back over a year's worth of current events compressed into a week, I'd say the first week of Lent in 2011 was one of the most wrenching I ever remember.

In the midst of this turmoil, I maintain my Lenten meditation. I meditate on Luke 17:20-21 – *Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among [or is it within?] you."* There has been much scholarly debate over whether Jesus means "within" or "among." The Greek word is *entos*, which can mean either. For the sake of argument, I'll accept both -- the kingdom is within and among us. I can accept within as faith inspires me. But in weeks as sad as this past, I'm tempted to ask: is God really *among* us?

What comes to me quietly is "yes," to the extent that God's people allow the God domain to shine within them, it manifests among them. A Facebook friend of mine



*Grace Lutheran Church is an inclusive community grounded in the love of God and committed to welcoming all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, creed, age or physical ability. We encourage all people to share in thoughtful worship, relevant education and service through faith in action.*

is Bruce Epperly, a professor at Lancaster Seminary, prolific author, and all-around spiritual guide. He shared this for St. Patrick's Day:

*Legend has it that a local chieftain was out to get a particular Celt named Patrick. The chieftain sent his men to kill Patrick as he traveled along a lonely wooded road. As they closed in on Patrick, his pursuers discovered that he had disappeared into thin air. All they saw was a deer bounding across the road. From that adventure, legend has it that the Prayer of St. Patrick (the "Lorica" or "Breastplate") emerged. As you read these words, you can almost visualize Patrick drawing a circle around himself as he rotated in a clockwise manner:*

*I arise today*

*Through the strength of heaven;*

*Light of the sun,*

*Splendor of fire,*

*Speed of lightning,*

*Swiftness of the wind,*

*Depth of the sea,*

*Stability of the earth,*

*Firmness of the rock.*

*I arise today*

*Through God's strength to pilot me;*

*God's might to uphold me,*

*God's wisdom to guide me,*

*God's eye to look before me,*

*God's ear to hear me,*

*God's word to speak for me,*

*God's hand to guard me,*

*God's way to lie before me,*

*God's shield to protect me,*

*God's hosts to save me*

*Afar and anear,*

*Alone or in a multitude.*

*Christ shield me today*

*Against wounding.*

*Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,*

*Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,*

*Christ on my right, Christ on my left,*

*Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,*

*Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,*

*Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,*

*Christ in the eye that sees me,*

*Christ in the ear that hears me.*

*I arise today*

*Through the mighty strength*

*Of the Lord of creation.*

If we were to pray that every morning, imagine how we'd face the world! We do not aspire to the magic of the legend of Patrick's escape. However, the inner strength this prayer expresses can face anything. I take it as a Lenten gift, and pass it along to you.

*Pastor Hahn*

## Grace Happenings

Published ten times per year

By

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## 2011 Congregational Council

### Members:

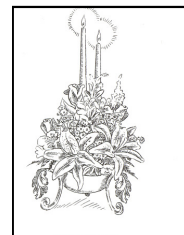
**Council Members:** Cynthy Nimmer, President; Glenn Gerber, Vice President; Chris Powell, Secretary; Cathy Joynson, Mary Gray, Shelley Hebert, Mike Perry, Christian Hogrefe, Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, Ellen Cash, Sue White and Ron Nimmer

**Congregation Officers:** Robert Powell, Treasurer, Bob Couchman, Asst. Treasurer, and Bill Hebert, Financial Secretary

## Altar Flowers April 2011

4/17—Marion Elliott in Memory of my father

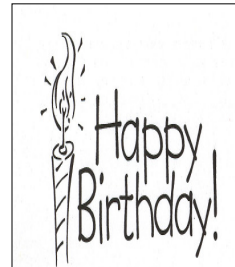
4/24—



If you wish to sign up to provide flowers for the Altar in honor of a special event or in memory of a loved one, there is a sign up board to the right as you go out into the Narthex. You will be billed directly by the florist. The altar flowers are generally taken to the sick or shut-ins after the service. Thank you.

