

NEWSLETTER



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Grace Lutheran Church

Birthdays

4/10: Angela Sharp
 4/17: Joan Myers
 4/24: Joanne Michel
 4/26: Noelle
 Granderson

Anniversaries

4/05: Michael &
 Amy Garoutte
 4/09: Peter &
 Christina Granderson

Pray the Psalms



During our Sundays in Lent, we have been going through some of the Psalms of Ascent to fit our theme of repentance. We have journeyed with the pilgrims of old, turning away from sin and away from the world toward our Lord and Savior. Throughout the series, you've heard me mention a few times that the Psalms are the prayerbook of the Bible and that we can pray the Psalms. But, why pray the Psalms in the first place?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran theologian from the 20th century, wrote a little book called *Psalms: The Prayer Book of the Bible*. In the first chapter, "Lord, Teach Us to Pray," he says

this:

"And so we must learn to pray. The child learns to speak because his father speaks to him. He learns the speech of his father. So we learn to speak because God has spoken to us and speaks to us. By means of the speech of the Father in heaven his children learn to speak with him. Repeating God's own words after him, we begin to pray to him."

I love that analogy of learning to pray from God the same way a child learns to speak from his father. The Psalms – indeed, the whole Bible – are God's Word to us. They are where God speaks to us His own words. The Psalms, incidentally, are God's Word *and also* prayers to God. Bonhoeffer's point is essentially this: We learn to pray when we pray God's words back to Him in Jesus' name.

Let's consider the example of Psalm 51 (feel free to pause and read Psalm 51). Psalm 51 is a prayer of confession. It is King David's plea for mercy after his grievous sins. Psalm 51 is also God's Word. When we pray Psalm 51, we learn to speak words of confession to our Father in heaven using His own words. He teaches us how to confess our sins through this Psalm. Incidentally, we know that through Jesus the answer to this confession is, "Your sin is forgiven; I have had mercy upon you." We learn, then, from this Psalm that God hears this confession and gives exactly what it asks for: Mercy according to God's steadfast love. We learn that when we make this same confession, God has the same response towards us: Mercy according to His steadfast love. It is the same way throughout the Psalms. Through the Psalms, God gives us His own words to pray.

To be sure, God certainly hears your prayer when you cry out to him with your own words, too. And truly, God hears even when we do not have the words and the Holy Spirit prays on our behalf (see Romans 8:26). When we think about prayer, we rejoice that God *also* gives to us His own words to teach us and to help us pray.

In Christ's Service,
 Pastor Heitshusen



He is Risen

HAPPENINGS AT GRACE

BABY SHOWER



The baby/diaper shower for Pastor and Rachel's new baby was held on Thursday evening, March 5th. Baby bingo was played. Hannah had a good time helping to unwrap gifts. The cake and drinks were enjoyed by everyone. It was a fun evening.



New members, Peter and Christina Granderson were welcomed on Sunday, March 15th. A reception was held following church services.

Lenten Lunch



Pictured above are helpers at the Lenten Lunch on Wednesday, March 11, at the Aurora United Methodist Church: Joan Myers, Sue Doss, Bernie Thomas, Charlie Chambers, Pam Bowling and Cathy Munden. Also helping, but not pictured, were Kathy Holle and Edith Chambers.