



# GLOW

*Grace Lutheran Church of Winchester*

## March 2026



### *From the Desk of Pastor Mark*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I'm not going to sugarcoat it – cabin fever hit me early and it hit me hard this past month. While most people accept it and adapt to it, (and many actually enjoy it!), for those who listen to me, as well as for those whom I impose it upon without their consent, you've heard me whine and complain about winter, snow, cold weather, heating costs, long days, longer nights, and just about everything else connected to these months. A couple of bloody spills on the ice and my daughter checking in from New Zealand to inform me how warm it is there has not made my disposition any cheerier. My family has heard me complain enough times that they just not-so-gently and not-so-subtly-anymore remind me that I chose to live here. I hate it when they're right.

When this cabin fever hits, I need a carrot to hold out in front of me (namely, summer) to keep me plugging along. These days turn into a daily countdown for me for things connected to warm weather, like when the Timber Rattlers begin their season (32 days), Cinco de Mayo (I'll eat tacos anytime, but we're talking about eating tacos outside! – 65 days) and confirmation camp (105 days). Yep, this is unfortunately how my mind works.

But as much as I focus on these static dates, it's really the unexpected little gifts along the way that continue to give me hope and joy, things like the recent week of faux spring that we had, the delightful responses from many churches that continue to come in from our confirmation class's Hearts Across America mailing campaign, the ice sculptures on display downtown Appleton that celebrate the artistic abilities of those in our community, and the fact that a simple meal of soup and warm bread can serve as a wonderful dinner any night of the week.

And, you know, Lent operates very much in the same way for all of us. On Ash Wednesday we begin a journey toward Easter, the carrot of promise and hope of eternal life that is held out in front of us after being reminded of our mortality and that we will all die in this world. There is a countdown attached to this season as well – 40 days – of an increased

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#### **Ruth's Pantry**

##### **Needs**

Canned Peas

Canned Carrots

Shampoo, Body Wash

Bar Soap, **Cereal**

Hamburger Helper

Pasta Noodles

Cooking Oil

Sugar, **Cereal**

Salt and Pepper

**Cereal, Cereal**

Paper & Plastic Bags

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intentional giving of ourselves to God and to God's people.

It's the little gifts on our way to the cross and the resurrection that keep us moving forward. The gift of scripture tells us not only about a God who loves us beyond our comprehension but defines our purpose in this journey of salvation that we've embarked on. The gifts of worship and community reveal to us how that love of God transforms and encourages us. The gifts of service grant us a greater understanding and appreciation of how our gifts and abilities fit together with the larger body of Christ. The gifts come daily and they come in large bunches for all of us.

With Ash Wednesday having transpired in February and Easter not until April of this year, it means that the entirety of the month of March will be lived out inside this season of Lent. As we await the great celebration of Resurrection Sunday, may we find time to daily give thanks for the many gifts that we are endowed with daily. They may not make the cold days outside go by any more quickly, but they will warm us from within, filling all our days with purpose and with joy.

Thanks be to God!

In Christ,

**Pastor Mark**



## LIFT Potluck

Immediately following the worship service on Sunday, March 8, everyone is invited to join us for the LIFT (Life in Faithful Transition) potluck and discussion. The first two offerings of this event were very well attended and have generated wonderful conversation and moments of sharing. The focus of our presentation/discussion for this gathering will be about the unexpected "God moments" in our lives. With the focus of our Lenten theme this season being "Holy Lament," God moments often (but not always!) come about during unexpected moments and from even more unexpected places.

As always, this gathering is open to everyone of all ages, and we follow where the Holy Spirit organically leads our discussions. If you are able, bring a dish to pass. If you can't, that's OK too – we'll have plenty of food for you, we just want you there! If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Mark or Lynn Selle for more information.

## 175th Anniversary



Circle the date and share the good news! On Sunday, April 26, we will finally(!) celebrate 175 years of ministry flowing out of Grace Lutheran Church!

