



Lutheran
Community of Grace

What's New?

www.LutheranCommunityGrace.org April 2010

Worship Sundays 9:30 am

April 4 – Holy Communion
EASTER Sunday

April 11
Joel Smeby

April 18 – Holy Communion
Joel Smeby

April 25
Joel Smeby

Forums 10:45 am

April 4
Coffee and conversation

April 11
(Congregational meeting)

April 18
Coffee and conversation

April 25
Coffee and conversation

Prayer Requests

Carla and her family of care-givers
those serving in the Armed Forces—especially
Ralph, Karl, and Eric

Harvey

Faith and family, especially Hannah

Annika

Bill and Trudy

all those suffering and those serving in Haiti
and in Chile

Cynthia

Nathan

Trygve

Charlotte

the Fahnings as they travel

Rev. Marvin Hagen

Thelma, and family, on her 88th birthday

Paul Berge

Rev. Andrew Rogness

Esther McDermid

Adeline and Chet Patyk

Don Erickson

those threatened by flood waters

(Send your prayer requests to
info@LutheranCommunityGrace.org)

Good Friday and Easter

Good Friday evening, April 2, at 6:30 pm we worship using a Tenebrae service (the service of “shadows” or “darkness”). The service is composed almost entirely of readings from the Psalms and other Scriptural texts. A series of candles are progressively extinguished. The last candle, the *Christ candle*, is extinguished but for a short time and is removed from sight, symbolizing our Lord’s death. But, all is not left in darkness for long. The Christ candle is returned, glowing brightly, to remind us of our Lord’s resurrection on Easter Sunday morning. This service takes place in the Volunteers of America (VOA) building in Minnetonka.

On Easter morning, we will worship as the sun rises—across the street from the VOA in Hilltop Park (toward the western edge), an ice rink

only a few weeks back, remember? Coffee and sweets will be provided. This brief service will also be spoken Word only and will begin at 6:45 am.

At 9:30 am we're back in the VOA Gathering Room for our Easter celebration worship service with liturgy and music.

Please invite your friends, neighbors, acquaintances, family to any or all of these worship opportunities. "It is finished" Christ is arisen! *[th, js contributing]*

Are we ever going to get a new roof?

It's been a long haul to nail down a facility that would allow us the freedom to provide more ministries. We are limited at the VOA to Sunday mornings and occasional evening services. Fortunately, we are very close to coming to an agreement on the store-front property at 4 Shady Oak Road in Hopkins. This is the property that some generous members and friends of Lutheran Community of Grace pledged monies to help cover the cost of a lease. We are all very grateful for those folks! THANK YOU!

The owner of that building may be turning over the keys to this suite as early as April 1. Look for continuing updates on what's happening with the Shady Oak store-front. We had an open house there on December 13 in the midst of winter. Thanks again to those who pledged their support of this space.

We will continue to hold our Sunday morning 9:30 am worship service at VOA in their Gathering Room.

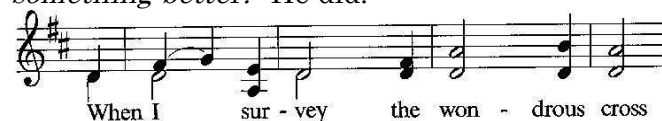
LCMC Leadership Conference

The 8th Annual LCMC Leadership Conference is coming up April 25-27, and is to be hosted by Lutheran Church of the Master in Omaha, NE. Speakers include G. Barry Anderson; David Housholder (who by the way has a really interesting article on ["Why Lutherans](#)

["Can't Evangelize"](#) on the Robinwood Church web site); Dr. Walter Sundberg; and Dave Drum, whose closing talk is entitled "Working Together to Fulfill Christ's Great Commission."

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) left a great legacy in the hymns he wrote. A keen student of the Bible, Watts took his inspiration from Scripture, but was not confined to the style of his day. The roots of his discontent began as a youth at the church where his father was pastor. He complained about the dreary worship music, and his father replied, "Write something better." He did.



Watts is credited with over 700 hymns and is known as the "Father of English Hymnody." However, from such pieces as "O God our Help in Ages Past," "Jesus shall Reign Wherever the Sun," "Joy to the World," and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," no one might know of the misfortune that accompanied his life. Watts was denied admission to the elite Oxford or Cambridge because of his religious beliefs. Instead he attended what was known as the Dissenting Academy. After ordination he was unable to handle the rigors of parish ministry and suffered a series of mental health setbacks that forced him to resign.

God miraculously provided a home for him. Sir Thomas Abney and his wife offered him a place to stay for a week. That week extended to thirty-six years. In spite of his mental health challenges, thin voice, and grotesque frame (one woman, who had fallen in love with his poetry, upon seeing him refused to marry him), when he preached, audiences would hang on his every word. He possessed a national reputation in England.

