



# Women of the ELCA



Grace Unit Newsletter.....April 2020

A reflection from Vicki Marthaler, President of Grace Women. This month of April we will be journeying the last dark, anxious days of Jesus' life. We enter into the Passion Week with fear and trembling. Hesitant. Confused. Overwhelmed. Cautious. Alert to what is going on but unable to make sense of it all. Feebly trusting, reluctantly following.....

And then there is death. A horribly agonizing, humiliating death. And darkness. And the earth itself shakes. And Jesus is gone. Limp. Used up. Unresponsive to the wailing cries of His mother. Dead weight to those who remove Him from the cross. Hurriedly wrapped and laid in a borrowed tomb, Jesus' earthly life has been completed. In its wake are fears, grief and questions of "Now what?" "Where do we go from here?"

The Good Friday leads into the Black Saturday which finally gives way to Resurrection Sunday! The tomb is empty! Empty? The stone has been rolled away! The stone has been rolled away? The linen cloths are on the floor! The wrappings are on the floor?

And with the glorious resurrection there remain: Questions, confusion, feeble trusting and reluctant following.

Yes, being "Easter People" doesn't mean we have all the answers. Being Easter People doesn't automatically instill perfect faith and total trust. Being Easter People means we can begin our journey anew... Every day...with maybe one more piece of the faith puzzle in place so that we can have a smidge more confidence, one more promise to encourage us, one more song to sing on the journey and one more day to experience the love of Jesus in real time!

The picture of my youngest granddaughter, Lily, reminds me to stop, look around and take a minute to get my bearings and remember what I am about. Her umbrella protects her from the elements. Her hands hold tightly and securely to the staff that is available to her. Her sweater warms her. Her little flip-flopped feet (like Dwama Wicki ☺ ) are firmly planted on the solid ground. She appears to be taking in her surroundings and making a decision on which way to go. And aren't we all.....



The Coronavirus Pandemic adds an extra layer of concern and confusion. We do wonder how to live well and safely. We do stand much like Lily taking stock of what's about us. Like Lily hold on! Be alert. Continue on.

May April be a glorious month of resurrection for you! May you live more confidently with your questions, be less confused, trust a little more and seek to follow closer to the One Who loves you totally and completely.

Where to? Forward! Together! In Jesus' Name! Amen.

"Lift high the Cross, the Love of Christ proclaim!  
'Til all the world – adores – His Sacred Name!"

"He is risen. He is risen, indeed!"

# Jesus

## A Bit of A Change In How We Do Business

Yes, dear Women of Grace, the Coronavirus has certainly become front and center stage of life as we know it. And, that includes how we – as Easter People, Women of Grace – come together for gatherings, Circle meetings, Bible Study, service projects, Prayers groups, Worship, support groups, basically every way we connect with each other on a daily/weekly/monthly basis.

We must not give in to despair over these trying times. We cannot let “social distancing” impede our growing in faith, fellowshiping with one another and serving our neighbor. Rather, let us join in the journey of Easter Life with your fellow brothers and sisters of Grace with ingenuity and creativeness! There are still ways we can be together, present to each other. We just have to do it differently for a time.

### 2020 Dates

**APRIL 12** – Easter Worship at Grace Lutheran – LIVE STREAMED ON FACEBOOK! **RESURRECTION CONTINUES!** 😊

**APRIL 18** – Smoky Mountain Conference Spring Gathering at Grace Lutheran – **CANCELLED** 😞

**MAY 9** – Grace Women’s General Meeting – **POSTPONED**

May become a July/August meeting or simply wait until our September meeting

**JUNE 12-14** – NC WELCA Annual Gathering at Lenoir-Rhyne in Hickory – **STILL SCHEDULED – WAIT AND SEE**

**SEPTEMBER 12** – Grace Women’s General Meeting – **ON SCHEDULE**

**OCTOBER 18** – Grace Women’s Thankoffering Sunday/Blessing of the Quilts – **ON SCHEDULE**

**DECEMBER 5** – Grace Women’s Christmas Tea – A Reading Theater of Christmas Stories! – **ON SCHEDULE**

### How Can We Do Things Differently?

For anyone who has a computer/iphone connected to the internet, there is a free option called “Zoom.” Zoom allows a number of people to gather at the same time, see each other on the screen, talk to each other and just be together. It can be used for Bible Study, planning meetings, prayer times, support groups or just simply checking in. Greg Dodd at Grace Lutheran is happy to help any group get acquainted with the program and begin meetings. It is a safe, easy way to connect and be involved.

Another use of technology is on Facebook. The Messenger portion of Facebook can provide a face-to-face time. I use it with my granddaughters. A Video call is just like a phone call with the joy of seeing someone as well as hearing them!

There are other wonderful technology options like Skype, Facetime, Hangouts – all offering the possibility of getting together. Yes, technology can be daunting and a bit scary to delve into, but once you get going, there is no end to the opportunities it can provide.