The special Sunday morning worship service will be a celebratory event with special music and guest preacher, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin Bishop Anne Edison-Albright.

Following worship, we are all invited to gather around the catered luncheon feast, a gift from Grace Lutheran Church to all her members and friends. Displays, fellowship, and placing our love letters to future Grace into the time capsule to be opened at her 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2050. So that we can get an estimated head count for food, please contact the church office by Monday, April 6, to let us know how many of your family and friends will be in attendance on this special day.

# Confirmation

*Hearts Across America*

## Confirmation Project Update

Last month, the students in our confirmation group wrote 102 letters to churches across the country with the mission of spreading the love of God. They were hoping to build a connection and get a reply from every state in the country.

So far, they have received responses from 24 churches in 23 different states. We hope that the letters continue to arrive at Grace and that we can complete our goal!

You can check the progress of their project on the map on the wall of the upstairs hallway.

Replies have been received from the colored states that are named on the wall map. The replies from the churches are in the envelopes on the table.



# March

## The 80+ birthday gang

- 21 Albert Ihrig  
5718 Grandview Road  
Larsen, WI 54947
- 26 John Schroll  
9188 N. Loop Road  
Larsen, WI 54947
- 26 Norman Zobel  
5905 Oak Lane Drive, Box 350  
Butte des Morts, WI 54927



## Grace Lutheran Church of Winchester

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### The Congregation Council

David Bork	920-428-3420	<a href="mailto:gpa.dave.bork@gmail.com">gpa.dave.bork@gmail.com</a>
Steve Harrison, President	920-585-8350	<a href="mailto:stevie.h@live.com">stevie.h@live.com</a>
Karla Holl	920-836-9508	<a href="mailto:karlah@new.rr.com">karlah@new.rr.com</a>
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Pastor Mark Laatsch	906-424-0003	<a href="mailto:gracewinchesterpastor@gmail.com">gracewinchesterpastor@gmail.com</a>

### Other Key Contacts

Building and Grounds	920-470-2574	Rob Nelson, Chairperson
Business Manager: Alissa Olson	920-277-7619	<a href="mailto:graceofwinchester@gmail.com">graceofwinchester@gmail.com</a>
Music: Todd Repp, Jessica McGinnis, Carol Reichert		
Custodian — Gene Walter		
Power Point Master — Patti Nelson		

*Love flows from Grace*

*May you have the power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ!*

# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Pantry Challenge: 9:30 a.m. Worship	2 9:00-11:00 a.m. Ruth's Pantry 4:00-5:00 p.m. Ruth's Pantry	3	4 9:00 a.m. Women of Grace 5:30 p.m. Lenten Worship	5	6	7
8 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. LIFT pot- luck and gather- ing	9 9:00-11:00 a.m. Ruth's Pantry 4:00-5:00 p.m. Ruth's Pantry	10	11 8:30 a.m. Sewing Circle 5:30 p.m. Lenten Worship	12 1:00 p.m. Leah Circle	13	14
15 9:30 a.m. Worship with Praise Band 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum	16 9:00-11:00 a.m. Ruth's Pantry 4:00-5:00 p.m. Ruth's Pantry	17 	18 9:00 a.m. Women of Grace 5:30 p.m. Lenten Worship	19 8:36 a.m. Property Team	20	21
22 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum	23 9:00-11:00 a.m. Ruth's Pantry 4:00-5:00 p.m. Ruth's Pantry	24	25 8:30 a.m. Sewing Circle 5:30 p.m. Lenten Worship	26	27	28
29 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum	30 9:00-11:00 a.m. Ruth's Pantry 4:00-5:00 p.m. Ruth's Pantry	31				

## Keeping in Touch

General email address:

[graceofwinchester@gmail.com](mailto:graceofwinchester@gmail.com)

Grace Web site: [glcw.org](http://glcw.org)

Grace: [Facebook.com/graceofwinchester](https://www.facebook.com/graceofwinchester)

Ruth's Pantry: [ruthspantrygrace@gmail.com](mailto:ruthspantrygrace@gmail.com)

Ruth's Pantry: [Facebook.com/glcw.ruths.pantry](https://www.facebook.com/glcw.ruths.pantry)

The email Prayer Chain.

