



BIG GROVE CROW RIVER GRACE PARISH

THE PARISH NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

Greetings,

As I am writing these newsletter article, we are experiencing some incredibly cold weather. My dog, Samson, does not want to be outside and he loves the outdoors! Hopefully, the month of March will bring warmer weather. March also includes the continuation of Lent, which is the forty days from Ash Wednesday (February 17th) to Holy Saturday (April 3rd), not including Sundays. Lent is a time to prepare our hearts and our minds for the great gift of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday (April 4th).

One of the disciplines of Lent is prayer. I found this Lenten devotional in a book called *Wondrous Love*, created by Augsburg Fortress in 2020.

"Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ...And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour?" ~Matthew 26: 36, 39-40

"In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus doesn't have it all together. He slumps down to the ground. Does he do this out of sheer exhaustion? Does he throw himself down the way a child does, embodying resistance? Regardless of the circumstances, this image of Jesus confronts us: he is the Son of God *and* fully human. It is difficult for us to take this in. And yet we could not relate to one who sails through every aspect of human life never experiencing temptation, hurt, or pain. But a Messiah who can relate to doubt and despair? Well, tell us about this one.

At some point in our live all of us experience some degree of doubt, despair, or depression. In these times, we might throw ourselves on the ground. Slump in exhaustion. Doubt the purpose before us. Resist with the full weight of our bodies. Throw our hands up in despair when we can't count on our friends to be there for us.

This scene from the garden of Gethsemane, however, offers us a sign of hope. When Jesus threw himself to the ground, he called out to God in prayer. Even in the most desperate of times, we can call out to God, knowing God is there for us too."

No matter where we find ourselves, we can always turn to God in prayer. I encourage you to pray everyday during the 40 days of Lent. Let me know how it goes.

Grace and peace to you,

Pastor Lisa

515-451-1382

pastorlisaanne@gmail.com

ACOLYTE, USHER, & CROSSBEARER SCHEDULE

PLAN TO BE AT CHURCH AT LEAST 20 MINUTES BEFORE SERVICE TIME ON THE SUNDAY YOU ARE SCHEDULED.

NOTE: IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO BE THERE, TRY FIRST TO SWITCH WITH SOMEONE OR FIND SOMEONE TO FILL IN FOR YOU. IF THIS DOES NOT WORK AND YOU CANNOT BE THERE, CALL THE PARISH OFFICE BY FRIDAY EVENING (320-254-3249).

PLEASE DRESS APPROPRIATELY

DATE	BIG GROVE	CROW RIVER	GRACE
Wednesday, March 1 -- LENTEN SERVICE (7:00pm at Big Grove) Gunnar Heieie			
March 7	Andrew Spanier	Acolyte: Abbey Schoumaker Cross: Cooper Roering	Kacey Fischer
Wednesday, March 10 -- LENTEN SERVICE (7:00pm at Grace)			
			Logan Oeltjenbruns
March 14	Kiley Viessman	Acolyte: Kora Martinez Cross: Jack Lundberg	Cameron Loe
Wednesday, March 17 -- LENTEN SERVICE (7:00pm at Crow River) Taylor Shelton			
March 21	Max Heieie	Acolyte: Jocelyn Commerford Cross: Mason Commerford	Mariah Koenig
Wednesday, March 21 -- LENTEN SERVICE (7:00pm at Big Grove) Aiden Johnson			
March 28	Tanner Viessman	Acolyte: Jesse Nicklaus Cross: Odin Jensen	Ethan Mueller

LENTEN SERVICES – “Created for Community

This year’s Lenten service theme will focus on “Created for Community.” After months of social distancing and isolation, we have all become acutely aware of the importance of community. During this Lenten season we will focus on the story of Jesus which provides insights into the importance of living in community.

March 3	11:00am at Grace / 7:00pm at Big Grove
March 10	11:00am at Grace / 7:00pm at Grace
March 17	11:00am at Grace / 7:00pm at Crow River
March 24	11:00am at Grace / 7:00pm at Big Grove



Unfortunately, we will be unable to gather for Lunches or Soup Suppers this year. But come, join us for worship!

