

Grace Lutheran Membership 2010 “Cherished-Chosen-Challenged”

The theme for our congregation and its ministries for 2010 is “Cherished-Chosen-Challenged”. Under this banner we ask God’s blessings, praying that He will grow us together as a family in faith and expand His kingdom among us.

Cherished – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life” - John 3:16* Above all else God loves us all enough to sacrifice His own Son to pay for our sins. We need to remember that every day—for our own peace and to see the eternal value God places on us and on others. *“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.” - Romans 8:38-39*

Chosen – *“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are mine.” - Isaiah 43:1* God has chosen each and every one of us through the Gospel. He has redeemed us by His Son and claimed us in the waters of Holy Baptism. We are not of the world, neither do we belong to it. We belong to God!

Challenged – *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” - Proverbs 3:5-6*

-Challenged to faithfulness in worship and study of God’s Word.
“And let us consider one another in

order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25. As members of Grace we are reminded our first act of love toward God and one another is faithful attendance to worship, regular reception of the Sacrament, and constant study of God’s Word. Our first act of love for each other is to hold each other accountable to God’s call for faithfulness and to encourage one another in that privilege and duty. *“I was glad when they said unto me, ‘Let us go into the house of the LORD.’” – Psalm 122:1*

-Challenged to faithful defense of God’s Word. *“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father in heaven.” - Matthew 10:32-33* The world, the devil, and our sinful flesh exert tremendous pressures on us to deny the fullness of God’s truth. We have been presented with tremendous opportunities in our day and age to bear witness to God’s truth. Although faithful defense of God’s Word often brings ridicule and persecution, by such defense we actually demonstrate the love of God and how He cherishes all mankind and desires them to be saved.

-Challenged to faithful stewardship. *“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.” I Corinthians 9:7-8.* Each Christian is expected by

God to support the preaching of the Gospel, but also taught by God that Biblical stewardship is more than giving money. New Testament Christians give offerings in response to the Gospel. They are not subject to “collections”. Time, talents, and treasures are all possessions of God, and we are but the managers and benefactors of these blessings. Giving back is our God-pleasing duty and our sacred privilege. *“Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase.” - Proverbs 3:9*

-Challenged to witness and missions.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20. God has blessed us with His grace and called us to His service. That means every Christian has the responsibility to reach out with the “Good News” of Jesus Christ to others. It is not accomplished by just the Pastors or the Evangelism Committee. It is who we are. It is what we do. Telling people they are cherished and chosen by God is a great challenge, but God has not left us alone and is with us every step of the way as we bring the saving Gospel to others in our families, in our neighborhoods, and throughout the world. *“Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” – Joshua 1:9*

**We are the people of Grace Lutheran!
Cherished by God—Chosen by God!
God bless us mightily that we may
never shrink from the challenge God**

has placed before us! *“Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away the gods your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt! Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve.....but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Joshua 24:14-15*