



Granite Falls Lutheran News

February 2013

**A Publication of Granite Falls Lutheran Church
Granite Falls, MN**

A Lent For EveryoneYES EVERYONE!!!!

How does God do it?.....How does God actually hang in there with each one of us, sometimes waiting for decades before we actually listen to him honestly,and love him truly,and follow Him even imperfectly? ...Listen to this real life story told by a 49 year-old Christian woman in Japan:

“Last year I was involved in an accident and was hospitalized for 6 months. I was miserable, wondering why I had to endure such a trial. I was depressed for days and did not want to talk to anyone.

For years my life had been far from the Christian model; 40 years had passed since I had been involved in Christianity, but on this night I began listening to a Christian radio station. I heard the Lord’s Prayer. It was as if I was hearing the voice of God. The words ‘Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors’ and ‘Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,’ ran through my mind.

I was wrapped in inexpressible emotion. Thoughts of how I had lived my life flashed in front of my eyes. After that, I started to read the Bible little by little, and am now learning how to truly live again. I’m thankful to be re-learning the things I once learned in Sunday School.”

Could it be possible that God may be finding us anew, each one of us just as we are, during this season of our lives?

Lent truly is a season when all of us are invited to be honest with God, just as we are! Here at GFLC, Lent this year will be very traditional for some & very contemporary for others.....it will be geared for children and families, and also for elderly and singles.....it will be a great place for people who are hungry and people who are ready to feed others. Take a look at **Page Two** of this newsletter and see for yourself.



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GFLC News
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Worshipping In February

Come, let us worship! Worship is at 8:00 am and 10:30 am every Sunday morning. Communion Services are Feb. 3rd, 13th, and 17th. Come, and let us worship together!

Sunday, February 3, 4th Sunday in Epiphany

Text: Luke 7:1-17—Healing of the Centurion's Slave
8:00 am Senior Choir
10:30 am Wee Praise and Kids of the Rock
1st Communion For Fifth Graders

BRING CANNED GOODS FOR SOUPER BOWL OF CARING!!!

Sunday, February 10, Transfiguration of Our Lord

Text: Luke 9:28-45—Transfiguration
8:00 am & 10:30 am Praise Ringers
Baptism Milestone

Wednesday, February 13, Ash Wednesday

Text: Luke 9:51-62—The Cost of Discipleship
4:15 pm Traditional Lenten Service
(No Meal at GFLC, but St. Paul's Lutheran has a delicious Ash Wednesday Meal, so please support them if you wish!)

6:00 pm Family Lenten Service

Sunday, February 17, 1st Sunday in Lent

Text: Luke 10:25-42—Good Samaritan
10:30 am Senior Choir

Wednesday, February 20, 2nd Wednesday in Lent

New Youth Area Open House Night!!!!
4:15 pm Traditional Lenten Service
4:45 pm — 6:00 pm Lenten Meal: **Hot Turkey Sandwiches & Cheesy Potatoes**
6:00 pm Family Lenten Service

Sunday, February 24, 2nd Sunday in Lent

Text: Luke 13:1-9, 31-35—Tower in Siloam

Wednesday, February 27, 3rd Wednesday in Lent

4:15 pm Traditional Lenten Service
4:45 pm — 6:00 pm Lenten Meal: **Spaghetti**
6:00 pm Family Lenten Service

New Youth Area Open House Night!!!

Wednesday
February 20th
4:45 pm—7:00 pm

After countless hours of preparations, demolition, construction, painting & decorating, **it is time we start using our newly renovated Youth Area!**

Come and help us thank all workers and Endowment Fund Contributors who helped create this wonderful new space.

Come And Experience Lent This Year!!!

When you come to church on Wednesdays during Lent this year, perhaps for the first time in your life, here are a few things you may be pleasantly surprised to find....

- ◇ A 4:15 pm worship in the sanctuary using the beautiful Holden Evening Prayer order of service....
- ◇ A 6:00 pm non-traditional, casual service held in the basement Fellowship Hall. This service will have lots of upbeat music and a very informal atmosphere. All Ages Welcome!!!!
- ◇ Children and Families, Singles and Couples, Community Members and Visitors, all eating together and enjoying one another's company.
- ◇ **The Lenten Meals This Year Will Be Free-Will Offering!**
- ◇ Children K-8th Grade enjoying afterschool activities at the church. This will be a time of fun and learning.