### April 2011 Birthdays

- 4/5—Agnes Peteler
- 4/16—Olga Hogrefe
- 4/17—Ashley Jensen
- 4/19—Ron Nimmer
- 4/21—Rosemary Vander Veer
- 4/22—Dorothy Brandow
- 4/22—Rev William Clasen



### *Prayer Request*

One of our own has been deployed and should be remembered in our prayers. On February 2, 2011, **Lieutenant Junior Grade Kevin Koenig**, U.S. Navy, was deployed to the Persian Gulf on the USS Reagan Aircraft carrier as a helicopter pilot.

Kevin is the son of JoAnn Koenig-Hagymas and the late Edgar Koenig, and brother of Kellee Koenig. He is a lifelong member of Grace and the first son of the congregation to be deployed in many years. He is shown with his wife Lindsay, and a helicopter similar to the one he will be piloting on this mission.

The USS Reagan left San Diego and will be on assignment for approximately eight months. There are 6000 Navy personnel onboard. Please keep Kevin and his shipmates in your prayers.

*Chris Powell*

We are Bethesda House of Schenectady, an interfaith ministry to the homeless, the disabled and the economically disadvantaged in Schenectady County. Since 1992, we have opened our doors each weekday and have provided a safe haven and services to over 150 homeless individuals in our community. These individuals look to Bethesda House for a meal, a shower, a safe place to rest, or clothes to ward off the cold. They are members of our community who exist on the fringe of society.

Additionally, Bethesda House provides the following social services and advocacy for the homeless:

We address the needs of the whole person by encouraging self respect, personal responsibility, and the discovery and exercise of one's gifts for the good of self and community

We educate the Schenectady community concerning the needs of vulnerable citizens and create opportunities for the community to unite in celebrating diversity and serving the disadvantaged

We collaborate with other social service agencies to enhance creativity, synergy, efficiency, and to avoid a duplication of services

We provide permanent housing on-site for 16 chronically homeless individuals and at our Lighthouse residence for another 10.

We are writing to ask if you would be kind enough to add the following article to your next bulletin/newsletter, expressing the need for donations to Bethesda House.

It reads as follows:

*'Bethesda House of Schenectady, an interfaith ministry to the homeless, the disabled and the economically disadvantaged in Schenectady County, is in need of items from our 'Wish List' to distribute to those most in need.*

*These items include, but are not limited to:*

*Bars of soap*

*shampoo*

*disposable razors*

*Bath sized towels*

*linens*

*toilet paper*

*Laundry products*

*socks*

*t-shirts*

*Food items*

*new or gently used clothing*

*Also greatly appreciated would be a monetary donation toward the following program(s):*

*Emergency Food Pantry*

*Free Clothing Program*

*The Sock Fund*

*The Women's Group*

*Client Needs Fund*

*Please accept our gratitude and the gratitude and appreciation of our guests, those most in need in our community.*

*Thank you for your support of Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc.*

*Marcy Marzloff*

### ***Mark Your Calendars: Special Appeal on April 20 to Support the Community Crisis Network's Emergency Fund***

The Community Crisis Network (CCN) was formed in 1999 as a collaborative effort of Bethesda House of Schenectady, Catholic Charities of Schenectady County, City Mission of Schenectady, the Jewish Community, Schenectady Community Action Program, Inc., and Schenectady Inner City Mission (SICM). Its mission is to provide the citizens of Schenectady County with immediate crisis intervention, comprehensive assessment, assistance in accessing appropriate community resources and other information as well as referrals to other needed services.

The CCN Emergency Fund is used to provide direct support to people in need when there is a gap in services and when no other resource exists. The Emergency Fund is supported by area congregations through donations that are sent to Catholic Charities and designated as being for the CCN. ALL of the funds donated are used to provide direct assistance to people in need. Grace Lutheran Church has supported the CCN Emergency Fund through special donations for the past decade. At the Annual Meeting on January 23, the congregation voted to pledge \$500 in support of the CCN Emergency Fund during 2011, to be raised through special quarterly appeals for donations. The first special appeal will take place on April 20 during Sunday morning worship.



The GLC book group will meet on Monday, April 18 at Chris Powell's, 110 Collins St., Scotia. The book for April will be *"My Name is Mary Sutter"* by Robin Oliveira.

