



OUR JOURNEY

A newsletter for members & friends of
Saving Grace Lutheran Church

FEBRUARY 2026

Articles from:

Pastor David Irgens
Pastor Dan Doran
Katherine Altreuter, Office Admin. & Music Director
Nikki Jackson

Other reports & news:

Education
Committee meetings
Scripture Readings & Fellowship
Memorial & Honorary Gifts
Mission Outreach

OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAY (FM 107.1)
3pm | Traditional
SUNDAY (LIVE-STREAMED)
8:30am | Traditional
10:30am | Contemporary

Upcoming Dates to Note:

Annual Meeting
Sunday, February 8 @ 1:00pm (Potluck at 11:30am)
Game Day
Sunday, February 15 @ 11:30am
Ash Wednesday
February 18 - Worship @ 12pm & 6pm
Bluegrass Gospel Worship
Sunday, February 22 @ 10:30am



3735 Jeffers Rd, Eau Claire, WI 54703

(715) 514 - 3552

www.saving-gracechurch.com

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday | 9am - 4pm

Coming up this month:



Thursdays: 1pm & 4:30pm

\$5 registration fee

Starting February 5th

New Members Classes

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15 9:30AM & SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 9:30AM

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23 6:00PM

Email office@saving-gracechurch.com for more info

LENT SERVICES

Wednesdays 12pm | 6pm

Starting February 18th

Meal before worship
Discussion following 6pm worship

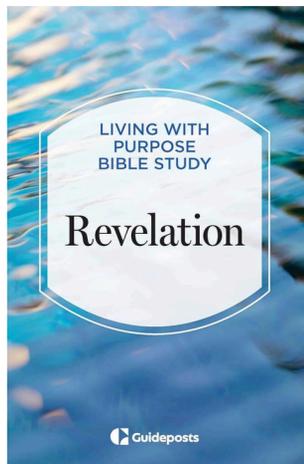
ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

1:00 PM

Fellowship at 11:30 AM - bring a dish to share!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Sunday Morning Bible Study

Starting February 1st
9:30 AM | Family Room
Studying the Book of Revelation

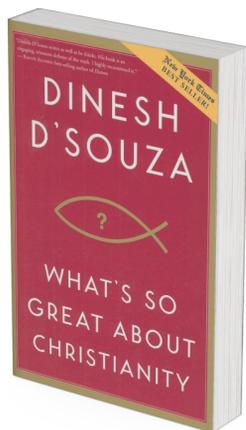
LED BY DONNA KOKEMOOR

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

a class on apologetics

SUNDAYS AT 9:30AM
starting January 11th

LED BY PASTOR KEN KUZIEJ



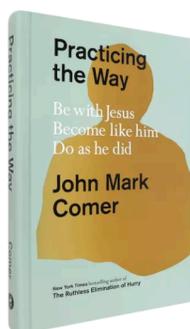
FAITH FOR LIFE: THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF LUTHER'S CATECHISM

THURSDAYS AT 5:00 PM
STARTING JANUARY 8

CLASS LED BY PASTOR DAVID IRGENS

LENTEN DISCUSSION SERIES

Join us in our book study after the Wednesday 6pm worship service this Lenten season



Learn more about Practicing the Way:



Join us for Sunday School!



Sundays at 9:30 AM
PreK - 6th Grade

Confirmation
6:00 PM on Wednesdays
Grades 7th - 10th

MORE NEWS & EVENTS



FEBRUARY ONLY:
Kwik Trip is raising the rebate for gas AND grocery cards for the month of February! Pick up your KT Scrip this month for an extra boost to our fundraising.

GAME DAY SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Games, food, & fun! Every third Sunday of the month!

