

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

March 19, 2023—March 26, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Lent 3/19/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship

8:45AM Adult Forum Group

10:15AM Traditional

Worship with Children's

Sunday School

11:30 Lunch (sponsored by WELCA)

& Open Congregational Forum

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY 3/20/23

9-11:30 Food Pantry

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 3/21/23

9:00-11:30 Food Pantry

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

7:00 PM Church Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY 3/22/23

9:00-11:30AM Food Pantry

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 3/23/23

9:00-11:30 Food Pantry

5:00PM Choir Rehearsal

**6:00PM Soup Supper/Video &
Discussion**

7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 3/24/23

10:30AM Grace Stitches

7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 3/25/23

No events

Fifth Sunday of Lent 3/26/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship Service

10:15AM Service of The Word

with Children's Sunday School

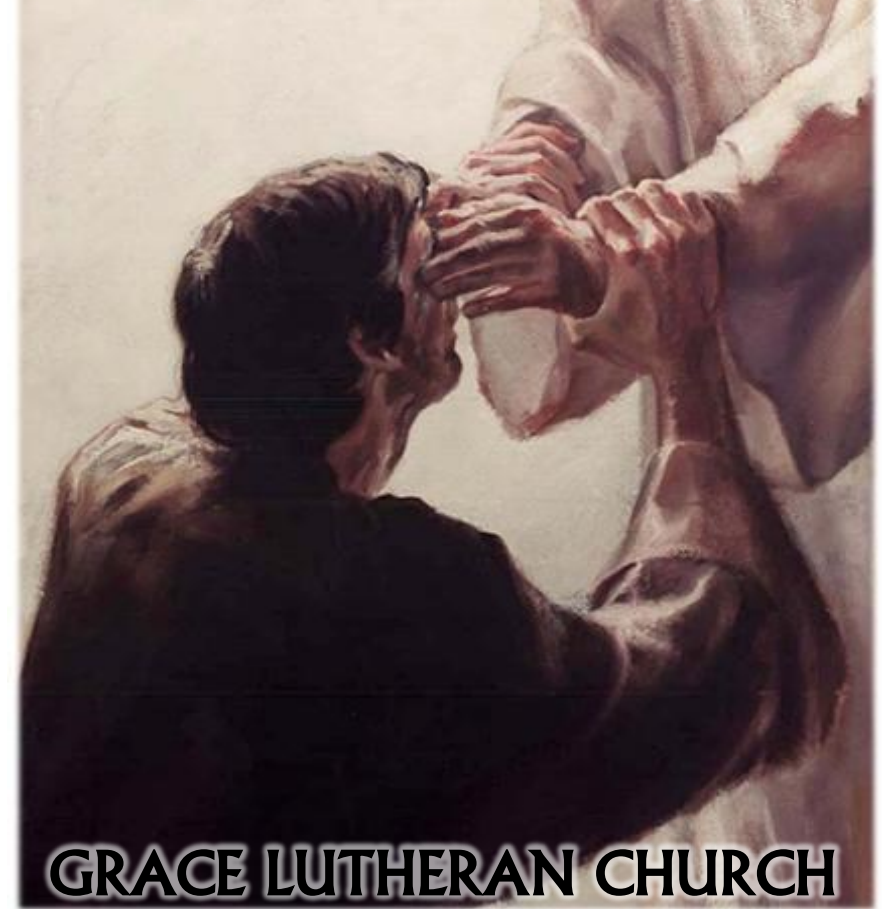
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SHORE DINER

Present this bulletin on a Sunday
and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace
Lutheran Church. Present this on
any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
6710 Tilton Road
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
609-641-3669

March 19, 2023 Fourth Sunday in Lent



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244

Church Office: 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982

Website: www.gracelutheranspnj.org

E-mail: office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor ✝ Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.
Our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

GATHERING

Thank you for joining with us as we worship our Lord together!

Introduction

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

Be Thou My Vision

by Franklin D. Ashdown

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace. **Amen.**

Let us acknowledge our need to turn back to God and for God's mercy and grace.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God, we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we hurt your creation instead of being good stewards; we struggle with consequences and pain and you call us to heal; we choose fear over compassion or empathy. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way of life. Amen.

God so loved the world that God gave his only Son, so that all may receive life. This is God's promise for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, forgives you in Christ's name, and refreshes you in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

GRACE CONSORT PRESENTS

No STONE Could Hold HIM

by
Lloyd Larson

A Dynamic Witness to the
Living Rock of Our Salvation

Director of Music/Organist Scott J. Breiner

GOOD FRIDAY, April 7th, @ 7:00 P M

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

BABY SHOWER

for Shore Memorial NICU

will be at Grace Lutheran Church

**Friday, May 19 at
12:00 PM**

Lunch will be served for Shore
Medical nurses and guests.



Donations needed: New clothing (preemie-2T),
diapers, knitted and crocheted clothing and blankets

Deadline for donations: Friday, May 12

March Worship Assistants:

3/19 Kevin Thomas

3/26 Mary Ann Gring

April Worship Assistants:

4/2 Corinne Rhodes

4/9 June Jordan

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-3:00PM

FRI 10:00AM-2:00PM

PASTOR OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-2:00PM

THURS varies

OPENING HYMN *Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness* ELW #843

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Take a brief moment to greet someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate, no need to feel pressured to touch or shake hands.

