



November 2018

Volume 42 — Number 22

Milwaukee, WI. USA

# Grace Notes

A publication of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church—LCMS

HAPPY  
Thanksgiving  
DAY

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.

1 CHRONICLES 16:34



## Happy Crafters

The Crafters would like to thank everyone who helped make our 1st Craft Fair a success. Also, we want to thank all many bakers who donated all the good bakery. We will be going to the Village of Manor Park on November 3rd for their Craft Fair. Join us there between 9am-2pm. Remember to check out all our many items on our table in the Hoge Hall.



## THIS MONTH AT GRACE



Monday, November 5  
ELDERS MEETING | 6pm

Wednesday, November 7  
CPTLN MEETING | 6:30pm

Monday, November 12  
COUNCIL MEETING | 6pm

Wednesday, November 21  
THANKSGIVING SERVICE | 6pm

[WWW.GRACE-OK.ORG](http://WWW.GRACE-OK.ORG)

3030 W. Oklahoma Av. Milwaukee, WI. 53215

# Mental health and pastoral ministry



**G**od has blessed His Church bountifully with called and ordained pastors who teach, preach and administer the sacraments faithfully. They care for souls within the church and bring God's life-giving Word to the unchurched as well. For many pastors, the ministry is a joyful vocation. In their service to God's sheep and lambs, these men are rooted in Scripture, effective and vibrant. They are spiritually mature and resilient, and they inspire confidence among parishioners as they provide both godly spiritual care and capable leadership.

Yet as a Christian clinical psychologist in private practice for 25 years, I've met hundreds of faithful pastors who have struggled to find joy in ministry, despite their love for the Lord and their zeal to serve their

parishioners. Some were distressed, discouraged, depleted or clinically depressed. Others were anxious and weary, reeling from personal attacks, financial crises or churchly divisions. Most of these pastors admitted that their personal psychological and spiritual needs had not been tended to. Over 70 percent of the LCMS pastors I've met clinically acknowledged that they had never spoken with a brother they considered to be their personal pastor. They were even less likely to have sought psychological care.

Many pastors I've spoken with have reported that, when taken captive by burnout, depression or anxiety, their first response was to redouble their churchly efforts to ensure that no one

would know they were struggling. Others have shared that, in light of Jesus' words about joy in the Christian life (John 15:11), their own experience of sadness and emptiness in ministry left them feeling guilt, shame or fear that they had failed. The Holy Ministry does not bubble wrap pastors and insulate them from challenges or spiritual trials. In one 2018 survey of Protestant clergy, 23 percent of pastors reported dealing with some kind of personal mental illness.

## Threats to pastoral well-being

The ministry compounds stressors in ways that many other vocations do not. Pastors come to know the lives of their parishioners very well as they baptize, confirm, marry and bury their flock. They are routinely

engaged in hearing about and tending to the pain of others; they accompany members into their heartbreaks, horrific moments, confusion, rage or despair. They bring God's Word to bear into family maelstroms, addictions, failures, betrayals and troubled marriages. Pastors are often the first resource for individuals in the congregation who are grappling with their own mental health diagnoses and spiritual dark nights. They keep close vigil with those who suffer and marinate in the pain of their people.

In addition to this, the pastoral office is truly one of few vocations in which a man must master countless competencies. We ask pastors to be biblical scholars, excellent preachers, problem-solvers, business managers, secretaries, financial wizards, mediators, teachers, counselors, marketers, winsome visitors and savvy leaders in a well-dressed, confident package, willing to do battle (politely) with an increasingly unhinged culture. In smaller parishes we may even ask them to cut the church lawn before the Sunday service. Many parishes turn to their pastors expecting he will do all these things well and be available 24/7. Each and all of these competing expectations can challenge any pastor's resilience.