11:30AM

BLUEGRASS GOSPEL

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22
10:30 AM

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Bazaar/Craft Ladies

Mondays @ 1:00-3:30pm

Discipleship

Monday, February 2 @ 3:30pm

Mission Outreach

Monday, February 2 @ 5pm

Church Management

Monday, February 9 @ 4:30pm

Worship & Music

Thursday, February 12 @ 5:30pm

Education

Sunday, February 15 @ 10:30am

Council

Tuesday, February 24 @ 6pm

A message from Pastor David Irgens

¹⁷And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." (John 6:17)

⁶⁵And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." ⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." (John 6:65-69)

After worship on Sunday morning, the pastor stood at the back of the church, shaking hands with the worshippers as they left. As one man shook hands, he looked intently at the pastor and said, "Powerful sermon, Pastor. Thoughtful, well researched. I can always see myself in them and I want you to knock it off."

Are we a little nervous when the Word hits a little too close to home? When it actually convicts us and reminds us that we aren't the one who is in control, but God is? When it speaks to us so plainly that we can't hide the fact that we need Jesus Christ to lead and guide us? Jesus The Word became flesh and **dwelt, lived (Tabernacled) among us** (John 1:14). Like in the feast of the tabernacles when the Israelites would pitch a tent and wait for the presence of God, Jesus pitched his tent among us. This tent was His flesh, which like the Holy of Holies embodied God Himself. The angel told Joseph in a dream, "***you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins***" (Matt. 1:20-21). He will be called "***Immanuel which means 'God is with us'***" (Matt. 1:23). When Jesus spoke, He spoke with the very authority of God, He cut to the heart. "***...the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority***" (John 12:28-29). The very authority of Christ comes from the Word of the Father, who still speaks to us today. He walks into our lives and says, "***Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you***" (Jn. 14:27). There's our hope, our joy, our peace, our sanctification, our redemption. Jesus calls us to Follow Him. When His Words cut to the heart, take notice, He's working on you. He's shaping you and guiding you.

We will be studying Practicing the Way by John Mark Comer this Lent. Comer reminds us of an old first century Jewish blessing, "May you be covered in the dust of your rabbi." This Lent, we will be learning what it means to Follow Jesus, to follow so closely that we are shaped by Him, as we lay aside the things that entangle us. May we be led by our Savior, our Redeemer, our hope and our shepherd, for He is "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6).

May you be covered with the dust of The Rabbi, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

In Christ Jesus our Lord,

Pastor David Irgens

A message from Pastor Dan Doran

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)

I’m preparing to preach on the beatitudes on the first Sunday in February. It’s one of those gospel texts that show us the gates of heaven are flung wide open to welcome sinners saved by grace. With these blessings, Jesus is further explaining what he meant when he said, “the kingdom of heaven has come near,” (Matthew 4:17). He’s telling us that the gates are open for the poor in spirit, those who are grieving, the meek, those who have witnessed abuse and injustice, those who are merciful, pure in heart, persecuted, and reviled on account of Jesus.

At times throughout church history, we have misunderstood these beatitudes as desirable traits that draw us closer to God. In Luther’s day, the Sermon on the Mount was considered the way to become a high-class Christian – not required of everyone, but if you did commit yourself to following Christ’s teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, then you would be a better Christian than everyone else! (3, Luther’s Works, volume 21, *The Sermon on the Mount and the Magnificat*) But, this word is not a recipe for holiness. These words deliver a promise that no matter how much this life has kicked you while you’re down, God can tuck you under his wing and bring you into the kingdom.

“The beatitudes simply cannot be ‘good news’ if they are understood as a set of ‘how-tos’ for achieving blessedness. They would then only amount to a new legalism. They would not serve to throw open the kingdom – anything but. They would impose a new brand of Phariseeism, a new way of closing the door...” (106, *The Divine Conspiracy*. Dallas Willard).

Everyone needs to hear this message. That the gates of heaven have been flung open in Jesus. We know, in this life, some people are better off than others. I’ll often hear, “Well, I could have it worse...” But, what if you’re the person that has it worse? What hope do you have then? Jesus gives us a hope that’s out of this world, that goes beyond this life and into the next. If we took a moment to think about a situation that you, in your mind might consider “worse” than your current situation, what comes to mind?