Greetings From Pastor Steve

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”

Psalm 133:1

The last couple of months have been pretty darn fun here at GFLC because there have been so many ways that people have worked together well.....and worshipped together joyfully.....and prayed faithfully for one another.....and have come up with new ideas and suggestions. For us pastors, it is very rewarding and inspiring to minister in a church that works well together like that.

Here are a few examples of things Pastor Leslie and I have really appreciated these last few months:

- > Painters....Painters....and more Painters! Many, many thanks to all who have helped paint the walls in the new Youth Area.
- > Servers.....Servers.....and more Servers! In fact, there were so many people who came to help serve the Christmas Morning Meal that some of them just had to get out of the kitchen and go eat!
- > Women...over 20 women showing up for a weekly, evening Bible Study, led by members of our church who are not the pastors!
- > Questions...like the one asked in December: *“Hey, could we make space in our pews for people with walkers and wheel chairs?”* Plans are now under way to create areas in the sanctuary to accommodate these needs.
- > Youth...High School and Middle School youth working with Ross to help elementary aged children during the Sunday School hour.
- > Suggestions.....such as: *“Can we get a few Handicap Parking spaces, especially in the winter months?”*and within days Joe finds 5 more spots!
- > Generosity...coming in the form of many generous donations at the end of the year which helped wipe out our debt and create a \$20,000 financial cushion to begin 2013!
- > Men...yes, men, waking up early each week just to meet for breakfast and get to know one another!
- > And, all those quiet Endowment Fund Contributors over the last two decades who are now making wonderful building projects possible — like the New Youth Area!!!

Lastly, however, I have to tell you, that one of my favorite things about God’s people working together is when we have different opinions, different priorities, different ideas, and yet still find ways to work to the glory of God!!! So please share your opinions and differences, but keep working together to love the Lord with all you’ve got!!!!

In Christ—Pastor Steve

Speaking of Working Together!!!We Need a Little Old Fashioned CHURCH CLEANING PARTY!!!

After all the basement construction, it is time to spiff things up a bit, wouldn't you say?

Sunday, February 10th, 5:00 pm—7:00 pm ***Everyone Welcome***

ALL PARENTS OF YOUTH 6TH—12TH ARE NEEDED AT THIS PARTY!

This will be a great way for all parents to show their appreciation to the church for building this beautiful new Youth Area!!!



Greetings From Pastor Leslie

I am excited to announce that Granite Falls Lutheran Church is pairing up with 11 other congregations in a year-long “Coaching Cohort” with Luther Seminary thanks to some GFLC Ministry Endowment Funds. We are coming together for plans to help grow our faith formation practices in creating a “lasting and sustainable faith” for all.

Five Big Ideas we will be focusing on are:

1. The Power of Congregational/Inter-Generational Faith Life
2. The Power of Parents in Faith Formation
3. The Power of Mentors in Faith Formation
4. The Power of Mission and Outreach in Faith Formation
5. The Power of Choosing the Right Target, with Maturing Christian Faith

Here are some outcomes we are hoping for:

1. A Unified Congregational Plan for Granite Falls Lutheran Church Lifelong Faith Formation
2. Plans for encompassing the whole family into Faith Life
3. A Faith Filled program, beyond events for youth ministry
4. An Inter-Generational Faith inspiring everyday life

This is an amazing time where we will be able to see some great movement and growth in many areas of our church life along with our personal lives as we all work together on what it means to have faith, to share it, and to live it together. A journey like this, of course, is more than a year-long process, but as we serve Christ together, as a community of faith, we will see that faith take us on a lifelong journey.



I pray that this is a time for us all to be renewed in our faith and strengthened by each other through Christ as we Grow together.

In Christ -
Pastor Leslie

Women's Retreat

When: May 10th — May 12th

On Friday, May 10th, we will gather together and travel to Danebod Folk School, located in Tyler, MN, where we will be led in a wonderful retreat and faith renewal by Rachel Kurtz. “Raised in rural Minnesota, Rachel has deep roots in family, tradition, and faith. She draws from those roots as well as her varied experiences in global travel when she writes and performs her music, infusing a humble awareness in all she does.” We will return home on the evening of Saturday, May 11th. To wrap up the weekend, Rachel will lead our entire congregation in Worship on Sunday, May 12th.

Cost of the event will be about \$35.00.