What else might contribute to discouragement? At a time when national surveys report that the number of American Christians is in decline across nearly all congregations and church bodies, pastors are still asked to demonstrate their effectiveness with membership metrics. In some places, the only true measure of the pastor's "success" is congregational size. Counting Baptisms, new members and members in worship can become a litmus test

for determining pastoral success, robbing men of joy even when they have been faithful in their calling. In the smallest parishes, the pastor may also be confronted with budget shortfalls which may threaten the school or the church itself.

The causes of pastoral depression, depletion and burnout are legion, but even among pastors who are not experiencing mental illness researchers have noted troublesome, recurrent themes. Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger's *Pastors in Transition: Why Clergy Leave Local Ministry*, a groundbreaking study built on interviews with more than 900 former pastors, showed that:

54% lacked agreement with parishioners over what the role of a pastor is

41% felt stress because of criticism from the congregation

55% felt drained by the demands placed on them

51% felt the demands of laity were unreasonable

15% felt pressure by lay leaders to leave the ministry

## The high cost of burnout

Given these and other contributing factors, it's not surprising: Ministry burnout is real and pastoral depletion is insidious. As stressors increase, small losses in functioning over time accrue and can lead ultimately to significant dysfunction and even clinical depression. The pastor with mental health issues struggles to manage his work and personal habits and may neglect time in the Word, meditation and prayer. He probably has not established healthy boundaries for himself or his family, and he is often reluctant to address chronic conflict or others' unreasonable expectations.

A pastor in these circumstances can soon find he is overwhelmed and rounding the corner to depression. Some pastors-in-decline report that



*Pastor Novelli Jr. visiting his good friend Pastor Morris Mayer, who serve the Lord in New York City.*

their lives have become a checklist of things to do, completed out of a sense of duty and necessity. They feel empty and find little satisfaction in their work. Pastors who are clinically depressed can often barely function beyond meeting Sunday morning responsibilities.

Dissatisfaction with self, family and ministry all take root and grow quietly. A pastor's spiritual needs (which are the most essential in his life) are usually the first to be neglected, and his ability to meet his family's needs may decline swiftly thereafter. Too often, pastors seek mental health or spiritual care only when their life, marriage and ministry are all at the brink of free-fall, their parishioners are upset or perplexed and no one knows quite what to do next. Fortunately, there are a number of excellent resources for LCMS pastors and their families, along with an increasing awareness of clergy mental health needs throughout our church body. Informed and sensitive efforts to address or even preempt mental health matters among our clergy are being examined throughout the stages of pastoral formation.

### *Beverly K. Yahnke*

*Dr. Beverly K. Yahnke is executive director for Christian counsel for DOXOLOGY: The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel. A licensed clinical psychologist who has spent more than two decades in private practice, she also served previously as professor of psychology and department chair at Concordia University Wisconsin.*



**PRAYING  
FOR PASTOR L**

- P** • Personal Life  
*Walk with God ~ Family*
- A** • Administration  
*Counseling ~ Leadership*
- S** • Sermon Study  
*Time ~ Sermon preparation*
- T** • Tests & Trials  
*Grace ~ Strength ~ Growth*
- O** • Oversight  
*Ministries ~ Care for the flock*
- R** • Resources  
*Strength ~ Wisdom ~ Projects*



4 NOV 2018 - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS

**FALL BACK  
ONE HOUR**

**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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Email: [novelligrace@gmail.com](mailto:novelligrace@gmail.com)**Congregational Officers****Terrence Donaldson, President****David Biermann, Vice-President****Staff**

Rev. German Novelli (Sr.), Pastor-Comunidad de Gracia

Jane Donaldson, Office Secretary

Telva Szymborski, Organist

Dennis Szymborski, Choir Director

Michelle Lenski, Bell Choir Director

Lucia Novelli, Lay Readers

Jane Donaldson and Marge Wodvarka, Altar Guild

Shirley Lovas, Altar Flowers

Sue Pritzlaff, Ruth Guild President/ LWML

Sue Brahm, Sunday School Superintendent

Kenneth Lovas, Interior Custodian

Judy Zarzynski, Caring Connectors and Piece Makers

**Board of Directors****Don Ewert, Board of Elders****Jim Barndt, Board of Evangelism****Brenda Nitz, Director of Stewardship****James Van Acker, Board of Trustees****Judy Zarzynski, Board of Fellowship****Kenny Lovas, Board of Human Concerns****David Biermann, Children's Ministry****[www.grace-ok.org](http://www.grace-ok.org)****Grace Ruth Guild / LWML**

Save the date: Sunday, December 2nd  
Ruth Guild Christmas Party and Secret Pal  
Gift Exchange. Lunch will be served at  
12:00 noon.