...

To every sorry situation you thought of, Christ can still bring the gospel! The hymn written in the 19th century by Thomas Moore captures our hope. (verse 1, *Come, Ye Disconsolate*)

Come, you disconsolate, where’er you languish;
come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel.
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish;
earth has no sorrows that heaven cannot heal.

We have received God’s blessing in Jesus because he has welcomed us into the kingdom of heaven. At times, this blessing stands in stark contrast to our current situation of brokenness, confusion, and weakness. That is the beauty of the blessing. It is ours even when we’re down and out. That’s good news!

Every Blessing in the Lord
Pastor Dan

Marks of the True Christian

Katherine Altreuter, Office Administrator & Music Director

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; holdfast to what is good.

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor...

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ To the contrary, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Romans 12:9-10, 18-21

As the apostle Paul traveled and shared the Gospel in Greece and other territories, he writes to the Romans to prepare them for his visit. Written sometime in the mid-50s A.D., Paul urges the early Roman Christians to follow in Christ’s footsteps, to be fervent in faith, and how to spread the Gospel throughout the world in his letter. At this time the Roman emperor, Claudius, had expelled the Jews and early Christians from Rome due to infighting and disturbances to the community. As we read about the historical context in which the Biblical writings take place, we see the parallels to the current state of our own time: politics dividing communities, surges of violence abroad and at home, religious wars, and the tensions of the modern age.

This excerpt I’ve chosen from Romans is entitled, “Marks of the True Christian,” encouragement from Paul to love above all else, as Jesus Christ commands of us: treat your enemy as a friend and live in harmony with all. Paul does not write, “live peaceably with other Christians” or “neighbors” or any group specifically, but all people, as Christ died for all people. It’s difficult to open the daily news and be confronted by the tumult of the world. There is no doubt that the rising tensions over the last decade have finally begun to boil over, with violent acts committed in our streets at home so freely as if there is righteousness in bringing down a hammer of justice of our own making. Where in scripture does God ask us to enact our judgment upon others? No, Jesus commands us, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35). Three times in this one passage Christ commands us to “love one another.” Not just your friends, your family, other Christians, but all people as Christ does.

As Christians (and humans), we flock to those who believe in the same things. In a positive light, we join a church where we feel welcomed, we break bread with friends that share our values, and we find comfort in those who know how to comfort us. On the other side of that coin, we conform to our circles of friends and smaller communities so tightly that we become entranced by the echo chamber of our own making. We listen to the words of our modern-day Babylonians to build our own tower rather than remembering the words of our Savior: love one another. Jesus does not command us to love one another just as a favor to God, but as an example of true Christianity. “I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites” (Rm 16:17-18).

What doctrine does Paul refer to? Christ’s commandment: love one another. So whether that’s by volunteering at church, helping those in need, or even just by sharing Christ’s message of universal love, we Christians are the counter culture of the modern call for violence, darkness, and sin. To call yourself Christian is to live as a servant of Christ. Are those speakers, rulers, or online personalities that you follow serving Christ, or their own agenda in the race to the top of the tower? Are you building a tower of Babel with your discipleship or are you building a community of hope, peace, and love?

God has blessed us with the mercy we so desperately need through the sacred blood of His Son, Jesus Christ. “For one will scarcely die for a righteous person - though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die - but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rm 5:7-8). Extend that mercy as Christ has extended it to you.

Exploring Our Past: Where History & Faith Flow Together

by Nikki Jackson

Shaped by Grace: The Craftsmanship of Bob Eberhardt

When entering the sanctuary at Saving Grace Church, the eye is immediately drawn to the centerpiece: a large wooden cross flanked by two inverted crosses. It is more than a focal point of the space – it is a proclamation of faith. As the Saving Grace community continues to grow upward in faith through mission and service, this cross invites us to reflect on Exodus 35:10: “Let every skillful craftsman among you come and make all that the Lord has commanded.” It is a reminder that God works through the gifts of God’s people.