Please contact the Church Office or Pastor Leslie to sign-up for this Wonderful time together!

Young Adult Ministries

Our first young adult gathering took place on Sunday, Jan. 13th. It was a great time as we ate together and discussed what this group could look like—a social gathering focused around people of similar age, interests, and faith beliefs.

Upcoming Gatherings

February 3rd, 6:00 pm

Super Bowl Party

Bring a snack to share and watch the game on a big TV in our newly remodeled space!!!

March 3rd, 5:00 pm

A Night out at **Grandview Valley Winery** in Belview

Child-Care Provided in March... \$5 per child — money goes to Youth going on Summer Mission Trip.

For more information regarding Young Adult Ministries contact Pastor Leslie.

Raymond LaVoie — Lay Visitation Minister

In the spirit of caring ministry, it is traditional to honor others by visiting and/or otherwise letting others know they are valued through a visit, phone call, card, note, or even a small gift. Valentine's Day is one of those days that should remind us to let others know that we love and appreciate them.

According to Wikipedia, Saint Valentine's, commonly known as Valentine's Day, or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is observed on February 14th each year.

St. Valentine's Day began as a liturgical celebration of one or more early Christian saints named Valentinus. He was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire; during his imprisonment, he is said to have healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterius. Legend states that before his execution he wrote "from your Valentine" as a farewell to her.

Today, Saint Valentine's Day is an official feast day in the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran Church*; and in the Eastern Orthodox Church on a July date.

The day was first associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages or 14th century. By the 15th century, it had evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other.

Perhaps, it would be a good idea to observe Valentine's Day both as a day for lovers to express their love to one another and as a day to honor others. Honoring others is probably best done by a simple visit, a call, or a note.

I pray that you will have lots of fun finding ways to make Valentine's Day special for people you cherish.

*Pfatteicher, Philip H. (1 August 2008). *New Book of Festivals and Commemorations: A Proposed Common Calendar of Saints*. Fortress Press. p. 86.

WELCA MEMO

There are NO WELCA General Meetings in February and March.

Koinonia Calling 1 Corinthians 1:9

The next WELCA Board Meeting will be held on Monday, March 11th at 2:00 pm. The Board would like to have someone come forward and offer to chair the Salad/Sandwich Luncheon to be held in May.

Lac qui Parle Global Missions

The meeting of the Lac qui Parle Global Missions is scheduled for Friday, February 15th at Trinity Lutheran Church in Montevideo. The speaker will be Carmen Brunsvold talking about "Beyond the Yellow Ribbon.." She works with Family Readiness Support; Assistance (FRSA). The morning begins with coffee served at 9:30 am, the meeting will follow and will conclude with a noon luncheon.

Sewing Days

The February sewing days will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 26th and 27th, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Work Group number TWO will furnish goodies for afternoon coffee. Plan for 3 dozen each day.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet on Wednesday, February 27th from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm.

Chairpersons needed for Salad/Sandwich Luncheon.

The WELCA Executive Board is asking for volunteers to come forward and chair the upcoming Salad/Sandwich Luncheon. The date is set for May 7th. Contact one of the board members.

From the Mission in Action Committee

The Mission in Action Committee is asking for donations for the following: dark hand towels, wash cloths, toothbrushes, combs, ivory bar soap, band aids and nail files (no emery boards). These items make up the Personal Care Kits that are sent to Lutheran World Relief. You may place these items in the container (marked Personal Care Kits) in the narthex.

WELCA Handbook Note

Add Thea Kraakaas to the Clarkfield Care Center.

Dates to Remember

February 15th	9:30 am	LQP Global Missions
February 26th & 27th	1:00 pm	Sewing Days
February 27th	1:00 pm	Prayer Shawl Ministry
March 11th	2:00 pm	WELCA Exec. Brd. Mtg.

February Happy Birthdays!