BIG GROVE CROW RIVER GRACE PARISH

First Communion Sundays

The 5th Grade students of our congregations will be receiving their First Communion on the following Sundays:



Crow River – Sunday, March 7 at the 10:30am Worship Service

Grace – Sunday, March 7 at the 9:00am Worship Service

Big Grove – Sunday, March 14 at the 10:30am Worship Service

Congratulations to our Fifth Grade students who will receive Holy Communion for the first time:

Aubrey Anderson (CR), Ella Bauman (CR), Lydia Deters (BG),
Jaylee Jensen (CR), Macie Roering (CR), Elliot Spanier (BG),
Kaleb Torkelson (G), Lillian Thompson (G)

Big Grove, Crow River and Grace,

I know that our God is a magnificent God, and He continues to show us His magnificence through people like all of you. You have been a gift and a blessing, and I want you to know just how good you have been to me over the past few years. Thank you for your continued support. I will forever be grateful to you and for you. May God continue to bless you so that you will be able to continue the good work that you’re doing. God’s Blessing to each and everyone of you.

Ecclesiastes 3- “A Time for Everything.” Each verse is a reminder for us in daily living. Verse 12-14 “I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.

Take Care,
Roxanne

BBE FOOD SHELF MARCH CAMPAIGN

This is a great time of the year to consider how we can alleviate food insufficiency in our community. Not only will we be addressing a very pressing need, but with every pound and every dollar we contribute to our local food shelf, the food shelf will receive an additional, proportional amount from state and private funds.

So... please... be generous!

We will be collecting food items and monetary donations at all three congregations. In addition, you can send donations directly to the food shelf by mailing to: BBE Food Shelf, P. O. Box 136, Brooten, MN 56316

If you would like to donate to the BBE Food Shelf please send checks to Patti Hagen, Treas. a 26400 43rd St. NW, New London, MN 56273. Please make checks payable to BBE Food Shelf.



COUNCIL MEETINGS IN MARCH

Parish Council – 5:30pm March 9 at Grace

Grace Council – 7:35pm March 10 at Grace

Big Grove Council – 6:30pm March 14 at Big Grove

Crow River Council – 7:00pm March 9 at Crow River

CROW RIVER HAM DINNER DRIVE THROUGH ONLY

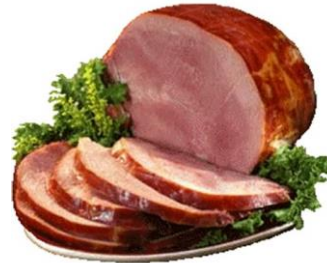


March 28, 2021

Serving: 10:30am till 12:30pm

Menu: Ham
Cheesy potatoes
Salad
Dessert

COST \$10.00



Proceeds go towards Sunday school and general church fund
Thrivent dollars have been applied for.

**WORRY IS A CONVERSATION YOU
HAVE WITH YOURSELF
ABOUT THINGS YOU CANNOT CHANGE.
PRAYER IS A CONVERSATION YOU HAVE WITH
GOD ABOUT THINGS HE CAN CHANGE.**

PRACTICING A NEW CRAFTING HOBBY?

Green Lake Lutheran Ministries -- Creative Souls Retreat -- March 19-21!

Whatever your hobby may be, bring your supplies and join us for a great weekend of crafting at Green Lake Bible Camp. You will enjoy fellowship, and a supportive Christian atmosphere in the company of other creative women. You will also have time for devotions, taking a walk, or even a nap. Learn more about this retreat, other adult and youth retreat opportunities, and our COVID policies on the Green Lake Lutheran Ministries website.

(2 night cost -- \$145 / commuter cost -- \$90)

NOTE – the Parish has credit that can be used for your registration so your cost will be minimal (\$45 for 2 nights / \$20 for commuters). Please register through the parish office to apply these credits.

PARISH SECRETARY TRANSITION:

Roxanne Oeltjenbruns is retiring and, as a parish, we give our thanks to her for serving as our Parish Secretary for many years. We appreciate all the good work she has done for us and we wish her (and Gary) well in retirement.

Lynne Dalen is coming on as our new Parish Secretary, beginning March 8. Let's all extend to her a warm welcome!

Also, Connie Wold will be serving as our new Treasurer/Financial Secretary for the Parish. We welcome her to this new role as well.

WE EXPRESS OUR SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS to Tim and Suzy Tensen and family and friends on the death of their son Josey Tensen and Remington Harder. We remember them with thanksgiving and pray their families experience God's grace in this time of grief.