That verse brings to mind Bob Eberhardt, whose skilled and humble craftsmanship is woven throughout our sanctuary. From the altar, lectern, and baptismal font to decorative display boxes and the inverted maple crosses, Bob’s work surrounds our worship. At the center stands the large wooden cross he crafted – both the physical and spiritual heart of our sanctuary – calling us again and again to remember Jesus’ sacrifice and God’s grace.

The cross also tells a deeper story, one that reflects how Bob’s life has been shaped over time, much like the wood he works with today. Raised near Half Moon Lake in Eau Claire and born into Grace Lutheran Church as a third-generation member, Bob grew up surrounded by faith, family, and hard work. His father and grandfather worked at the paper mill, and his grandfather also spent time in a home workshop building wooden boats. This was also the setting of Bob’s earliest memory of craftsmanship: soaping screws for Grandpa George to use in building those boats.

Those early experiences were formative. Whether involved in the Ski Sprites and the Flying Eagles ski-jumping team (qualifying for junior nationals) or building projects inspired by necessity and creativity, Bob learned discipline, problem-solving, and perseverance – qualities that would serve him throughout his life. His interest in industrial arts continued. While Grandpa George may have introduced Bob to craftsmanship, he credits his Uncle John as his mentor. John, the youngest of George and Evelyn Eberhardt’s children, was closer to Bob’s age and taught him many lessons.

Bob carried those lessons and values into his professional life, becoming a master electrician and building a long career in the energy industry, eventually managing Xcel Energy’s hydroelectric plants across northern Wisconsin and into the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. His work required precision, responsibility, and trust – qualities not unlike those demanded by fine craftsmanship. Yet, as is true for many of us, life’s responsibilities grew heavy. Work and family brought both blessings and challenges, and there were seasons when Bob did not feel closely connected to God.

Still, God was present. In a particularly dark and difficult chapter of his life, Bob turned again to the God who is faithful and true. In that turning, he found renewed hope and a future. As Bob leaned into his faith, he also found himself drawn back into the life of the church, blessed with a marriage of nearly 34 years to Pam – and back to the work of his hands.

A turning point came when Bob sold a rifle he had won as a raffle prize and used the proceeds to buy a table saw. What might seem like a small decision became the beginning of a renewed passion for woodworking. Through woodturning, Bob began transforming salvaged pieces of wood into objects of beauty and purpose – bowls, pens, vessels, and gifts meant to be shared. He helped form the Chippewa Valley Woodturners Guild, generously offering both his creations and his time to raise money for charity and to teach others.

Woodturning itself offers a powerful image of faith. A rough, discarded piece of wood is placed on a lathe, shaped through steady pressure and careful attention, and gradually revealed for what it can become. In the process, the hidden beauty of the grain emerges. Scripture tells us something similar about our lives in Christ: *“We are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory”* (2 Corinthians 3:18). God takes what is broken, unfinished, or overlooked and shapes it into something new.

And so we return to the cross – the cross Bob first created for Grace Lutheran Church, the cross that once hung in a transitional space in a shopping center, and the cross that now hangs at the center of Saving Grace Church. It carries with it the story of where we have been and where God is leading us. It reminds us that God’s grace is not abstract – it is made visible through faithful hands, generous hearts, and lives shaped over time.

That cross stands as a testament not only to Bob’s craftsmanship, but to the truth that God uses the gifts of ordinary people to do holy work. It invites each of us to consider how God is shaping us, and how our own gifts – offered humbly – might help build the body of Christ and give hope and a future to others.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

for the month of February 2026

Sunday, February 1 - Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

Micah 6:1-8
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12
Psalm 15 (1)

Sunday, February 8 - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.