1 Molly Barborek	10 Jordan Iverson	16 Levi Blue	22 Larry Thielen
1 Gregory Bue	10 Adam Johnson	16 Susan Blue	23 Derek Lalim
1 JoAnn Fromm	10 Brett Massmann	16 David Haroldson	24 Curtis Hanson
1 Lillian Knox	10 Travis Roskens	16 Michael Ohliger, Jr	24 Darell Swam
1 Jessica West	11 Hope Bang	16 Sarana West	24 Pamela Wilkening
1 MacKenzie Williams	11 Darlene Knutson	17 Kayla Nordaune	25 Lorraine Worsech
2 Dale Bakker	11 Vicky Lewis	17 Eric Schutz	26 Nicholas Baker
2 Ashley Soine	11 Alissa Putnam	17 Isabelle Stark	26 Renee Grimes
2 Owen Torvik	11 Jack Tjosvold	17 Jamie Terning	26 LaVerne Korthuis
2 Tyson Viessman	12 Linda Dahl	17 Laila Waller	26 Brody Sannerud
3 Elliot Carmany	12 Richard Loewe	17 Layton Waller	27 Justen Burgeson
3 Bruce Lundin	12 Stacey Parks	18 Carl Imes	27 Matthew Johnson
4 Tanner Kotek	12 Michael Stavne	18 Kylie Knollenberg	27 Jeff Leach
4 Shana Roskens	12 Sandra Sullivan	19 Julia Anderson	27 Randall Lewison
5 Chad Friese	13 Michael Aus	19 Benay Cole	27 Darcy Mulvihill
5 Abby Gullickson	13 Kolten Blankenhagen	19 Eleanor Erickson	27 Andria Olson
5 Jill Meyer	13 John Ims	19 Loretta Knutson	28 Joan Johnson
5 Peggy Schindler	13 Gail Opdahl	19 Mavis Lewis	28 Harmony Saucke
6 Bill Dinesen	14 Todd Balfany	20 Aubree Enstad	28 Eunice Skeie
7 Dalton Anderson	14 Adam Eckhardt	20 Gregory Fagen	28 LaBonna Skjefte
7 Dianne Barber	14 Connor Fagen	20 Kristine Hanson	29 Chelsi Torke
7 Herbert Calley	14 Maxine Heglund	20 Travis Hempel	
7 Jordan Fischer	14 Gunnar Knutson	20 Becky Sather	
7 Robert Johnson	15 Karen Baker	20 Nathan Willson	
7 Tyler Johnson	15 Braden Lee	21 Barry Anderson	
8 Gene Goldenstein	15 Laura Munsterman	21 Kim Malmquist	
8 Samuel Ohliger	15 Jacob Peterson	21 Brady McClenahan	
9 Lynn Johnson	15 Veronica Steinbach	21 Thomas Midthun	
9 Krista Polla	15 Michelle Twait	21 Daniel Walters	
9 Cyan Zieske	16 Liam Anderson	22 David Bredeson	
10 Eyvonne Hoese	16 Lois Appelwick	22 Joshua Foy	
10 Howard Hultman	16 Andrew Arneson	22 Marie Risa	

February Worship Leaders

Date	Time	Communion Assistant	Lector	Usher Team	Acolyte	Projection	Videotape	Choir
Feb 3	8:00 AM	K. Bjorndal, D. Bakkelund	D. Peterson	D. Erickson		E. Hauger	J. Williams	Sr. Choir
	10:30 AM	T. Opdahl, D. Grove	M. Norell	S. Bjorndal	C. Hoernemann, H. Kotek, A. Viergutz			Wee Praise/ Kids of the Rock
Feb 10	8:00 AM		C. Erickson	J. Erickson		K. Bjorndal	S. Bjorndal & D. Abraham	Praise Ringers
	10:30 AM		J. Tjosvold	K. Knudson	D. Moe, A. Friese			Praise Ringers
Feb 17	8:00 AM	D. Peterson, C. Peterson	K. Bjorndal	S. Jans		A. Carmany	J. Koepke	Special
	10:30 AM	Pat Sheggeby, Paul Sheggeby	D. Bang	C. Opdahl	T. Knollenberg, W. Martin			Sr. Choir
Feb 24	8:00 AM		P. Heglund	M. Jensen		L. Carter	K. Sandberg & J. Sannerud	Special
	10:30 AM		M. Sannerud	R. Peterson	T. Panitzke, S. Burgeson			Special

Parent & Youth

5th Grade 1st Communion Milestone Sunday

We will hold a Family Sedar Meal on Saturday, February 2nd, at 5pm, in the church basement. All family members, sponsors and even big buddies of these 5th grade students will take part in this wonderful experience of the Last Supper meal.

Then on Sunday, February 3rd, the students will receive their 1st Communion at the 10:30am service. Come and join us as we celebrate Keaton Anderson, Taylor Bakkelund, Adam Gosmire, Madison Hinz, and Megan Nordaune.