Ruth Guild / Lutheran Women In Missions  
– Mites for Missions on Sunday, November  
18th.

Please Note: Mites are collected on an on-  
going basis and is not limited to Mites for  
Missions Sundays. Empty your Mite Box  
into the basket marked Mites. You will be  
able to use your Mite Box again and again.

Thank you for your generous support –  
this helps fund SWD and National Mission  
Grants.

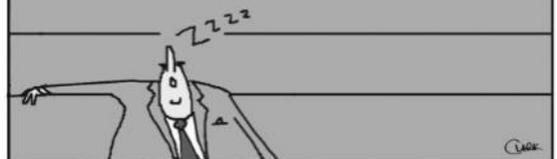
Happy Thanksgiving!

*Sue Pritzlaff*

**HONEST JON**

by Jon Clark

..Late that Sunday night, Sister  
Fleming suddenly remembered  
what it was she left at Church...



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In this my 90th year, I'm writing a thank you note to the Lord for his grace and mercy from the time of my birth and ever since. It begins with my grandparents who migrated here from Germany. They were led to Jehovah Church. They passed on their faith to my parents, who in turn, passed it on to me. By passing on their faith, I mean seeing to my spiritual needs. First baptism, followed by Sunday School, Confirmation Class and regular worship, while on their watch. I'm thankful for the pastors and teachers, past and present, who taught and preached the Word in its truth and purity.

Romans 10: 14, 15: "How can they believe in the one they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

Since I cannot include all, I'll just name the first of those who made a lasting impression: Mrs. Rammenger, my kindergarten teacher, for her loving kindness, and Pastor Reichmann for his passion for the Word. In Confirmation Class from Luther's Small Catechism we were instructed in the Law and Gospel and the deeper meaning of our Articles of Faith.

After three years of instruction, we were confirmed in 1943 and confessed our pledge of allegiance to Jesus. From my class of nine, James Reichmann and Leonard Ristow went on to become pastors. Pastor Reichmann introduced me to my first Bible study class. The good news is, whether you begin your spiritual journey early or later in

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.  
1 Corinthians 13:12

## Ninety Years of Grace and Blessings

life, the door of God's Kingdom is open to all who are seeking truth in light of the Word.

Since I have always lived on the south side of Milwaukee, I have never had to change my place of worship. But changes have taken place since the founding of our church in 1895 by a small community of believers. We relocated twice and our name was changed from Jehovah to Grace and, of course, there have been a succession of pastors that the Lord led to our community of saints - saints through faith in

Jesus, sinners through the inheritance of disobedience. So it's not surprising that there has been more than one "dust up" in our history. But just as Satan was about to chalk one up for his team, our Good Shepherd's rod and staff (love and forgiveness) overpowered acrimony. The Holy Spirit united us, God's will lead us and the power of the Word sustained us. Psalm 23:4 - "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me." The unexpected death of my mother when I was 19, my brother was 18 and my sister was 7, and my

divorce after 26 years of marriage were walks in the valley of shadows that caused great emotional upheaval. What I remember is that I was not afraid. I prayed and my faith was strengthened. Support and help came from family, friends and pastor. I know it was not coincidence that surprising and unexpected help arrived at just the right time. The Lord was with me.

The Lord was with me when I was ill, injured or in need of surgery. I'm thankful for the medical community and their skills that got me back on my feet. They made the repairs, but God alone mends and heals the body he created, just as only He can cause seeds to grow and produce harvests that sustain our bodies - amazing blessings we sometimes take for granted.