*"My Name is Mary Sutter"* by Robin Oliveira is an enthralling historical novel about a young woman's struggle to become a doctor during the Civil War. Mary Sutter is a brilliant, headstrong midwife from Albany, NY, (and there are lots of references to the Albany area) who dreams of becoming a surgeon. Determined to overcome the prejudices against women in medicine—and eager to run away from her recent heartbreak—Mary leaves home and travels to Washington, DC to help tend the legions of Civil War wounded. Although plain and unattractive by some standards, her strong will, determination, and tireless work ethics attract the attention of three men who see far more than her "plainness". Robin Oliveira has created a truly unforgettable heroine whose unwavering determination and vulnerability will resonate with readers everywhere.

Hi everyone,

Below is the flyer for the Spring Assembly which is being held at St. Luke's, Valatie, 9:30 am—2 pm on Saturday, April 4. Hope to see many of you at St. Luke's.

Donna Gibson,  
H/M Conference Secretary

ALL WOMEN ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE  
**Hudson-Mohawk Conference Women of the ELCA**

# SPRING ASSEMBLY

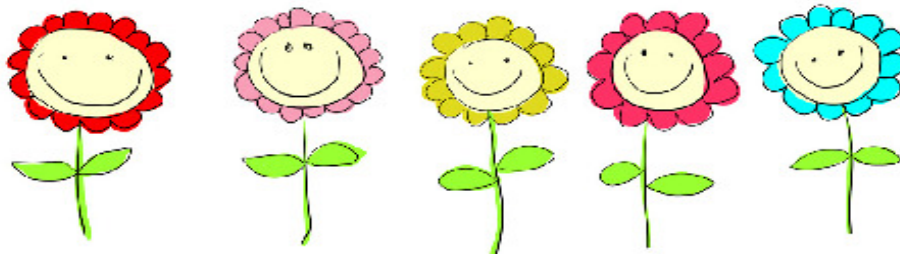
Saturday, April 9 – St. Luke's, Valatie  
9:30 AM – 2 PM

## PROGRAM

**LEARN TO MAKE DRESS-A-GIRL DRESSES and POCKET DOLLS  
THE SYNOD WELCA INGATHERING PROJECT FOR 2011**

- Bring good scissors to cut material
- 5/8 to 1-1/8 yds cotton material OR a gently used (pretty) pillow case, 1 pkg double fold bias tape, thread, and 12-16 inches of ¼" elastic
- Bring scraps of material and partial skeins of yarn for dolls
- Sewing machines will be available

Agenda includes devotions, lunch, business meeting with 2011 convention update and nominations information, Cherish Our Children, Synod Assembly, Region 7 Gathering 2012, Twinning with Sister Parishes in Zimbabwe. Registration is \$7. RSVP to Barb Slater 772-9669 (cell) 392-7798 (home).

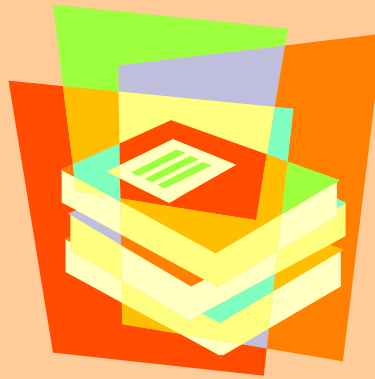


## Women's Study Group

*LOVE and JOY & PEACE* will be the focus of our next several sessions in our *Workbook on Virtues & the Fruit of the Spirit*.

Share in the discussion - Fridays at 1 pm at  
Cynthy Nimmer's home.

We **WILL** be meeting on Good Friday unless otherwise reported in church.





***REMINDER***

***A member of the Altar Guild will be available in the Narthex to take orders for Easter Flowers on the following Sundays:***

***April 3  
April 10***

***The cut off date is April 18th***

**One More Chance to Get Involved**

The next **Salvation Army Soup Kitchen luncheon** prepared by Grace Church folks will be on **Monday, May 9**. If you can help in any way (bake brownies, make soup, work at SASK that day), please get in touch with Chris Powell. Much of this ministry is subsidized by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans which bases their gifts to us on the number of volunteers and hours it takes to prepare and serve this meal. So, please think about getting involved.