Lenten Wednesday Gatherings

During the 5 weeks of Lent, we will be hosting Wednesday afterschool gatherings of fun and worship for Kindergarten through 8th grade. The dates are:

*2/20 (early out @ 12:30 pm), 2/27, 3/6, 3/13, 3/20

We will meet K-5 grade kids at Bert Raney and 6-8 grade kids at YME afterschool and we will walk over to the church as a group. **Please sign your child up by calling the Church Office at 320-564-3746. Teachers must be notified that we will be picking them up.**

The schedule for each Wednesday (except 2/20) is as follows:

3:15 pm—4:45 pm	Lenten Activities (Stories, Crafts, Games, etc.)
4:45 pm—6:00 pm	Dinner (Parents join us!)
6:00 pm—6:45 pm	Family Worship Service

There is no registration fee. We will have a free will offering for this event.

* **On 2/20, we will meet the kids at 12:30 pm at school, have a snack and watch a movie, with the afternoon scheduled activities to follow. It will be a fun kick-off day to celebrate the Lenten Season!**

S.S. Choir Notes

Our Wee Praise & Kids of the Rock choirs will be performing on the following dates at the 10:30 service:

2/03, 3/03, 3/24 (Palm Sunday,) 4/07, and 5/19 (Last day of Sunday School)

Continued special thanks to Amy Hoernemann and Lisa Carter for sharing the beautiful gift of music with our children and our congregation.

2013 Facilitators & Shepherds Needs Update

While we do have many of the station facilitators in place through year-end, **we still have three slots open where we are asking for your help. They are as follows: We need a Story-Time/Games facilitator for March 3rd to March 17th, April 7th to April 21th, and April 28th to May 12th.** (The lessons for the respective dates are noted below.)

- ◇ Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday: 3/3, 3/10, 3/17
- ◇ Jesus Feeds 5,000: 4/7, 4/14, 4/21
- ◇ Doubting Thomas: 4/28, 5/5, 5/12

What facilitating a station entails is creating a lesson plan and teaching it for each of the grade levels during that month's rotation. From February through May, we have 3 wk. rotations instead of 4 wk. We have Spark Teacher Reference Guides, which have suggested lessons for lower elementary, upper elementary, or all kids. I will provide you a copy of these lessons along with the bible story. In terms of teaching these particular Spark lessons, it is solely up to you. We want you to be comfortable teaching, use your own creativity and have fun! DLTK is a great on-line resource for Sunday School lesson planning.

In terms of supply needs, you can either purchase the supplies yourself, save your receipts, and be reimbursed, or you can give me a list of what your needs are and I am happy to get the supplies for you. On average, it is safe to plan for about 20 kids a week (except for 1st grade, which is a class of 13). Anything that does not get used, can be used for future dates.

Additionally, **we still need 1st grade shepherd volunteers**. Shepherding involves sitting with the students during choir, taking attendance, and shepherding them to their assigned weekly station. The shepherd also helps the students as directed by the facilitator during their station activity.

Thank you again to all who have volunteered their time and talents, thus far, and to all of you for your future consideration. Remember, the kids Love sharing this special time with their parents—it is a wonderful gift to them (and to yourself!)

If you are interested or have any questions, you can reach me at jpoffmn@yahoo.com.

Baptismal Milestone - Sunday, February 10th

Our second annual celebration for all the families who have had a child baptized during the previous year is soon to begin! ... **On Sunday, February 10th, during the 10:30 am service, we will have a special celebration with the families of all children baptized in 2012.** Following the service these families will share in a nice time together, celebrating this wonderful milestone.

This is a fun way every year to have our congregation celebrate God's gift of naming, claiming, and marking each one of us with the cross of Christ forever!



Parent & Youth cont.

Acolytes Return!

No, our Acolytes have not been lost, but they have certainly been missed!

Starting in February we will have the ushers lighting the candles at the 8:00 am services and we will have Acolytes at the 10:30 am services. They will once again assist with Communion, Offering and other worship needs.

We will also have Acolytes during Holy Week & Easter.

Mission Possible...

