

Reflections of Grace

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2025

Grace Community Christian Reformed Church

What is Lent?

Lent is a significant season in the year for Christians – a time of solemnity and self-reflection where they confess their failings and resolve to live a more godly life based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. It lasts for just over six weeks leading up to Easter.

Traditionally it was a time of fasting from certain foods such as eggs, meat, fish and fats. Nowadays people might give up a luxury food – such as chocolate. They may also give up an activity such as using social media or drinking alcohol. It is called Lent in English because it is the time of the year when days are lengthening in the northern hemisphere. Like Easter, Lent falls on different dates each year. Christians in different church traditions around the world celebrate slightly different periods of Lent. Some church buildings are made to look more plain during Lent with flowers and other decorations removed.

In many churches, the first day of Lent is Ash Wednesday. Many Christians go to church that day to seek forgiveness from God for what they have done wrong. In some churches, the priest will take some ash and use it to mark a cross sign on the forehead of each person. It is a symbol of their remorse. The ash is traditionally made from burning palm crosses which were distributed on Palm Sunday the year before. During Lent, many Christians use special studies to guide their times of personal prayer and reflection.

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A PRAYER FOR PRESIDENTS DAY—FEBRUARY 17

Lord of heaven and earth, we offer you our deepest gratitude for this country and the freedom to worship you. Stir up a sense of stewardship so we all may care for our nation and each inhabitant of it. We pray especially for our leaders, that you will bless them with wisdom and humility. Prompt everyone in positions of authority to pursue righteousness, justice and the welfare of all. Remind us of the psalmist’s teaching: “Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalm 33:12, NRSV). May that promise be fulfilled “from sea to shining sea.” Amen.



The hurricanes that battered the East Coast in fall 2024 also battered my soul. I was over the rain and humidity. I was tired of lugging my two preschoolers through the downpours and driving through flash floods at night. Yet I had no reason to complain. Our house was still standing, with no damage.

The news around us was worrying and heart-breaking. “What if that was us?” I wondered. “Would I be strong enough?”

Then the kids asked to play outside. Even though I knew they’d get wet and muddy, I gave in. When a rainbow appeared, I’d never been more humbled as I remembered: I don’t need to be anxious. I don’t need to be strong enough. God watches over us all. He knows the hurt and sorrow. And he promises to be “our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1, ESV).

Lord, forgive my unbelief. “Hear my cry, O God ... when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:1-2, ESV).

—Kristen Greene



CHRISTIAN SYMBOL

Censer & Incense—

A censer (or thurible) is a vessel for burning incense during worship.



Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, as well as some Protestant ones, often do this on special occasions. Censers come in many sizes, shapes and designs.

A worship leader may swing a chain censer to waft the fragrant smoke over the congregation during a procession or benediction.

As incense burns in a censer and smoke wafts upward, it symbolizes prayers of the faithful, floating to God.

"May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2, NIV).

TRUE LOVE

Many of us celebrate Valentine's Day in both fun and serious ways. Children exchange treats and humorous cards with classmates and friends; some bring home handmade cards for the adults in their lives. Romantic partners may go out to eat and present each other flowers, chocolate, a fancy card — maybe even an engagement ring!



As playful as Valentine's Day can be, it's also a great time to remember the serious side of love, as indicated by these quotes:

- "When you love someone, you love the whole person as he or she is, and not as you would like them to be." —Leo Tolstoy
- "You don't love someone because they're perfect; you love them in spite of the fact that they're not." —Jodi Picoult
- "Love ... is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. ... It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses." —Ann Landers

We can do the difficult work of true love — actions, not just feelings — only because God loved us first. He did (and does) so despite our imperfection, and in Jesus, God shows us how to share true love with others. This Valentine's Day, if you don't remember any other profound quotes, hold this one in your heart:

"We love because God first loved us." —1 John 4:19 (NCV)



Random Acts of Kindness Day, observed each year on **February 17**, is a reminder of the power of altruism. Followers of Jesus express kindness selflessly, out of love for God and our neighbors. Yet in return, we reap emotional — and even physical — benefits.

Researchers have identified a "helper's high" that can ease anxiety and depression. Spontaneous or planned acts of "pro-social spending" have been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve heart health, reduce pain and even extend longevity.