REMINDER-MARCH 31 DEADLINE TO DIRECT CHOICE DOLLARS

Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31st. Eligible Thrivent Financial member who have available Choice Dollars have until March 31 2021 to direct them. Don't miss the opportunity to Recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to the church of your choice. Go to [Thrivent.com/Thrivent choice](https://www.thrivent.com/thrivent-choice) to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. **THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!** Together we can make a difference through Thrivent Choice. A heartfelt thanks to all of you who directed Choice Dollars to the church of your choice. Thrivent Financial and its members once again show us, together we can make a difference by helping to strengthen community's.

BIG GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

WE WELCOME INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD Briar David Becker son of Shannon Wander and Brody Becker. Welcome Briar to God's Kingdom.

CROW RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH

CROW RIVER WELCA is scheduled to meet on Thursday, Mary 4 (note day change). Please watch the bulletin for announcement on time.

CROW RIVER WORK DAY is scheduled to meet on Monday, March 15th. Please watch the bulletin for any announcement for work day.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE DO DAY LADIES have been busy quilting. Since September they have tied and stitched 76 quilts. In September they delivered 21 to Place of Hope. Even on the coldest of days, their dedication to supplying quilts to those in need is a great blessing to those who receive them. Thank you, ladies, for your nimble fingers and your sewing talent. God's Work and Our Hands.

GLCW will meet on Saturday, March 13th at 9:30 a.m. at church.

Big Grove Crow River Grace Youth

FREE SPIRITS (7-12TH GRADES) On Sunday, March 7 and 21 – 7:00-8:00pm. At Grace. Come, join us for an evening of fun, fellowship, and faith!

CONFIRMATION and EPIC YOUTH- Confirmation and Wednesday night EPIC will not take place during Lent. **All youth are encouraged to be involved in our Lenten services!**

GREEN LAKE LUTHERAN MINISTRIES-Who's up for camp this year?!? Our Bible Camps are gearing up for a summer season this year. They are taking great care in providing a safe camp experience this summer. You can see the schedule of opportunities on their website.

Registration is open. Because of a shortened season and reduced capacity at camp this summer it will be very important to register early! We ask that you register by paper forms and register through the parish office again this year in order to get all the great discounts and credits we can apply to your cost.

FCA BREAKFASTS- Thursdays at 7:45 – every Thursday that there is in-person school. All 7-12th Grade students are invited. Bring a friend,

PARISH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – February (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

Treasurer's Report: (January) Income: \$ 20,562.00
 Expenses: \$ 20,109.25
 General Fund End Balance: \$10,304.74

- ** Council elected officers for the year: President – Eric Johnson; Vice-president – Brian Ziemer; Secretary – Connie Wold.
- ** February 12 -- Council approved offering the secretary's position to Lynne Dalen. She has accepted and will begin on in full on March 8. Council also voted to have Connie Wold do the treasury position (beginning in March).

GRACE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – February (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

Treasurer's Report: (January) Income: \$ 11,077.85
 Expenses: \$ 11,049.22
 General Fund End Balance: \$ 43,836.72

- ** Council approved using Tithely as our on-line giving option for Grace.
- ** Council will be looking for volunteers to be our delegates to the Synod Assembly. This year will be on-line and a new Bishop will be elected.

CROW RIVER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS February (Complete minutes available at parish office.)

Treasurer's Report: (January) Income: \$ 7,680.37
 Expenses: \$ 11,196.70
 General Fund End Balance: \$ 15,233.81

- ** Council is moving forward to establish an endowment fund with funds received in memory of Suzie Johnson. Council approved investing through Edward Jones in Spicer.
- ** Council is working to fill one Trustee position and one Deacon position on the council.