Sun., February 3, 2013



Ready to have **THE BEST SOUPER BOWL OF CARING COLLECTION** Ever? On Sunday, Feb. 3rd, our entire Sunday morning services will be a celebration of our Mission Possible Food Program. You are invited on that day, to **WEAR YOUR MISSION POSSIBLE T-SHIRT**, or the shirt/colors of your favorite football Team to win as we collect food and other donations to help support the needs of our community.

So come, bring canned food, and/or cash donations, and show your support as we bring God's love to the World! Every food item donated will go to the Yellow Medicine Food Shelf. Every dollar donated will go to the Mission Possible Program — our 2013 Souper Bowl of Caring Charities of choice. We will also have a noisy offering this Sunday!

Scholarship Applications

All current GFLC members who are attending college, undergrad or graduate school, may be eligible for one of the scholarships offered through our Endowment Fund.

A one-time \$100 is available to all students after their first year in college. There are also additional scholarships for students in the Ministry and Medical fields. Please inquire at the church office: 320-564-3746.

AGAPE — In Concert

YES!!!! AGAPE, the awesome Christian Rap Artist, is coming to Marshall, MN on Wednesday, Feb. 6th, at 6:30 pm!!!!

For those of you who know who AGAPE is, you know how big of a deal it is that he is coming to this area. For those of you who are not familiar with him, AGAPE has inspired youth from Brooklyn to Bosnia with his relational ministry "Hip Hop Outreach". Combining rapping, dancing, & storytelling, AGAPE connects with listeners in a way so they really "get it". His messages are inspiring, his music is catchy, and his performance is downright awesome!

Where: First Lutheran Church, Marshall MN
Cost: *Free Will Offering!* Also, bring all the change you can find to help DIG WELLS!
When: Meet at GFLC parking lot 5:15 pm, leave by 5:30 pm, concert @ 6:30 pm. Parent Drivers Needed!!!
Call: Reserve your spot by calling/talking to/ Ross or Pastor Leslie by Sunday, Feb. 3rd.

CONFIRMATION STUDENTS MAKING AN IMPACT!!!

We may not always see what our Youth are up to these days, but often it is some pretty good stuff. Here's what our Confirmation Students have going on in this church and in our community:

* **Big Buddies with Sunday School Students:** Every Sunday we have Confirmation Students from each class being paired up with S.S. children as "Learning Buddies."

* **You probably have seen our Youth Singing & Playing Bells with our Adult Choirs:** But did you know we have Confirmation students playing the piano and leading worship almost every week at some of our area rural congregations?!...Wow!

* **Fourteen High School Youth are heading to The Appalachian Mountains this summer on a Mission Trip!**

* **Over a dozen of our older Confirmation Students** will be helping with the Mission Possible Backpack Food Program.

* **Most of the Walls,**....and some of the ceilings by mistake!.... Have fresh paint on them in the New Youth Area, thanks to many of our Confirmation Students.

* **The Guardian Angel program** is being resurrected, having Confirmation Students and Parents making 'secret connections' with S.S. aged children.

* **Confirmation Students who are Acolytes, Ushers, Scripture Readers, Video Camera Operators, Video Screen Technicians, and Celebration Service Musicians** have all become a weekly part of our worship services.

Can You Find More Things they are doing well?.... Look closely, I bet you can!

Church Council Highlights



January Council Meeting: 1-08-13

Main Business:

1. Karen Jacobsen discussed options for a **Mission & Vision process with the Congregation**. This will include congregational feedback and discernment, beginning with a brief congregational survey.
2. 2012 Year-End Financial Status: We ended the year being able to pay off the temporary bank loan, keep over \$12,000 in checking, and establish a Financial Cushion Fund starting with \$9,000.

3. Congregational members and staff, along with Pastor Steve and Pastor Leslie, will take part in three separate training events. Each one of these workshops and seminars will help inform and guide the Congregational Mission and Vision process during the coming months. These training events will be:
 - a. Jan. 29th -30th - *Beginning A 1-Year Congregational Coaching CoHort:* Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN
 - b. Saturday, Feb. 9th - *SWMN Synod Leadership Day*, Willmar, MN
 - c. Feb. 20th -22th - *Building An Equipping Congregation*, Loveland, CO

Committee Reports:

Education – Completed the first part of the school year very well. Julie Poff as S.S. Superintendent has made a big difference. Many thanks to Katie Lundell for organizing and directing the S.S. Christmas Program.

Property – The New Youth Area painting has come along well; flooring to be installed soon, then closet shelves and furniture.

