

# Grace Lutheran



Yoked parish of faith and service: Bethel & Zion

c/o Zion Lutheran Church  
41 Whitmarsh Avenue  
Worcester, MA 01606-3296

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NEWSLETTER APRIL 2026

**TIME SENSITIVE**

**PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

*Our lives are formed by Word and  
Sacrament, and we gather as the beloved  
children of God around the means of grace  
where our lives are in Christ.*

## **PASTOR'S COLUMN CENTERING**



The *mythological* bird, the Phoenix, is supposedly immortal and cyclically regenerates (is “born again”). It had a “life” within ancient Egyptian (and other cultural) religious (and philosophical) thought and has come to represent a rising from the ashes; a new beginning following an ending, usually having taken place tragically.

Some might think this would be a good comparison to Jesus. However, a big difference between the concept of the Phoenix and Jesus’ Resurrection is that while we understand Jesus, God and the Spirit to be immortal, Jesus was also human. So, his human pain and death were *real* and once for all time.

Jesus became as we are to understand our nature fully, to be able and meet us, minister to our needs from intimate appreciation of what it means to be us. There were no “smoke and mirrors” regarding his passion; it was absolutely real, painful (on many levels) and deadly!

Yet, his rising, and as expressed through scripture, was first in what might be referred to as a liminal state: Mary couldn’t recognize him at first outside of the tomb (what might be

referred to as not fully “in phase” to our dimensional parameters), and he told her not to yet touch him (indicative of a transitional state). But then, a short time later, he was enfleshed at times and yet could morph into liminality evidently at will, thus capable of transitioning through solid objects such as the wall of the upper room where the disciples gathered behind locked doors following the crucifixion.

What we have with Jesus, God and the Spirit are evidence of a Power beyond human conception, yet focused to our benefit as we are active through a faith connection.

Jesus’ willingness to not only defy societal expectations to reveal a better-way to live, grounded in Love, expressed as Grace and Mercy, but also die for his convictions (the Essence of he, God and the Spirit) proves the ceaseless devotion of the Divine to our well-being! And the key to us knowing the Grace and Mercy as Power to overcome the effects of chaos in its many forms is through our trusting in God and letting go of our trying to be control: Let go and let God!

Jesus let go of his freedom in the timeless dimensions in which he, God and the Spirit inhabit in order to limit his Presence to our space on earth alone for a little more than thirty years of our linear scale of time. This was his sacrifice, in order to personally show us *the Way* to best live in relationship with God, others and ourselves. And he was willing to do this, regardless of how painful an experience it would be to him!

As we celebrate his Resurrection, let us appreciate his sacrifice to Love us into better version of ourselves as we follow *the Way* of his teaching and our lives become his hands, feet and heart of Divine Love in the world each day; helping bring the Kingdom of God closer and closer to full reality here on earth!

Soli Deo Gloria,

*Pastor Andrew*

## **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

*1 PM @ Zion*

*7 PM @ Bethel*

## **Good Friday**

*1 PM @ Bethel*

### **Good Friday—Tenebrae Service**

Worship in Shadows



Friday, April 3, 2026 7 pm

Greendale Peoples Church

25 Francis St Worcester, MA 01606

*Sponsored by the Greendale Ecumenical Group*

### **EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE**

**April 5, 2026 7:00 am**

Shore Park

115 Shore Drive, Worcester, MA 01605

(on Indian Lake)

(rain location—UUCW)

Sponsored by Greendale Ecumenical Group

# THANK YOU!

On behalf of the Social Ministry/Outreach Team, we wish to extend a special thanks to an anonymous donor who gave a generous gift card to Target.

We recently used it to purchase food, drinks and hand warmers for St. John's Catholic Church, Xavier Center in Worcester for their overflow shelter during the coldest part of this winter, helping those experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.

It is through the gifts and volunteerism of our members that we are able to make a difference, helping to bring hope and assistance to those who are in need.

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Dear Friends,

Many thanks for all the support and efforts by so many for the Music For Meals fundraiser on March 20th. Special thanks to our Grace Lutheran "music makers", Pastor Andrew, Randy Bloom, Adam Hanks, John Leslie, the singers, ringers and our drummer. Thanks to our artists/ushers. Thanks to Gateways Academy students with their teacher/coaches, Christine and Joel Seager. Thanks to the JEMS Singers. Thanks to friends of Bethel Lyndy Ambruson and Joe Halko. Thanks to Ann in the office, for our bakers, refreshment team, set up team, clean up team, those who attended and generous givers toward the over \$2,500.00 free will offering raised toward the End Hunger Meal Lines scheduled on May 3rd.