When my last hour comes, I am convinced, from past experience, the Lord will quell my fears. He will be with me and I will find rest in heaven. On the last day

my body will be resurrected and united with my soul. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, the likes of which are beyond our imagination.

1 Corinthians 13:12 - "Now we see but a poor reflection, then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part, then I will know fully, even as I am fully known."

**Hymn 573:**

**Lord, 'Tis Not that I did Choose Thee**

*Lord 'tis not that I did choose thee;  
that I know could never be,  
for this heart would still refuse thee  
had thy grace not chosen me.  
Thou hast from the sin that stained me,  
washed and cleansed and set me free  
and unto this end ordained me,  
that I ever live to thee.*

*Lillian Hughes*

**GRACE: COMUNIDAD DE GRACIA  
NEW OUTREACH WORKSHOP**

**EVERY  
ONE**

**HIS WITNESS**

LUTHERAN EVANGELISM

**NOVEMBER**

Registration is Now Open: Church's Office (414) 384 3520

## editorial

**T**his year has been one of the most challenging ones of my entire life.

We had a lot of funerals in our congregation, and also we had several issues which kept us very busy and worried.

However, as I was walking through the dark times of planning funerals and dealing with some other problems, I had a special meeting that changed my view of my pastoral mission: a family came to me in order to organize the Baptism of their baby, which ended in the Baptism of this baby's sponsors too. Three Baptisms for the price of one! Aha!

Right there during this experience, God showed me that there is a light of hope in the midst of darkness.

A few weeks ago, a lady came to my office. She wanted to talk to me about a personal problem she had. More than a problem, it was a difficult dilemma. I didn't know

what to say. In my bones I felt my lack of experience and my human weaknesses. But God had other plans! He put words in my mouth, His Word, which touched the life of this woman, and my heart as well. Again, Jesus' light in the midst of darkness!

I have many reasons to be thankful for with our Lord these days. I'm thankful for my marriage with Lucia, and for having her in my life. I'm thankful for all we were able to accomplish this year as a congregation. I'm thankful to God because He preserved the life of my dad after two huge heart attacks. I'm thankful because you're part of this congregation. I'm thankful because I know that God is walking on our side, even though problems, trials, issues, and challenges seem to be overwhelming.

I'm thankful because Jesus died for my sins, and for your sins, to

give us forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

We will miss our brothers and sisters who have departed...Yes, we will... but we hope in the life to come... the abundant life we will receive from Jesus. I'm thankful because we are still a strong congregation that relies on the hands of God. After all, this is HIS Church.!

What about you? What are you grateful for in this Thanksgiving month?

See you on November 21st for our Thanksgiving Special Service!

***"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever."***  
***1 Chronicles 16:34***

*Pastor Germán Jr.*  
*novelligrace@gmail.com*



# NOVEMBER USHERS

## NOVEMBER 4

Jim Barndt, Mark Jubeck,  
Dave Biermann, and Chester Zbrozek

## NOVEMBER 11

Sue Pritzlaff, Lynda Trapp,  
Brenda Nitz, and Shirley Lovas

## NOVEMBER 18

Art and Amy Socha,  
Terry and Jane Doanldson

## NOVEMBER 21 (Thanksgiving)

Art and Amy Socha,  
Terry and Jane Doanldson

## NOVEMBER 25

David and Danny Gaus  
Sheryl Pelican, and Lori Eshelman

## DECEMBER 2

Chuck and Alana Zielesch,  
Don and Karen Ewert

- 11/2 Zander Pluta & Alyssa Schenzel
- 11/3 Zachary Bishop
- 11/5 Brenda Miller
- 11/6 Norma Ulbing
- 11/7 Joshua Barndt
- 11/8 Charles Heim
- 11/9 Janis Mattson
- 11/11 Richard Ermis
- 11/12 Lillian Hughes
- 11/13 June Richter
- 11/18 Alana Zielesch
- 11/21 Jasmina Rabideaux
- 11/22 Bekka Sobczak & Joan VanAcker
- 11/24 Debbie Finn
- 11/25 Damien Quiles
- 11/27 Amy Pelican
- 11/29 Colleen Smith
- 11/30 Leonard Lovas & Telva Szymborski