BIG GROVE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – February (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

Treasurer's Report: (January) Income: \$ 6,640.35
 Expenses: \$ 6,029.02
 General Fund End Balance: \$ 44,535.42

- ** Council appointed Tammie Strand to the role of Financial Secretary for 1 year. They also discussed ways of handling the offerings that would provide some flexibility for the Financial Secretary and possibly changing the constitution to make the term of the Financial Secretary one-year.
- ** Council discussed the possibility of applying for a PPP Loan through the bank. No decision made to date.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

1 Leif Weichman
Kevin Rapp

Johanna Thompson
Arlen Anderson

2 Spencer Lundberg
3 Dylan Schulz

14 Gary & Barb Hanson
Tessa Halvorson

4 Valerie Walstrom
Diane Gerhardson
Melissa Michels
Jacob Raveling
Rance & Pete
(Doreen) White

15 Todd Anderson
Tammy Quenemoen
Jens Mueller

5 Melissa Heieie
Richard Hanson
Alyssa Tjosaas
Krista Lautenschlager

16 Megan Mohs

17 Sonja Stavos
Dianne Henjum
Deb Norris
Keith Kampsen

6 Todd & Missy Jakobson
Annika Heieie

18 Barb Walstrom

19 Sierra Wohlman

7 Marci Schwinghammer
Kaylee Olson

21 Logan Schwinghammer

10 Ashley Kirckof
Todd & Mary Anderson

22 JoAnn Nelson
Susan Swanson

11 Dakota Pelzer
Elliot Spanier

24 Andy Schoumaker

25 Laura Johnson
Travis & Nichole Szczesniak

12 Kathy Nelson
Kari Wold

27 Andrew Spanier

13 Mary Solbreken
Sharlot Roeder
Travis Schoumaker
Daniel Kirckof

30 Brandon Rach

31 Wade Jakobson

March 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	1. Thu	2. Fri	Sat
	1 6:30p Rachel Circle (G)	2 9:30am Sarah Circle(G)	3 11a Lenten Worship @ Grace 7p Lenten Worship @ Big Grove	4 7:45a FCA 7p WELCA Mtg. @ Crow River	5	6
7 8:30am Worship-BG 9am Worship-Grace w 1 st Communion 10:30am Worship CR w/ 1st Communion 7p-8p Free Spirits @ Grace	8	9 5:30p Parish Council 7p CR Council	10 11a Lenten Worship @ Grace 7p Lenten Worship @ Grace Grace Council to follow Worship service	11 7:45a FCA	12	13 9:30a GLCW Mtg at Grace CR Social Hall Reserved for Baby Shower
14 Time Changes Set your clocks ahead 8:30am Worship-CR w HC 9am Worship-Grace 10:30am Worship- BG w 1 st Communion 6:30p BG Council	15	16 Newsletter Deadline	17 11a Lenten Worship @ Grace 7p Lenten Worship @ Crow River	18 7:45a FCA	19	20 1 st Day of Spring
21 8:30am Worship-BG 9am Worship-Grace 10:30am Worship- CR 7p-8p Free Spirits @ Grace	22 9a Do day @ Grace (note day change)	23 9a Do day @ Grace (note day change)	24 11a Lenten Worship @ Grace 7p Lenten Worship @ Big Grove	25 7:45a FCA	26	27
28 8:30am Worship-CR 9a Worship-Grace 10:30am Worship- BG 10:30a-12:30p Ham Dinner Drive Through @ CR	29	30	31	APRIL 1 Maundy Thursday	2 Good Friday	3

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish
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Pastor John Dalen prjohnd59@gmail.com
Pastor Lisa Meshke pastorlisaanne@gmail.com
Parish Secretary bgcrlutheran@frontiernet.net

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

God's Work, Our Hands!

Church and Parish Councils

Big Grove

President	Jim Thoen	Vice Presidents	Scott Stueckrath /Jenny Stueckrath
Secretary	Megan Imdieke	Treasurer	Deanna Johnson
Financial Secretary	Tammie Strand		

Crow River

President	Doug Mohs	Vice President	Ryan Halvorson
Secretary	Melanie Lundberg	Treasurer	Travis Szczesniak
Financial Secretary	Jerry Torgerson		

Grace

President	Stephanie Fischer	Vice President	Dennis Braegelman
Secretary	Erin Krug	Treasurer	Connie Wold
Financial Secretary	Brenda Kaiser		

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish (BGCRG)

Council Members:	Allen Anderson (BG)	Eric Johnson (BG)
	Jan Martin (CR)	Brian Ziemer (CR)
	Connie Wold (G)	Megan Klaphake (G)

Pastors	Pastor John Dalen
	Pastor Lisa Meshke

Office Secretary	Lynne Dalen
Parish Treasurer	Connie Wold