*"It is a funny thing, but when I am making music, all the answers I seek for in life seem to be there, in the music, there are no questions and no need for answers." Gustaf Mahler*

Thanks be to God,  
Pam Sutton, for the Social Ministry Team

## **PRAYER LIST**

Donald Tremblay - Rose Marie Faragoli - Donna Brunnell - Russ Terrien - Tom Toepfner - Sandy Staples - Jim Mooney - Karen Carlson - Judy Garneau - Paul Josephson - Edla Bloom - Steve Hynes - Denise, Peter & George Kosciusko - Tony Genga - Henry Lewis - Glenna Brownell - Lois Kane - Roberta Briggs - Joan Bejune - Billy Rogan - Judy & Don Leomburno - Mark Glandville - Jack Fenton - Mark Stevens - Jill Ducat - Jim Mahoney - Amy Rumge - Heather Gregar - Kenneth Johnson - Beth Johnson - Bill Withers - Pr. Judy L. - Gary Kaufman - Betty Jane Weagle - Valerie Cotter - Kelly O'Brien Hartnett - Judy Sawicki - Anne Berberian - Carol Katagher - Julie Dawes - Louise Young - Elaine Peterson - David & Madeline Nevard - Lina Dickey

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## **BEING LUTHERAN**



### **New/prospective member/current member refresher session**

On Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, from 9 – 10 AM, at Bethel in his office, Pastor Andrew will host a participative discussion on what it means to be an ELCA Lutheran amidst the other denominational understandings amongst Jesus followers.

If there is further interest in continuing the line of thought, a second session can be setup for May 11<sup>th</sup>. If interested, please talk to Pastor Andrew, or let Ann know.

**LOOKING FOR A GROUP OF  
LUTHERANS TO MEET WITH AND  
SHARE SOME EXPERIENCES AND  
HAVE FUN?**

**AS A SHARED MINISTRY WITH BETHEL/ZION,  
WHY NOT GIVE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING A  
TRY?**

**MEN'S GROUP**

Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. These dinners are open to anyone who would like to get together and socialize for an hour or 2. We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6 pm in Voosen hall. Dinners are \$15.00, and all the profits go into the Calumet scholarship fund. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex so we have a general head count.

**WOMEN'S: DOLs  
(Dine Out Ladies)**

The DineOut Ladies are having lunch at 1pm on Tuesday, April 14, at Tavern-in- the Square, 193 Boston Turnpike, Lakeway Commons, Shrewsbury. Carpooling from Bethel at 12:30 or meet us there. Signup sheet in Bethel's narthex or call Leanne Carraher at 508-335-6421. Please indicate if you plan to carpool.

**"BOOKIES" Book Club**

Bookies will be meeting in the church library at 2pm on Monday April 27th. The book for discussion is "A Fall of Marigolds" by Susan Meissner. A beautiful scarf passed down through generations connects two women who learn that the weight of the world is made more bearable by the love we give away. A stunning and timeless story about love and hope. A novel....400 pages



Please join us for interesting discussion .... we may even have snacks! All are welcome!



**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

- Gail Hartshorn - 04/05
- Beth Townsend - 04/09
- Nancy Fenton - 04/11
- Carolyn Salmonson - 04/12
- Dick Kneeland - 04/12
- Lois Toepfner - 04/12
- Emily McKinney - 04/15
- Brianna Courteau - 04/16
- Shirley Connor - 04/18
- Bill Connor - 04/20
- Adam Hanks - 04/23
- John Kallio - 04/28
- Jon Sanborn - 04/29
- Bill McGovern - 04/30



**APRIL ANNIVERSARIES**

- Vinny & Jackie Walsh - 04/09
- Jon & Sara Sanborn - 04/17

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**Grace  Lutheran  
Café**

Each Wednesday noon we serve a meal through Elder Services of Worcester at Zion!

Call the main office each week by 11 AM Mondays to register for a tasty/nutritious meal and some great social time!

Meals are FREE to anyone 50+, with a suggested donation of \$3.50/person.



## **Social Ministry / Outreach**

*“For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” ~ Ephesians 2:10*

Together with Emanuel Lutheran Church in Worcester, First Congregational Church in Auburn, and Gateways Academy, Grace will be running meal lines with **End Hunger NE** on Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our goal this year is to make 20,000 meals to be distributed to local food banks, including Loaves and Fishes at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester, Charlton Food Pantry, Auburn Youth and Family Services, Quinsigamond Community Center and food pantries under the Friendly House umbrella. A project of this scale not only requires lots of hands to package the meals, but funds to pay for the ingredients. To help raise money, there have been fundraising events, including a Social Ministry/Outreach sponsored **Community Musical Springfest** on March 20<sup>th</sup> where close to \$2,500 was raised through free-will offerings. In addition to the monies raised through these events, private donations have come in to help offset the cost of the meal line. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex for volunteers to help the day of the packaging event. Thank you to all for your generous donations. Together we can make a difference in helping those suffering from food insecurity.