The following flyer invites you to a Community Meeting about cuts in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget. The US House of Representatives has passed a bill that will result in a 62% cut in this funding. The City of Schenectady would lose \$1.7 million out of this year's (starting 7/1/2011) budget should these cuts go through.

The bill has yet to go before the US Senate. Schenectady's City Council has passed a resolution against the cuts and Mayor Stratton has stated publicly that they would result in the City's having to close the pools, cancel all park programs, cut back on summer police patrols in addition to many other cuts.

**THIS IS SERIOUS FOLKS.** Many of the services that help the neighborhoods in the City are also partially funded by CDBG. The meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> will give you an opportunity to sign letters urging Senators Gillebrand and Schumer not to support these cuts when the bill comes before the Senate. Speakers will talk about what the cuts will mean for the City and you will also have a chance to speak out yourself.

**SEE YOU THERE!**

## FEDERAL BUDGET CUTS COULD DEVASTATE OUR CITY



**CDBG funding supports programs and services in our city and neighborhoods. We are facing a possible 62% cut.**

**Attend a community meeting and support a resolution by the City Council to oppose these reductions that will hurt the residents of Schenectady.**

**COME HEAR  
COME SPEAK OUT  
COME DO SOMETHING**

**STOP THE CUTS**



**The meeting is being held  
Saturday  
March 26, 2011  
at 1:00 PM**

**State Street Presbyterian  
Church  
5 Catherine St.  
(corner of State & Catherine Sts.)**

## Recap of Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 8, 2011

*Submitted by Chris Powell, Council Secretary*

The meeting opened with prayer led by Pastor and a Lenten suggestion: Don't give something up—take something up!

The minutes from the February Council meeting were approved.

### **Pastor's Report –**

- He reminded people to use the GoodSearch engine – we earn money every time someone uses it.
  - Recommended reading: *“The Emerging Church”* (Sangin)
  - We need more “face-to-face” groups. Invitation is the key to creating small groups. It's a good way to make people feel welcome. (Outreach team)
  - More ideas for enhancing Grace's visibility:
    - o Improved signage (Outreach team)
    - o Improve official photo of church
    - ✦ remove some trees in front so we can be seen (Property team)
    - ✦ Projector/screen(s) for Liturgy, hymns, etc.
    - ✦ Transform newsletter into e-newsletter (print copies for mailing)
- Try on-line studies/discussion groups (e.g. sermons)

**Treasurer's Report** - February was a break-even month as there was one pre-paid annual pledge received which covered expenses. We are approximately \$4,000 behind, ytd. There are several months worth of *The Upper Room* devotional booklets in the Narthex. Members should be reminded that they are there and invited to take them each month.

**Endowment Fund** – We are now accepting applications through May. Sometime thereafter decisions will be made regarding funding.

### **Old Business –**

- Council Retreat was well received and fruitful.
  - The Pancake breakfast was successful and earned a small profit.
- There is interest in the Administrative Assistant position which will become available in early summer.

### **New Business –**

- Rachel Mathis will coordinate the Crop Walk details for Grace.
  - The Worship and Music and Outreach teams are meeting this month.
- The Gazette has been contacted to list Grace on the Gazette's online “Places of Worship”. This can also include our Website link.

## Financial Report

Submitted by Glenn Gerber

### Grace 2011 income and expenses against goals:

<u>Overall Budget</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>YTD Projections</u>	<u>YTD Actuals</u>	<u>Differences</u>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 11,868.</b>	\$ 109,160.	\$ 17,869.	<b>\$ 18,521.</b>	\$ 652.
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 10,920</b>	\$ 148,543.	\$ 26,404.	<b>\$ 22,819.</b>	<b>- \$ 3,585</b>
	Difference	<b>- \$ 39,383.</b>	<b>- \$ 8,535.</b>	<b>- \$ 4,298.</b>	\$ 4,237.
<b>Envelope</b>					
<b>Giving</b> (Included in above total Income amount)					
	<b>\$ 11,124</b>	\$ 98,000.	\$ 16,042.	<b>\$16,931.</b>	\$ 889.

- Overall budget income and envelope income for February 2011 were greater than expected due to \$6,000 in prepaid 2011 pledges. Budget expenses for February 2011 were as expected. There was a non-budget expense of \$ 749 for boiler and heating system repairs, which will be covered under the Major Maintenance expense account..