For maximum impact, experts recommend getting creative with random acts of kindness and mixing them up. But no matter how you spread kindness, you're bound to experience blessings in return!

FROM THE EDITOR:

Do you have a story you've read or seen that has affected your life in a positive way?

Or maybe you've had a "God" moment in your life that impacted you and your spiritual journey? When something happened that can only be explained as having come from God?

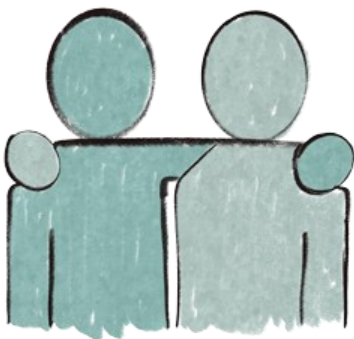
How about a great recipe that others may like?

We'd love to be able to share these stories and recipes in our newsletter.

Submit your half or one page story for the newsletter by placing it in the newsletter box on the wall outside the office. Or email it to the church at: gracechurch@gccrc.org. *Articles/stories may be edited.*

All articles/recipes must include your name. If the article was published in a magazine or any other way, you must include your name, the copy of the article, and the permission from the source to publish, to be considered for the newsletter!

We reserve the right to reject a submitted article and edit your personal submission for size.



"I am here"

In *Bread for the Journey*, theologian Henri J.M. Nouwen calls consolation — from "to be with" (con-) "the lonely one" (solus) — "one of the most important ways to care." He writes, "Life is so full of pain, sadness and loneliness that we often wonder what we can do to alleviate the immense suffering we see."

Although consoling doesn't necessarily remove someone's pain, Nouwen notes that it serves a deeper purpose: To console means "to be there and say, 'You are not alone, I am with you. Together we can carry the burden. Don't be afraid. I am here.'" That is consolation. We all need to give it as well as to receive it."



SPECIAL DATES IN FEBRUARY & MARCH

- Feb. 2 - Groundhog Day
- **Feb. 7 - Ladies Craft Night (6:30-8:30pm)**
- Feb. 14 - Valentine's Day
- **Feb. 28 - Ignite Kids Group (5-5th grade / 6-8pm)**
- March 4 - Fat Tuesday (Punczki Day)
- **March 5 - LENT begins**
- March 9 - Daylight Saving Time Starts - Spring Ahead!
- March 17 - St. Patrick's Day
- March 20 - First Day of Spring
- **March 28 - Ignite Kids Group (5-5th grade / 6-8pm)**



THE WORK OF RACIAL RECONCILIATION

Racial reconciliation isn't a new concept. Some 2,000 years ago, the apostle Philip recognized that a man from Ethiopia was just as worthy of baptism into the body of Christ as were the natives of Judea and Galilee.

In *Color-Courageous Discipleship*, Michelle T. Sanchez views racial reconciliation as a personal journey for the greater good. "Jesus seeks to bring about the kind of inner transformation we need to transform our world God's way," she writes. That echoes Martin Luther King Jr.'s statement: "Only through an inner spiritual transformation do we gain the strength to fight vigorously the evils of the world in a humble and loving spirit" (*Strength to Love*).

On Racial Reconciliation Sunday, observed the second Sunday of February, consider how you can address racial issues. Sanchez suggests simple steps such as starting a conversation with someone of another ethnicity or advocating for a friend. Consider how other people's lives and challenges are different from yours. Pray for people of different races and cultures. Ponder how you can come alongside and walk with them — and they with you.

In God's creative and thorough plan, he might transform your own life as you try to transform the world.

—Janna Firestone



The short Old Testament book of Lamentations is a set of communal laments (sorrowful songs) about the destruction in 587 B.C. of which city, by which people?

- A. Babylon; the Assyrians
- B. Jerusalem; the Babylonians
- C. Rome; the Greeks
- D. Caesarea Philippi; the Romans



LOVE MAKES US WORTHY

Unlike God, who loves unconditionally, humans often make choices and set limits when doling out affection. But Thomas Merton reminds us, "Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business and, in fact, it is nobody's business. What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy."

As for how to develop and maintain that type of love? Merton shares, "It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my [neighbors]."