Isaiah 58:1-12
1 Corinthians 2:1-12
Matthew 5:13-20
Psalm 112 (4)

Sunday, February 15 - Transfiguration of Our Lord

Exodus 24:12-18
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9
Psalm 2 (7) or Psalm 99 (9)

Wednesday, February 18 - Ash Wednesday

Isaiah 58:1-12
2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10
Matthew 6:1-21
Psalm 51 (1)

Sunday, February 22 - First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11
Psalm 32 (10)

Interested in reading the Word at the Sunday 8:30am traditional worship?

Contact Ellis Stewart to sign up!
ellis.stewart@charter.net

THRIVENT MEMBERS

Please consider contributing to SGLC through your Choice Funds. If you are a member of Thrivent yet unfamiliar with this option, please speak with your representative. The deadline for 2025 is **March 31, 2026.**

FELLOWSHIP

Sundays @ 9:30am

Thank you to Chuck & Jean Hill and Don & Marge Hartwig for leading fellowship this month!

Poppy Seed Cake

(shared by the Muellers):

White cake mix, prepared per package directions, using 4 egg whites & adding 3 tbs poppy seeds prior to baking.

Bake as directed & cool completely.

Frosting: 4 egg yolks, 1 ½ cups milk, 1 ½ tbs cornstarch, ½ cup sugar.

Mix together in a microwave-safe bowl; microwave on high power for 4-5 min. until thickened. Add 1 tbs of butter & ½ tsp vanilla. Spread on cooled cake & top with ½ cup nuts or coconut.

Memorial & Honorary Gifts

In memory of Jerry Schmidt

to the General Operating Fund

Bev Nelson

In memory of Evelyn Chappell

to the TV Ministry Fund

Susan Hutchinson

In memory of Ray Metz, father of Tracey Samuelson

to Debt Reduction

Steve & Chris Gutsch

to the General Operating Fund

Cindy Joy Fischer

In memory of Kay Anderson Kries

to the General Operating Fund

Robert Kries

MISSION OUTREACH

SHARING GOD'S GIFTS

In January, monthly gifts went to Starfish Kids, Ephrem, Binder Family, "Gifts of Hope," Samaritan's Purse, and Rising Hope.

We have decided to start working with Rising Hope. They are a non-profit based out of Eau Claire. They have been involved in mission work in Jos Nigeria since 2008. Jill Wendtland spent two years there volunteering with an HIV/AIDS ministry. Jill partners with Nigerian Regina Mobu to help Elementary, High School, and College students received the funds to attend school. Saving Grace will begin to support a student named Fountian, with our gift he will be able to start high school. We will have more information on Fountian at our Mission Outreach table.

We have started a collection of old and new devotional books *Our Daily Bread & Christ in Our Home*, we want to use them for future projects. We have a basket on our Mission Outreach table for them.

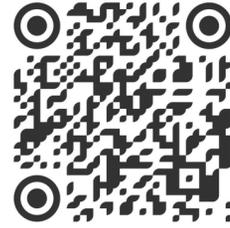
We would like to invite you to our Mission Outreach table in the fellowship hall. We have notes, newsletters, and volunteer information from groups and organizations Saving Grace supports. We are always open to ideas and suggestions *use the new Lockbox* for Missions from our congregation. Call one of our mission committee members or email office@saving-gracechurch.com.

Mission Outreach next meeting will be on Monday, February 2, 2026 at 5:00.



Keep up with current events, live-streaming, and more on our Facebook page!

<https://www.facebook.com/SGLChurchEC>



OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAY (FM 107.1)

3pm | Traditional

SUNDAY (LIVE-STREAMED)

8:30am | Traditional

10:30am | Contemporary

Church Council

Michelle Otto, President

Patty Dundas, Vice President

Pam Bee, Treasurer

Michelle Volz, Secretary

Council Members: Patrick Bartholomew,
Barb Clark, Brian Hagen, Ruth Hofland,
Carol Pickhardt, Mary Schneider, Steve Wright

Staff

Pastor David Irgens, Senior Pastor

Pastor Dan Doran, Associate Pastor

Katherine Altreuter, Office Administrator & Music Director

Cheryl Eberhardt, Education Director



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LUTHERAN CHURCH

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