Phil & Jamie Steinke  
 Dave & Margaret Wodvarka  
 Jeff & Liz Tuuri

November 6  
 November 20  
 November 29



# Thanksgiving

CELEBRATION SERVICE

WEDNESDAY | November 21, 6pm






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## PUTTING OUR FAITH IN ACTION

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**S**ometimes people don't like it when pastors talk about stewardship. For some, it hits too close to home. It is easier to talk about bad people in Washington, in history, or overseas than it is to think about what our daily life in Christ is supposed to look like – how we are supposed to love our neighbor. The fact that we don't like hearing about stewardship certainly means we ought to face it.

God calls us to first-fruits, sacrificial giving. This means we should give off the top. We should set a percentage of our income as a deliberate gift for the work of the Church and give that first. We write the check to the Lord's work in the Church before we pay the mortgage or pay for our medicine or pay for anything else.

We don't pay for all the stuff we need, and think we need, and then give from what is left over. That is the first-fruits idea. It is hard because we think we need all sorts of other things first. But that is the point of "sacrificial."

Next, how could the starting point for Christian generosity and sacrifice really be anything less than a tithe – 10 percent? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament was never

arbitrary. In the Old Testament, the Levites received this tithe so they could be full-time ministers. Does the New Testament have a ministry that is larger or smaller? It is far larger: "Make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

So, if 10 percent was needed in the Old Testament, and we have a bigger mission need in the New Testament, how can we expect the Lord's work to be done on less than a tithe?

First-fruits, sacrificial, generous giving – that's the way. We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we've out-given God's goodness or that we've given plenty.

We might be tempted to think so but consider – no one in the Church has given plenty because no one has given all. No one has died for his sins. Only the sinless Son of God did that.

Or, as St. Paul said, bringing the Good News of Jesus into the discussion of our giving to support the Lord's work in the Church:

*"I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is*

*genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich"* (2 Cor. 8:8-9).

In Mark's account of the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus took the disciples' five loaves and two fish and blessed them. It was nothing among so many, but, of course, it was plenty. Jesus makes something from nothing.

Mark doesn't say that all the disciples gave Jesus all the bread they had. It is quite possible some of them held something back. But even if they did, that didn't stop Jesus from blessing them. Jesus makes something out of nothing. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. The Lord gives abundantly or asks us to fast. We do not know what will happen. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

He does all things well and works all things together for good. The disciples don't give their bread to Jesus because it is a good investment. They give it because He is good, they love Him, and they trust Him. Let us go and do likewise.

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# Christmas

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

*I rejoiced with those who said to me,  
"Let us go to the house of the Lord."*  
Psalm 122

Sunday | December 2 and 9  
**9am & 11am**

Sunday | December 16 | **10am**  
Children's Christmas Program

Wednesday | December 12  
Advent & Healing Service - 6pm

Sunday | December 23 and 30  
**10am**

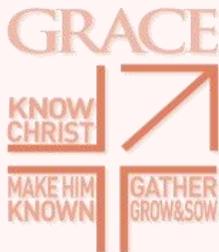
Monday | December 24  
**Christmas Eve - 6pm**

Tuesday | December 25  
**Christmas Day - 10am**

**GRACE** | 3030 W. Oklahoma Ave. Milwaukee, WI

# Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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[www.GRACE-OK.org](http://www.GRACE-OK.org)

Together  
**IN CHRIST**

WORSHIP SERVICES  
EVERY SUNDAY | 9AM & 11AM

**GRACE: 3030 W. OKLAHOMA AVENUE. MILWAUKEE, WI. 53215**