Benjamin Franklin, who became acquainted with Watts' hymns while serving as ambassador in England, carried the dear hymns of Isaac Watts in his arms when he returned to America prior to the outbreak of

the Revolutionary War. Matthew Arnold, a noted church music critic, declared “*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*” the greatest hymn of the English language. Recently I attended a sold-out contemporary music performance. Towards the end of the concert the musical group began singing this hymn. The audience of 13,000 rose to their feet and joined them in singing the words to this hymn written in 1707. Though over 300 years old, the words of Isaac Watts still powerfully reflect the heart sold-out to God. *[fh contributing]*

Lenten Worship

Many and varied are the styles and formats of the mid-week services held during Lent. Lutheran Community of Grace was afforded the opportunity of a new worship experience this year. What better way to worship than to involve the children.

The owners of “Our Space,” a Christian care center for grade school children, offered use of their facility and promoted the service among their clients. Then they worked with Joel to present the Gospel message through four themes—*grace, love, forgiveness, and holiness*, not only by hearing but also using all the human senses. How the children got into this. What an example they were to their parents. How children can be used to reach their parents with the Gospel message. The use of sight and sound will be continued into our Good Friday Service where light and darkness and the sound of the closing of the tomb lend emphasis and meaning to the scripture readings for that day of victory.

A word must be said about those children present. They were full of energy and bubbling over with enthusiasm. But to the credit of their parents and to the staff of Our Space, they were kind, considerate, courteous, disciplined, and well behaved. They were most eager to read for the adults and to express what they had learned as they examined the teaching tables. At the end of the last service they flocked around Joel with eager thankfulness for the services held for them.



[images from thank you cards of worship participants]

Thanks are due to Pastor Jim and Tosca Grimm for all that Our Space provided. And thanks to Joel for his efforts at arranging and conducting the service. Great thanks are due to Cynthia and Bea for providing and serving the “soup supper” that preceded each service.

What a door of opportunity has been opened to spread the Gospel throughout our neighborhood. What a challenge is before Lutheran Community of Grace. Are we up to it? Are we willing for God to use us to do a “new thing” (Isaiah 43:18-21) in our community? Pray that the Lord of the harvest sends forth the needed workers. (Luke 10:2) *[th contributing]*

Calling

The recessed Congregational Meeting of January 24, 2010 will reconvene on April 11, 2010 at 10:45 am for the purpose of voting on the issuing of a Letter of Call to Joel Smeby. Full details will be made available at the meeting.

Prayer at ResourceWest

It's not so dark in downtown Hopkins now, since the time change. Please join us for a brief service of prayer, discussion, and fellowship. We're at ResourceWest, which is 915 Mainstreet, just across the alley from the US

Bank. We meet at 7:00 pm on Tuesdays. Interestingly, ResourceWest is hosting workshops for tax assistance during the next several months at the same location, although our room in the interior is reserved for our continued use during this time. Please come and make your way past the tax-preparers. You might even get to know some of the citizens awaiting their turn for tax advice. Come and be a witness. Invite someone you know or someone who could use a mid-week dive into a Psalm, along with some prayer and informal discussion. We follow the Psalm appointed for the following Sunday. An invitation to join the on-line discussion (even if you can't join the group in person) is available here: www.LutheranCommunityGrace.net/wordpress Just another "entry point" into worship (better, for some, than entering the doors of a sanctuary and its "everyone-knows-everyone" crowd of congregants) or, perhaps, simply another chance to slow down and reflect in the middle of the week.

Protecting Us

That trio of soldiers (Karl, Eric and Ralph) for whom we pray as a congregation on Sunday mornings is still living and fighting out there in "harm's way." We missed an update on Ralph last month, so here it is, directly from Jean Hansen:

"He's still with NATO in Kandahar and will remain there throughout his deployment. Not much can be said about his work since it's all classified but he works on communication projects for NATO. The unit he works with is primarily Dutch and English. And they're all tea drinkers, so we send him coffee!" [jh contributing]

Sign up and set up

Please take a few moments to volunteer for setting up and participating in worship activities, whether it be prepping the VOA facility space, bringing some coffee, reading

Scriptures, greeting incoming folks, or the many other tasks that are required to facilitate our worship service.

Outreach *still* needs arms

Want to help out with evangelism, locally, that is? Perhaps you want to help stem the outgoing tide of Lutheranism. Or, perhaps you simply want to meet new people and witness to them. Or, perhaps you want to figure out how to approach a neighbor or friend or family member in need. We can use you! Send Joel a message at (952) 217-7908 or email us at info@LutheranCommunityGrace.org.

Contributing

jean hansen, freya hanson, trygve hauge, joel smeby

Your ideas and contributions to this newsletter are welcome.

Worship with Us



Volunteers of America (VOA) building
11400 4th Street North
Minnetonka, MN 55343
(Traveling west on Hwy 7, make a U-turn at Shady Oak Road and take the first right exit)

Contact Us

(952) 217-7908
info@LutheranCommunityGrace.org
www.LutheranCommunityGrace.net/wordpress