

The CrossWorks

Information, Inspiration and Invitation from
Cross of Grace Lutheran Church

Good Grief

While many likely think of Charlie Brown when we hear it, there's also a short, sweet, and highly esteemed book with the title ***Good Grief***, by Granger Westberg. (I don't know if either of them should get credit for coining the phrase.) I recently read another book titled, ***The Wild Edge of Sorrow***, by Francis Weller, after hearing him interviewed on Anderson Cooper's podcast, ***All There Is***. That book is as great as its title and I've recommended the podcast to anyone who will listen, because Anderson and his guests wrestle with grief beautifully, honestly, thoughtfully, and more.

All of this is to say, I've had grief on the brain. And it seems true that, while grief is something that has touched – or will touch – each and every one of us, it is something few of us engage in ways that are deliberate, healthy, faithful, or helpful as God would have for us. In other words, we don't do grief well, if we dare to do it at all.

I'd like to do something about that during the coming Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14th. Informed and inspired by ***The Wild Edge of Sorrow***, we're crafting worship experiences for our midweek Wednesday evenings that acknowledge the many ways grief touches our lives so that we might practice the sacred work of grieving together. My hope is that this season will be a time to soften the hardness of our hearts where sorrows have yet to heal and that we'll prepare ourselves, too, for the unavoidable moments of sadness that are bound to find us in this world.

When he was a young boy, Stephen Colbert lost his father and two brothers in a plane crash. As a man of deep faith, he has thought deeply about how that grief has impacted him over the years. In his interview on Anderson Cooper's podcast, Colbert said, "Grief is the thirst everyone has, but no one's pouring any water for anybody." (Read that again, please.)

That strikes me as both a holy calling and a profound challenge. So I'd like to spend the coming days pouring some water for each other and quenching our community's thirst by engaging – if not embracing – the sadness and sorrows of life in this world. And I'd like to do that through the gracious, hope-filled perspective of our faith, which calls us not to deny or run from our grief, but rather to endure it with trust that God transforms us – and the world – through the redemption we know in Jesus.

With hope,




Happening in February

February 2024

Comfort Quilts • Saturday, February 3 • 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

A day of quilt-making for our Comfort Quilts group includes opportunities for everyone to help. If you have time or fabric to donate, please check in with Sheila Baker (bakesfab@sbcglobal.net) or Nancy Hunnicutt (nancy.hunnicutt22@gmail.com). There are some “take home” projects available, too.

Mission Endowment Fund Silent Auction • Sunday, February 4, 8 a.m. to Sunday, February 11, 12 p.m.

What might you contribute for the good of the cause – a craft, an experience, a skill/trade – anything that will help grow the principal of our Mission Endowment Fund and do God’s work beyond our walls? Please have your contribution to church by Saturday, February 3rd, at 10 a.m. to join the fun! Contact Linda Snow with questions. (tandlsnow@sbcglobal.net)

Holy Conversations • February 4, February 6, February 7, February 13

Check the times and details about these events as we celebrate where we are as a congregation and where God is calling us to be. All are welcome and we’re hoping for 100% participation from Partners in Mission.

Women’s Bible Study • Thursday, February 8 • 10 a.m.

Our Women’s group will pick up again on February 8th for their next session. We will be reading something from one of the featured authors in our last study.

Galentines’ Brunch • Saturday, February 10 • 10:30 a.m.

The Moms’ Nite Out group is having a Galentines’ Brunch for their February get-together. Amy Matthews will host this month at her home. For additional details you can check in with Chelsea Walsman at chelseadowdell@gmail.com.

Mardi Gras • Saturday, February 10 • 5 p.m.

Please join our annual pre-Lenten celebration. Drinks and appetizers begin at 5 p.m. Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m., with all sorts of catered and home-cooked goodness. BYOB. Tickets cost \$13.00/adult. There will be free food, fun, and childcare for kids, too.

Pancake Breakfast • Sunday, February 11 • 9 a.m.

The High School Youth will host a pancake breakfast as a fundraiser for their trip to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in NOLA. Join us for some scrumptious pancakes and fellowship, and look for cool ways your freewill offering will help our kids have a meaningful experience this July.

Breakfast with Pastor Mark • Tuesday, February 13 • 6:30 a.m.

High School Youth are invited to join Pastor Mark for breakfast at the New Pal McDonald’s. The first three get breakfast free.

Ash Wednesday Worship • Wednesday, February 14 • 6:30 p.m.

Notice the NEW TIME as we begin your Lenten journey to the cross with the imposition of ashes and holy communion.

Faith Formation Fun and Games • Sunday, February 18 • 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Gather for some food, fun, games and a chance for Lenten-focused prayer and worship, just for our young people.

High School Youth Overnight Lock-In • Sunday, February 18 • 8 p.m. – 7 a.m.

With the day off of school for President’s Day, we’ll gather overnight right here at Cross of Grace. Join us and bring a friend.

Agape Alliance Ministry • Monday, February 19 • 6:30 p.m. (Carpool leaves COG)

Connect with Carla Hopkins (carlahop64@gmail.com) or Linda Sevier (lsevier103@gmail.com) to learn how you can be part of this ministry to sex workers on Indy’s east side. Sign up to help on the board in the kitchen.

Midweek Lenten Worship • Wednesdays, February 21 - March 20 • 5:15 p.m.

Lenten Family Worship – specially geared toward families with young children – begins at 5:15 p.m., in the sanctuary, with activities, devotions, and prayer. Then all are welcome to a meal at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Our traditional midweek Lenten worship will follow at 7 p.m.

Blood Drive • Sunday, February 25 • 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Reserve your time in advance, or hop on the bus that will be ready and waiting in the parking lot throughout the morning.