*The Financial Team is working diligently to manage expenses against income.  
Keeping your envelope giving current will enable Grace to meet its financial commitments.*

# April 2011

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1 1:00 PM Women's Study Group 8 PM AA Meeting	2
3 - 4 <u>Lent</u> 9:15 AM Adult Forum 10:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service - Holy Communion <i>SICM Emergency Food Donation</i>	4 6:00 PM - First Monday Pot-Luck 8 PM AA Meeting	5	6 7:00 PM Choir Practice	7 7-8:30 PM - Depression & BiPolar Group	8 8 PM AA Meeting	9
10 - 5 <u>Lent</u> 9:15 AM Adult Forum 10:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service - Holy Communion	11 6:30 PM - Adult Study 8 PM AA Meeting	12 6:30 - Council Meeting	13 7:00 PM Choir Practice	14 7-8:30 PM - Depression & BiPolar Group	15 1:00 PM Women's Study Group 8 PM AA Meeting	16
17 - <u>Passion/Palm Sunday</u> 10:30 AM Worship Service - Holy Communion	18 7:00 PM - Book Group 8 PM AA Meeting	19 May Newsletter Materials Due	20 7:00 PM Choir Practice	21 7:00 Maundy Thursday 7-8:30 PM - Depression & BiPolar Group	22 7:00 Good Friday 1:00 PM Women's Study Group 8 PM AA Meeting	23
24 - <u>Easter</u> 10:30 AM Worship Service - Holy Communion	25 6:30 - Adult Study 8 PM AA Meeting	26	27 7:00 PM Choir Practice	28 7-8:30 PM - Depression & BiPolar Group	29 1:00 PM Women's Study Group 8 PM AA Meeting	30
May 1 - 2 <u>Easter</u> 9:15 AM Adult Forum 10:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service - Holy Communion <i>SICM Emergency Food Donation</i>	May 2 6:00 PM - First Monday Pot-Luck 8 M AA Meeting	May 3	May 4 7:00 PM Choir Practice	May 5 7-8:30 PM - Depression & BiPolar Group	May 6 1:00 PM Women's Study Group 8 PM AA Meeting	May 7

## THE SAINTS AT GRACE

Pastor Hahn has been encouraging us to write our spiritual and personal biography.

How wonderful it would be if each of us recorded our individual stories of our lives including how we selected our professions, our religious convictions, are life goals, our family story. Why we ended up as friends or members of GLC. Starting with our youngest remembrances.

In the first session we considered "what room in your home, as you were growing up 1 year old to 5 years old, was your favorite room and why. From 6-12 years old, what was the experience that prompted you to be interested (or not interested) in your religious life? From 13-21 what teacher had the most influence on you? From 22 upward, who were the people (teachers/mentors/friends) who had the most influence on you along your life's journey?

This has encouraged some of us to start thinking about our memoirs. If we don't do it, nobody else will know.

Some of us have been meeting 45 minutes at 9:15 on Sunday morning. Others have been meeting on alternate Monday nights starting at 7 PM on alternate Mondays evenings. It has been an interesting and stimulating period of sharing and discussion.

What is your story? We did a little art work to recall seminal experiences or events that influenced our lives. You would be surprised at the interesting people and events that led us on our spiritual or professional journey through life.

If you don't do it, who will know? Each of us is unique. And a few long term friends will know part of your story. But if you don't record it in some way it may get lost. Some may call it a resume from birth to today.

I think it would be nice to share the histories of our lives. Many interesting engineers and scientists have been members at Grace. Many have music backgrounds or have been influenced by events in their lives. It could be a war that caused us to be refugees that fled our birth country and caused us to journey to other places where we eventually met our mates. I am reminded of a movie of a peaceful Estonian Music revolution that sustained the Estonians during the Russian occupation. There are a number of Estonian Lutheran families who gather in this area who meet regularly.

I'm sure there are many interesting memoirs that could result from all of our experiences. Share what you'd like. All of us have interesting lives we need to preserve. It honors those who have had an influence on our lives.

Submitted by Mary Gray

Grace Lutheran Church  
1930 Hillside Ave  
Niskayuna, NY 12309