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Bible Quiz Answer: B

a lovely aroma

Make this
sweet-smelling
gift for a friend
or valentine.

What you need:

- Colored felt
- Scrap paper
- Permanent marker
- Scissors
- String
- Essential oils
(rose, lavender, etc.)



What you do:

1. Draw a flower shape on paper and cut it out.
2. Place the flower template on felt and draw around it with the marker.
3. Cut out the felt flower. Then cut a small slit or hole through it.
4. Cut 8 inches of string. Thread it through the felt flower and tie to form a loop for hanging.
5. To the felt, add 3 to 5 drops of essential oil. This air freshener will last about 2 weeks.
6. Revive the scent, as needed, by adding a few drops of essential oil.



Resting in Jesus

An old hymn
declares:



I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest. Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast." I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn and sad. I found in him a resting-place, and he has made me glad. (Horatius Bonar, 1846)

Many people these days feel exhausted by division, the news, hatred that seems louder than love. More than ever, we who are "weary, worn, and sad" need to hear Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest."

Jesus wants to be our resting place — but not so we can hide forever from reality. Instead, he offers a place of refreshment where we can relax long enough to remember that not everything is bad; there is gospel to share. Not everything is hatred; God's love is stronger.

Resting in Jesus, we focus on God's goodness. We are reminded of love shown by kind people to those in trouble, bold voices speaking for justice, warm friendships that brighten our days. Gladdened by rest, we rise again. Jesus walks with us, as always. We can lean on him every step of the way.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

Time is...

too slow for those who wait,
too swift for those who fear,
too long for those who grieve,
too short for those who rejoice.
But for those who love, time is eternity.



LEAVE IT TO GOD

Fourth-century theologian Augustine urged again and again that we focus on practicing love in the here and now, not on worrying about our lives in the hereafter. In *Beautiful Bodies*, Margaret Miles writes that especially regarding complicated doctrines like predestination and challenges like “The one who endures to the end will be saved” (Matthew 24:13), we can’t do anything *but* leave those to God. It’s impossible for humans to take responsibility for ourselves in such matters. If we could determine our afterlife destiny by means of effort, persuasion or bribery, self-pride would surely be the accompanying sinful result.

“In fact,” Miles writes, “preoccupation with one’s eternal destiny distracts from a Christian’s present business. ‘Leave it to God,’ St. Augustine said, and place your attention on living lovingly in the body of Christ here and now.”

On the path to victory

After moving to a college town, Pastor Kendra Thompson learned about the athletic phenomenon known as March Madness. And after a nondenominational upbringing, as a young adult she learned about Lenten traditions.

Lent and the NCAA college basketball tournament, which usually coincide, both point to the divine, Thompson argues. “In Lent, with each day we are drawn closer to the crushing reality that we’ve crucified our God. And yet we are also faced with an impossible victory: that death did not win, that our God is raised in Jesus Christ,” she writes. “Likewise, watching college basketball invites us into a season of hoping in unlikely possibilities, marveling at upsets, and giving thanks to God for the connection we find as his people.”

Like fans swept up in high-stakes games, Jesus’ disciples abandon everything to follow him. Lent might be “holy madness,” Thompson muses. It’s “an opportunity to ‘feel’ our religion, not just in our heads but with our skin, our voices, even in the anxieties of our prayers.”



THE LENTEN DESERT

During the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5 this year), Christians figuratively follow Jesus into the desert. Just as our Savior spent 40 days fasting and facing temptation, we focus on self-reflection and contrition.

In an 1873 hymn, Claudia Hernaman wrote, “O Lord, throughout these forty days, you prayed and kept the fast. Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past.”

The desert experience of Lent serves a clear purpose, filling us up rather than depleting us. “This is what Lent is meant to be,” writes theologian Ron Rolheiser. “Time in the desert to courageously face the chaos and the demons within us and to let God do battle with them through us. The result is that we are purified, made ready, so the intoxicating joy of Easter might then bind us more closely to God and each other.”

IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE
by Lois Blanchard

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two-

If He came unexpectedly, I wonder you'd do

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,

And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best,

And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there-

That serving Him in your own home is joy beyond compare.

But, when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door

With arms outstretched in welcome to your heav'nly visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,

Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?

Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard,

And wish you hadn't uttered that last loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymnbooks out?

Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?

And I wonder - if the Savior spent a day or two with you,

Would you go right on doing the things you always do?

Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?

Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace,

And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?

Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read

And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you ev'ry-where you'd planned to go,

Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends,

Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?



Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.
—Revelation 3:20

ALL THE WAYS GOD HELPS US

When young adults land in difficult situations and desperately call home, parents respond in various ways. They might remind their son or daughter of guidelines learned years back — behavior and problem-solving skills to get back on track. Or maybe parents direct their kids to a mentor, expert or resource for assistance. But if the crisis is severe, no doubt these loving parents hop in the car, or even on a plane, and go to their child. They embrace and support them, perhaps even taking initial steps to bring them through the chaos to a new beginning.

When the people of Israel were in the wilderness, exile and countless difficulties in between, God lovingly used each of these strategies. God reminded Israel of the Ten Commandments and other laws he gave to guide their life together. Sometimes he sent prophets and other leaders to direct the people into better ways and times. God does the same today, reminding us of Scripture's guidance and sending us prophetic voices and wise leaders.

Above all, when nothing less would save people, ancient and modern, from the dangers of sin and death, God came to us as Jesus. God's only Son walked with us, lived through our troubles alongside us, taught us new ways directly and brought us out of the problematic place where we were trapped and into a new beginning.

—Heidi Hyland Mann,
based on a sermon by
Pastor Dave Sonnenberg



Fasting and feasting

During Lent, consider this practical — and biblical — advice from Arthur Lichtenberger, a former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church:

- Fast from criticism, and feast on praise.
- Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy.
- Fast from ill-temper, and feast on peace.
- Fast from resentment, and feast on contentment.
- Fast from jealousy, and feast on love.
- Fast from pride, and feast on humility.
- Fast from selfishness, and feast on service.
- Fast from fear, and feast on faith.





LIVING WATER

In the mountains, my mom and I have a favorite riverside picnic spot.

Inevitably, we end up removing our socks and shoes, dunking our feet in the icy water. While seeing who can keep both feet submerged the longest, we distract ourselves by admiring the rushing water. Hundreds of gallons from melting snow cascade over rocks and around fallen trees.

Although we're in the same spot visit after visit, the water is always fresh. The same is true about God's presence and his Word. We can revisit the same beloved Scripture and experience the same truths in fresh ways, as "rivers of living water" flow within us (John 7:38).

In *The Attentive Life*, Leighton Ford describes enjoying solitude by a river. "I remembered that the ancient philosopher Heraclitus said it was impossible to step into the same river twice, for a river is always in flux," he writes.

Ford continues: "Yet Heraclitus left out an important truth. A river is more than a succession of millions of disparate drops of water. I can step into a river in this living moment and know it has *never* changed. For each moment of time, each part of creation, each aspect of my life is also lived under the eye of God and is gathered and held in his eternal hand."

—Janna Firestone



sweet soil



This snack's layers mimic properties of our planet's crust.



What you need:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup nut butter (divided)
- ½ cup chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Silicone mini baking cups

What you do:

1. Combine the oats and ⅓ cup of the nut butter. Mix until oats stick together.
2. Place 2 teaspoons of oat mixture in each baking cup. Press with a spoon. Freeze for 10 minutes.
3. Spread remaining nut butter atop the cups. Freeze for 10 more minutes.
4. Microwave the chocolate chips 30 seconds. Stir and keep heating for 30-second intervals until melted.
5. Spread melted chocolate atop the cups. Freeze until chocolate is firm.
6. Remove from the molds and enjoy! Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container.



FEBRUARY & MARCH SCHEDULES

GREETERS

Feb 2 Warren & Ruth Kuipers
 Feb 9 George Voss / Evelyn Luchtenburg
 Feb 16 Carol DenBesten / Mary Lewan
 Feb 23 Patricia Schroader/ Theresa Dybala

CHILDCARE

Feb 2 Joyce Phillips
 Feb 9 Barb Wassenaar
 Feb 16 Laura Soucek
 Feb 23 Kaitlyn Van Kuiken