And, of course, let us not forget the tried and true ways to stay in touch – U.S. Mail! Sending and receiving cards/letters/postcards is still a great thrill! It demonstrates purposeful intention on the sender’s part and joyous delight on the receiver’s part!

Or, a telephone call. A telephone call will always be a caring way to check in with someone.

It would be wonderful if every Woman of Grace would deliberately seek out other Women of Grace during this social distancing time. Be an instigator! Reach out!

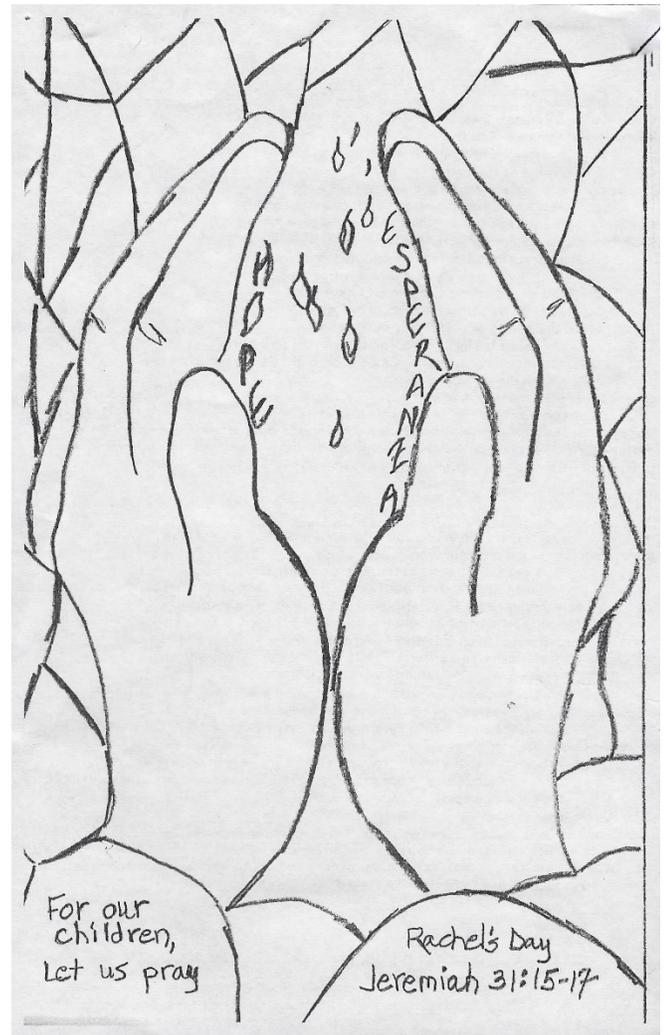


## Rachel's Day – May 3, 2020

The National Women of the ELCA have designated May 3, 2020, as Rachel's Day, a Sunday for all Women of the ELCA to recognize and pray for children who are enduring violence in their lives and for those children who are recovering from violence in their lives.

Violence can take many forms. It can result when living in an environment where guns/shooting abound. It can be living in poverty, experiencing homelessness, enduring abuse physically/emotionally/mentally or being bullied and other ways manipulated.

The Women of Grace have traditionally recognized Rachel's Day by wearing the color blue and collecting children's books that are donated to the Swannanoa Correctional Facility for Women for its "**Ministry of Hope**" that is coordinated by the Chaplaincy Committee. The incarcerated mothers then are recorded reading a book and that recording and book is gifted to their child. It is one way to keep the mother and child connected. **UNFORTUNATELY**, according to the website, they cannot receive books this year because of the CoVid-19 threat. Instead the Chaplaincy Committee is asking for money donations for art and journaling supplies for the women. ([www.ministryofhopewnc.org](http://www.ministryofhopewnc.org))



Last year at our September General Meeting we heard from "On Eagles Wings" which is a ministry that supports rescued girls from Human Trafficking. "Hope House" is the first in North Carolina to provide a home where rescued girls can live safely and receive medical care, education and be taught life skills to prepare them for a future filled with hope. We were able to send the speaker back with a car absolutely stuffed with food items and recipes. As part of their life skills training at Hope House, the girls learn to follow recipes and make their meals. CoVid-19 will keep us from gathering food supplies but we could donate money or VISA cards as we remember and stand with those who are recovering from Human Trafficking violence. ([www.oewhope.org](http://www.oewhope.org))

Rachel's Day is May 3. Mother's Day is May 10. If you would like to remember children in some way, the Women of Grace would be honored to receive and forward your donations. Treasurer Kathy Stancar can forward donations to "Ministry of Hope" or "Hope House" as designated by the donor. **Kathy Stancar: 1015 Carousel Lane, Hendersonville, NC 28792** Questions? [amkstan@yahoo.com](mailto:amkstan@yahoo.com)



### PILLOW CASE DRESSES! Interested in sewing?

The sewers of the pillowcase dresses made 130 dresses for Haitian girls and others in Guatemala and Honduras. We have a small group -six at the most-- so this is an accomplishment! Learn more from Barb Koch.