We have been collecting diapers and baby wipes for **Marie's Mission Diaper Outreach Program** during Lent this year. We wish to thank everyone who donated. We will be delivering these items to St. Michael's Episcopal Church after Easter.

The **Knitwits** have been busy working on a new knitting project – Prayer Squares, Each one is

approximately 4-6 inches square with a cross in the middle. The small size makes it easy to carry with you, reminding you of the blessings and prayers meant to bring comfort:

*May this square, knitted and given in love, be a reminder of my prayers for you at this time, and bring comfort and assurance of the love of Christ and His constant presence with you.*

If you know someone who might benefit from receiving a prayer square, lap blanket or prayer shawl, please let one of the knitters or Pastor Andrew know.

In collaboration with First Congregational Church in Auburn, we are in the early planning stages of bringing back the Auburn Walk for Hunger to raise money **for Auburn Youth and Family Services Food Pantry**. The walk is scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup>. More information will follow.

Mark your calendars for the following:

**The Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance Walk For The Homeless** is scheduled for Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. Please consider joining the Grace Team on this 3 mile walk in Worcester.

On May 31<sup>st</sup> we will be making lunches for **Worcester Fellowship** for their Sunday Worship Service.



**Gateways Academy**  
**Open House**  
PreK and Kindergarten

Come explore our classrooms, meet our teachers, and discover how learning and growing can be so much fun!

Where kids can  
*Grow, Achieve, Think, Explore, and more!*

**SATURDAY APRIL 11TH**  
10AM to 12PM

90 Bryn Mawr Ave.  
Auburn, Mass. 01501

Enroll Now →

Visit Our Website [gatewaysacademy.org](http://gatewaysacademy.org) For More Information (508) 523-9406

Gateways Academy is an intentionally small and purposefully designed PK-12 micro school where every learner is known personally and empowered to learn and grow. We invite you to visit us during our Open Houses on April 11th and May 16th from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. For more information, contact us at 508-523-9406 or visit our website at [www.gatewaysacademy.org](http://www.gatewaysacademy.org). You can also check us out on Facebook! We look forward to meeting you!

## ZION PAINTING

We want to thank Jessica Caminero and Adam Hanks for their work in freshening up the entryway to the narthex!



## Meal Lines

May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Noon to 3 PM

*Voosen Hall @ Bethel*

Make checks out to: The Outreach Program



## ADULT STUDIES

Wednesdays, 2 PM

Bethel Library

**April 8<sup>th</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup>?**

Continuing Old Testament History

**April 29<sup>th</sup> – May 20<sup>th</sup>**

Surprise the World!

*Journeying in Jesus' Way, Surprise the World, Michael Frost*

Ask Pastor or Ann for a copy of the book



**Grace Notes - April 2026**



**MISSION STATEMENT**

*"To boldly share God's Love and Grace universally in and through our communities."*

**VISION STATEMENT**

*Modeling the welcoming nature of God, we are humbly called and driven by the Spirit to witness, engage and walk with each other authentically, as Jesus' hands and feet, providing spiritual, emotional and physical nourishment.*

*Through evolving partnerships with ecumenical and other social service organizations we affirm justice and wholeness under the "agency of Grace" that feed the needs and hope of all.*

**The Rev. Andrew H. Borden**, Pastor  
pastor\_andrew.b@verizon.net

**Ann Spinner**, Parish Administrator  
[bethelauburn@verizon.net](mailto:bethelauburn@verizon.net)  
Main Office: 508-832-3427  
[grace-lutheran-elca.org](http://grace-lutheran-elca.org)

**Randy Bloom** – Minister of Music    **Lois Toepfner**, Deacon – Minister of Music Emeritus  
**Shannon Papandrea** - Sexton    **Garret Peters** - Treasurer  
**Kate Valleli** – Christian Education Coordinator    **Adam Hanks** – Bell Director  
**Ann Spinner, Kate Valleli** – Financial Secretaries  
**Louisa Klaven**, AIM – Licensed Lay Minister

**Parish Council**

President – **Dave Valleli (B)**    Co-Vice-Presidents – **Jennifer Courtney (Z)**, **Jessica Caminero (B)**  
Council – **Dave Spinner (Z)**, **Ruth Thompson (B)**, **Joan Parker (B)**, **Leanne Carraher (B)**  
**Virginia Carlson (Z)**, **Adam Hanks (B)**, **Patrick Jones (B)**

Worcester Campus - Zion Lutheran    Auburn Campus - Bethel Lutheran  
41 Whitmarsh Avenue, 01606    90 Bryn Mawr Avenue, 01501