TECH SCHEDULE

Projection

Sound

Feb 2	Dave Phillips	Ed Ritzema
Feb 9	Ed Ritzema	Chris Van Kuiken
Feb 16	Aiden Soucek	Pedro Kialanda
Feb 23	Dave Phillips	Ed Ritzema
Mar 2	Ed Ritzema	Chris Van Kuiken
Mar 9	Dave Phillips	Ed Ritzema
Mar 16	Aiden Soucek	Pedro Kialanda
Mar 23	Dave Phillips	Ed Ritzema
Mar 30	Ed Ritzema	Chris Van Kuiken

ACCOMPANISTS

Feb 2	Diane/ Pedro	Mar 2 Bob/Diane
Feb 9	Diane	Mar 9 Diane
Feb 16	Diane	Mar 16 Diane
Feb 23	Pedro	Mar 23 Pedro
		Mar 30 Diane/Pedro

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Feb 2 Diane Ritzema
 Feb 9 Jestine Ivy
 Feb 16 Ed Ritzema
 Feb 23 Tom Huisenga

VOLUNTEERS PLEASE NOTE:

ALWAYS USE THE LATEST SCHEDULE YOU HAVE RECEIVED. CHANGES MAY HAVE BEEN MADE FROM WHAT IS LISTED HERE.

*Lord, create in me
 the heart of a servant
 choosing to work
 for your glory
 and not my own.*

HOME COOKING

SWEETHEART CHOW

SUBMITTED BY BARB WASSENAAR

SHOP FOR INGREDIENTS AT DOLLAR TREE!



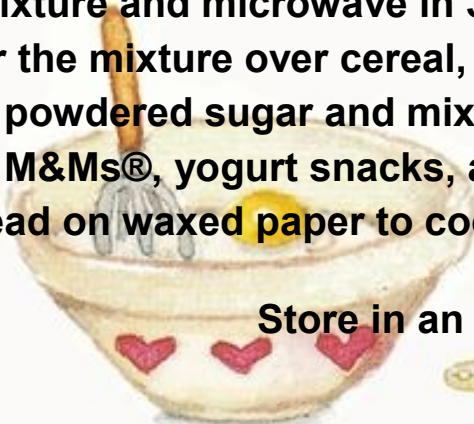
INGREDIENTS

- Two 3.5-oz. bags of Honey Nut Cheerios®
- One 10-oz. container of Pillsbury Vanilla or Cream Cheese Frosting
- 1 tablespoon of Butter
- 1 tablespoon of Imitation Vanilla Extract
- 1 cup of Powdered Sugar
- 1/3 cup of red, pink, or white M&Ms®
- One 2.25-oz. bag of Welch's® Fruit 'n Yogurt Snacks

MAKE IT!

- Pour the Honey Nut Cheerios® into the mixing bowl.
- In a separate microwaveable bowl, add the frosting, butter, and vanilla extract.
- Microwave uncovered on high for 30 seconds. Then, stir the mixture and microwave in 30 second intervals until smooth.
- Pour the mixture over cereal, stirring until evenly coated.
- Add powdered sugar and mix until well-coated.
- Add M&Ms®, yogurt snacks, and any other sweets you'd like.
- Spread on waxed paper to cool.

Store in an airtight container.



Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the boxes. Then write those letters on the correct numbered lines below to complete 1 John 4:16 (NIV).