KYRIE

front of the red ELW hymnal on pages 138-139

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated

WORD

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16: 1-13

Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the LORD, designating David as the LORD's chosen successor to Saul.

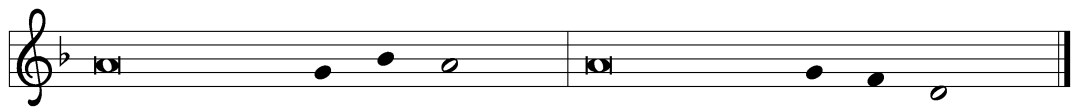
¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ²Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say,

‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” ⁵He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is now before the LORD.” ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 23



¹The LORD¹ is my shepherd;
I shall not¹ be in want.
²**The LORD makes me lie down¹ in green pastures
and leads me be-¹ side still waters.**

We thank all those serving in worship today:

Reader: Kevin Thomas

Altar Guild: Brenda, Clare, Marleigh, and Ruth

The candles sponsors today are The Rumble, Ruffenach, & Kellenberger families, in loving memory of Wayne Rumble on his 90th birthday!



WELCOME VISITORS!

If you are a visitor please fill out a VISITOR CARD in the pews if you are new to our church. Pastor Althea would love to meet you and get in touch with you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of mercy, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and to go out and touch the world with your love. Amen.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING BLESSING

May God, the giver of love, + Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey. Amen.

SENDING HYMN *Be Thou My Vision* ELW #793

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music
and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Serve in love.
 Thanks be to God!

**May the peace of the Lord be with you always! We are glad
for your presence today. We hope you come again soon!**

³You restore my ¹soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways ¹for your name’s sake.
⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I
shall ¹fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they ¹comfort me.**
⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence ¹of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is ¹running over.
⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days ¹of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the ¹LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5: 8-14

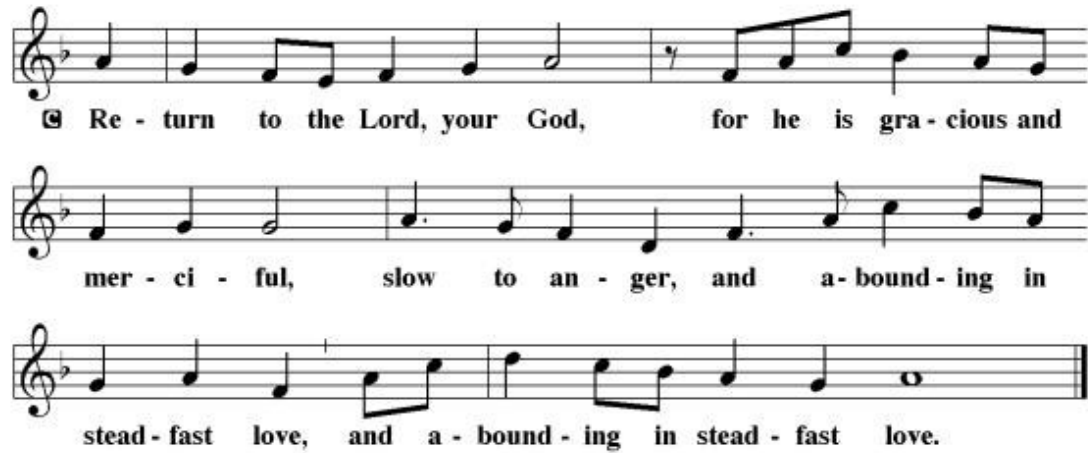
*Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we
conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity
is truly pleasing to God.*

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as
children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and
right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part
in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is
shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything
exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible
is light. Therefore it says,
“Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.



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GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Holy Gospel according to John the 9th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 9: 1-41

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now. **We thank you, O God.**

On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember your Son, the first-born of your new creation. We remember his life lived for others, and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth. We await his coming, when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom, all our sins and sorrows will be no more. **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER (sung) Celebration Hymnal p.631

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and find healing in the presence of the Lord. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN Lamb of God ELW page 146

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to come forward at the direction of the ushers. If you are unable to come to the altar, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children may come forward to receive a blessing.

A: Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve especially all those we name aloud and in our hearts... Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Dearest Lord Jesus, you have been with us in our past, present, and future. We strive to follow your example in our ministry. Be with each and every one of us as we come together to discuss our building and future ministry. Remind us that all we do is for You, and that nothing can be accomplished without You. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW hymnal page 144

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW hymnal page 144

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him,

he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

Please be seated.

CHILDREN’S SUNDAY SCHOOL

The children are dismissed after the Pastor’s message for Sunday School and they will return for communion.

SERMON

Rev. Althea Albright

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Dearest Jesus, at Your Word

ELW #520

THE APOSTLES’ CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Please be seated.

OFFERING

JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

*Our monthly special noisy offering for March is The Funny Farm
Animal Rescue & Sanctuary in Mays Landing, NJ. All donations go*

OFFERTORY

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

by Robert Lee

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Create in me a Clean Heart* WOV page 732

OFFERING PRAYER

God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, our source of eternal life. **Amen.**

Please be seated

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Sustained by God’s abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *Brief silence.*

A: Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to care for your creation well and enjoy the beauty around us, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**