Parking lot ice will be removed as temperature allows. Committee working on creating a 2013 Project Plan to be implemented once Endowment and budget money is secured.

Outreach - The Christmas meal turned out very, very well. Ideas were shared for making it even better next year.

GFLC Financial Picture

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Balance on Hand Jan 1, 2012	\$ 7,266.76	
Income	\$ 427,343.91	\$ 443,747.00
Expense	\$ (434,454.62)	\$ (443,747.00)
General Fund Balance 12-31-12	\$ 156.05	
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$ 13,284.00	
Checkbook Balance 12-31-12	\$ 13,440.05	

Ministerial Acts

Baptisms:

- Grayson John Scholin — January 6th
 Lauren Ruth Soine — January 13th
 Marcos Jarrell Harris — January 20th

Funerals:

- Florence Miller — January 9th

A Note From The Stewardship Committee

Over the past year, the time, talents, and gifts from the Congregation of Granite Falls Lutheran Church have made a huge impact locally and in faraway places. It is with this letter that we want to say Thank You for making all of this happen. The following is a list of accomplishments:

- ◇ For the first time in 9 years, Granite Falls Lutheran Church was fully staffed;
- ◇ Over 20 rooms in the church have been renovated;
- ◇ Donations of quarters have been made from M&M containers for Feed My Starving Children;
- ◇ Noisy Offerings have been received for various missions;
- ◇ Contributions have been made to the “Mission Possible” backpack food program for school;
- ◇ Basement renovations have been made;
- ◇ The screen technology in the sanctuary has been embraced;
- ◇ Implementation of the rotational Sunday School program has been successful.



Many people have been involved to make these exciting things happen for our church. Without them, none of this could have been accomplished. Another thing to mention is that the “Rainy Day – Financial Cushion” fund has been very successful. Through your gifts, to date, \$10,000 has been set aside for the future.

Most importantly the time, talents and gifts given have been able to touch the lives of many people. It goes without saying that this is a very important mission of our church. Once again, THANK YOU!

Lac qui Parle Conference Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 24th, 3:00 pm
Kvitseid Lutheran Church, Milan, MN

Pastor Steve Carmany will give a presentation about our South African Companion Synod Ministries.

Men's Breakfasts Now Every Week!!!

We have Men's Breakfasts every Thursday morning at 6:30 am and every Saturday morning at 7:00 am! These will be held in the front room at Hardees and everyone is welcome, even if you can't make it every week. Come when you can!!!

At these breakfasts, we will keep it very informal. We'll eat and we'll talk about whatever is on our minds. I'll share a scripture passage for the week, and give us a few things to think about as Christian men. You'll get to know other guys in our church and anyone else you may invite.

Come and check it out!



<http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org>

Vibrant Faith at Home is just one way to help you and your family grow in faith together. Here is an example of something you can find from Vibrant Faith.

Ash Wednesday

By Jolene Roehlkepartain

Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent. Discover more about this religious holiday and why it's an important part of faith.

For: Teen Families

Season: Winter

Needed: Bible, YouTube video on [Ash Wednesday](#), candle and matches (optional)

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

God, help us to talk to each other honestly. Amen.

2. Take turns reading aloud each of these Bible passages. Take a moment of silence between each one.

Isaiah 30:15-18 (about repentance) "For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, 'In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.' But you were unwilling, and you said, 'No! We will flee upon horses'; therefore you shall flee away; and, 'We will ride upon swift steeds'; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. A thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill. Therefore, the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore, He exalts Himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him."

Luke 3:8 (about repentance) "Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham."

Isaiah 40:31 (about renewal) "but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Romans 12:2 (about renewal) "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Hebrews 10:24-25 (about community) "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Romans 12:3-5 (about community) "For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body, we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

3. As a family, view the YouTube video on [Ash Wednesday](#), (http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=m3L3c23MfC0#!) and discuss these questions:

- What is Ash Wednesday?
- Why do people have ashes placed on their forehead?
- Where do ashes used on Ash Wednesday come from?

4. As a family, talk about these questions:

- Has our family ever been to an Ash Wednesday religious service? Why or why not?
- What has been your past experience with Ash Wednesday?
- How do you feel about Ash Wednesday? Why?

5. On Ash Wednesday, either attend an Ash Wednesday worship service as a family or light a candle when you eat dinner together. Talk about how Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, which is about prayer and reflection.