- A place to live

--	--	--	--	--

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
- Opposite of dark

--	--	--	--	--

6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	----
- Companion

--	--	--	--	--	--

11	12	13	14	15	16
----	----	----	----	----	----
- Hand greeting

--	--	--	--

17	18	19	20
----	----	----	----
- Male adult

--	--	--

21	22	23
----	----	----



8
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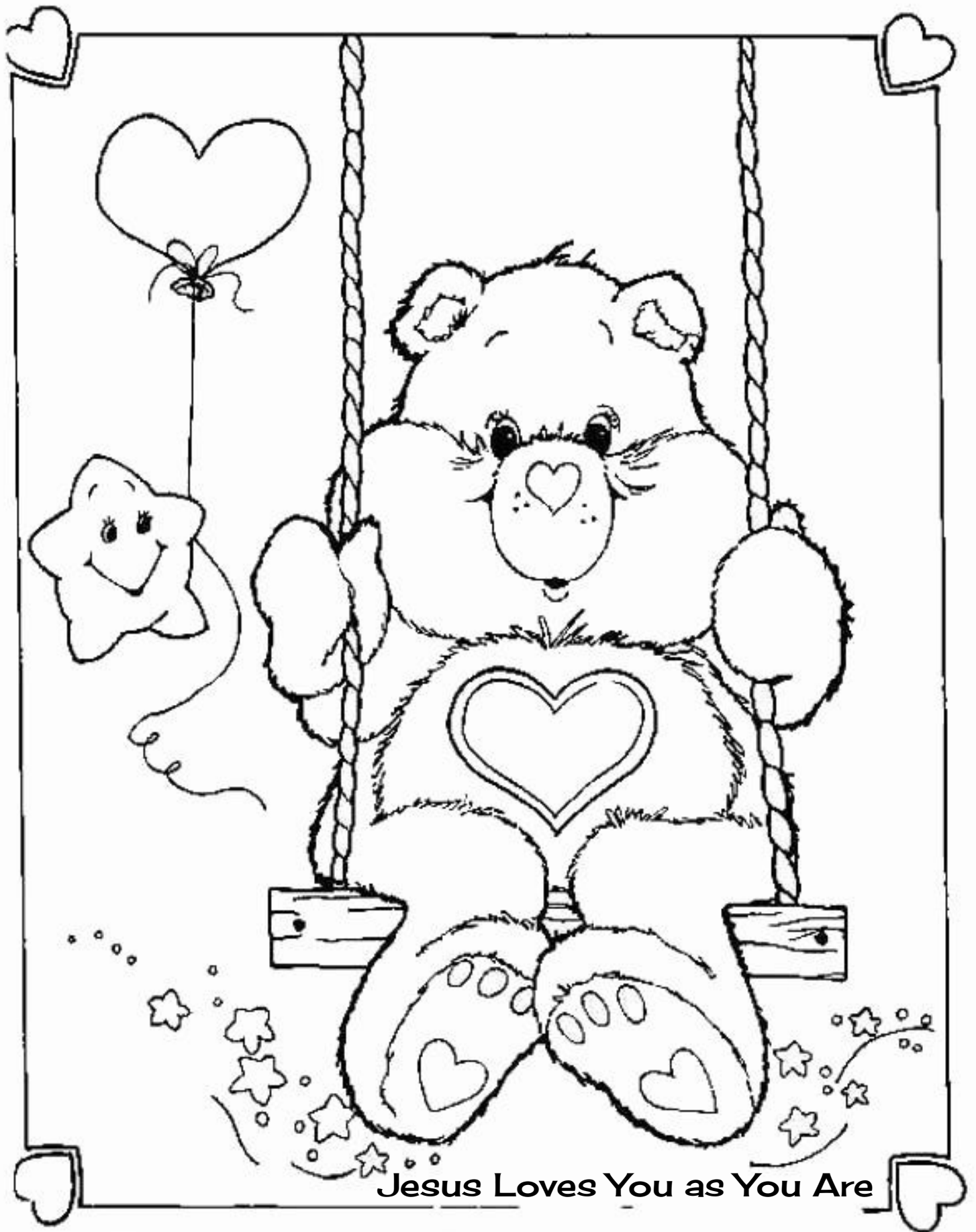
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14
21

1 John 4:16, NIV

Answers: house, light, friend, wave, man; God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 1 John 4:16, NIV