March	
Ushers	Greeters
March 1 — Team 1	Team 1
March 8 — Team 2	Team 2
March 15 — Team 3	Team 3
March 22 — Team 4	Team 4
March 29 — Team 5	Team 5

## *Ruth's Pantry "Collection Challenge"*

The Ruth's Pantry Collection Challenge Sunday (to help stock the shelves) is coming up. When you come to Church on Sunday, **March 1**, please bring cleaning supplies.

"Early" Notice: The first Sunday challenge in **April** requests are in. You are encouraged to bring dish soap.

Many thanks to all of the people who regularly contribute to stock our shelves!

### *Funeral Planner*

A number of years ago, all members of the Grace community were invited to put their funeral wishes on a planner form that could be stored at the church. The reason to do this is to help your family as well as the pastor in planning the funeral that you would like when the time comes for you to go home to Jesus—Bible verses, readings, music, etc.

If you did one at the time we invited you to do so back then, those planners have gone missing. Besides, you may have made some different decision in the meantime.

Funeral planner forms are on the cabinet across from the church offices. Please pick one up—give it some consideration, talk to your family members, and fill it out. If you have special poems or readings you would like at your funeral, please attach copies of those readings. Then return the planner to the church office. It will be kept privately in the pastor's office until the time when it is needed.

### *Pancake Supper*

Thank YOU! The pancake supper on the evening before Ash Wednesday was well attended. The pancakes were wonderful. The Pantry board members worked hard and had a good time. The free-will offering brought in a generous amount of money which will be used to stock the shelves at the Pantry. A number of the cupcakes were "King Cakes" with small statues of Jesus baked into the batter. Several people were crowned because they found Jesus in their cupcakes! Fun!

Of course, we can find Jesus everywhere in our everyday lives—we don't need special Pantry cupcakes to find Jesus. But the supper was a fun way for people to get together and celebrate and support the hard-working Pantry workers who distribute food to as many as 30 families each week.

### *The World is Both Burning and Blooming*

Pastor Mark shared this poem in his Ash Wednesday sermon. It is being used as the blessing during our Lenten midweek "Holy Lament" worship services, words that speak directly to the conflicting and confusing events of our lives, nation, and world that many of us may be experiencing right now.

*You get the bad news and the sunrise in the same day.*

*You cry over the headlines, then you laugh at a baby wearing a hat shaped like a bear.*

*This is the dual citizenship of being alive.*

*Rage and reverence, grief and grace.*

*You are allowed to feel both.*

*You are allowed to scream, and still notice how good the soup is.*

*You don't have to choose.*

*Let it all in.*

*Amen. —Karen Salmansohn 2026*

# Grace Lutheran Church of Winchester

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# March 2026



## Grace Historical Notes

- 1927 The balcony of the church was repaired and the interior of the church redecorated—the first date of interior decoration was in 1905.
- 1927 The first approach to the envelope system for collecting the annual budget was made and voted down.
- 1932 The Luther League purchased the choir gowns for the Senior Choir.
- 1933 A single envelope system was initiated. Up to this time, dues were assessed and personally collected.
- 1933 The present system of having ushers at various church services, the morning service programs, altar flowers, and use of the white surplice on Festival and Holy Communion services by the pastor was instituted.
- 1933 It was unanimously voted to form the Lutheran Brotherhood in our congregation.
- 1934 The “Union Aid” was organized in June, when the six Ladies Aid groups were called together by the pastor.
- 1935 The first Cradle Roll Secretary was appointed to enlist all babies baptized in our church into the Cradle Roll.
- 1936 The Ladies Aid Mission Boxes were introduced.

—Facts are assembled and submitted by David Christianson, with the help of several people who went through historical materials and pulled out data of note.