Jesus Loves You as You Are

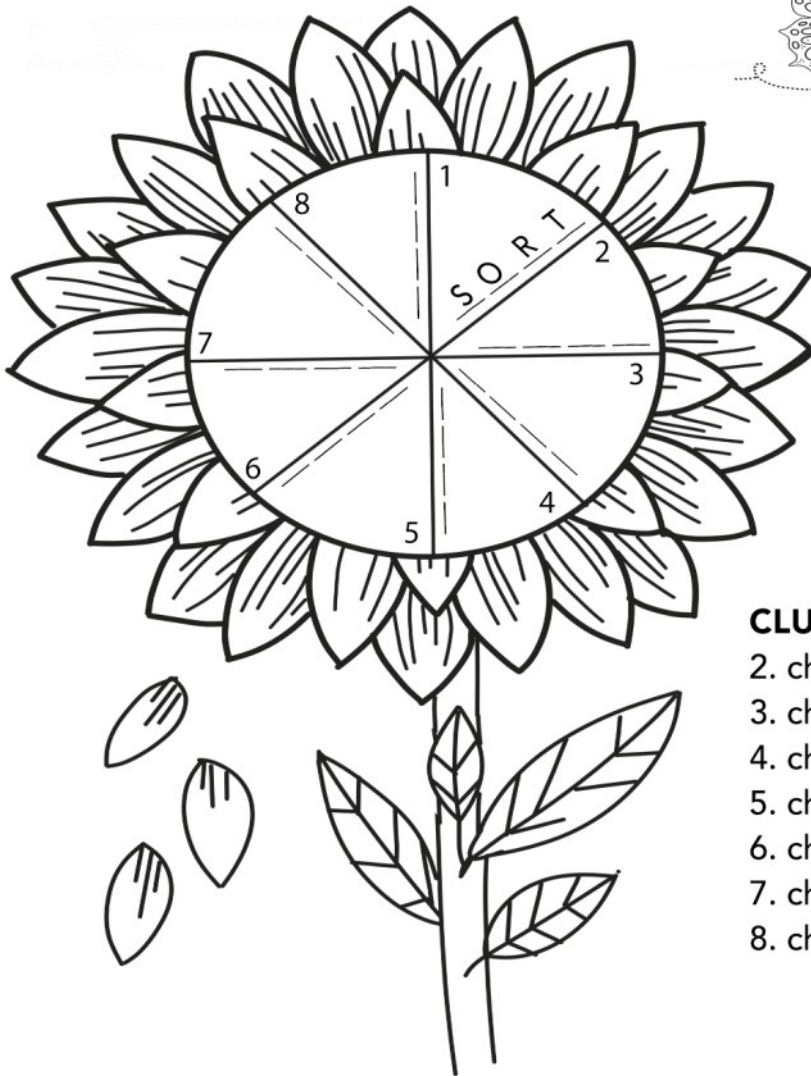
PUZZLE



THE LOVE CYCLE

In 1 John 4, God instructs us to love other people. Where does our love come from?

Directions: Starting at #1 and going clockwise, solve each clue to create a new four-letter word. Then write the eighth word in both blanks below to complete 1 John 4:19, NIV.



We _____
because [God] first
_____d us.

1 John 4:19, NIV

CLUES

2. change 1 letter: a tent to play in
3. change 2 letters: a crease in paper
4. change 1 letter: a precious metal
5. change 2 letters: a beautiful dress
6. change 1 letter: opposite of up
7. change 2 letters: a type of bird
8. change 1 letter: God is this
(see 1 John 4:16).

Answers: fort, fold, gold, gown, down, dove, love; We love because [God] first loved us. 1 John 4:19, NIV

The calendar is a large, stylized number '40' divided into 40 numbered segments. At the top, there are illustrations of the Crucifixion, a chalice, and the Resurrection. The central text reads '40 DAYS OF LENT'. The calendar includes specific days like Ash Wednesday, the four Sundays, and Holy Week. Religious symbols like the fish and the cross are placed in various segments.

40 DAYS OF LENT

1 ASH WEDNESDAY
 2
 3
 4 1ST SUNDAY
 5
 6
 7
 8
 9
 10 2ND SUNDAY
 11
 12
 13
 14
 15
 16
 17 3RD SUNDAY
 18
 19
 20
 21
 22
 23 4TH SUNDAY
 24
 25
 26
 27
 28 5TH SUNDAY
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34 PALM SUNDAY
 35
 36
 37
 38 HOLY THURSDAY
 39 GOOD FRIDAY
 40 HOLY SATURDAY
 EASTER SUNDAY !!

Puzzle!



Fill in the blanks with the tiny creatures mentioned in each verse (all NIV). Then search for those words in the puzzle below.

Proverbs 6:6

Psalm 78:45

Matthew 23:24

Judges 14:8b

Acts 12:23

Leviticus 11:22

Leviticus 11:22

Deuteronomy 7:20

Exodus 16:20

1 Samuel 24:14

Isaiah 50:9

Isaiah 59:5

Leviticus 11:22

Leviticus 11:22

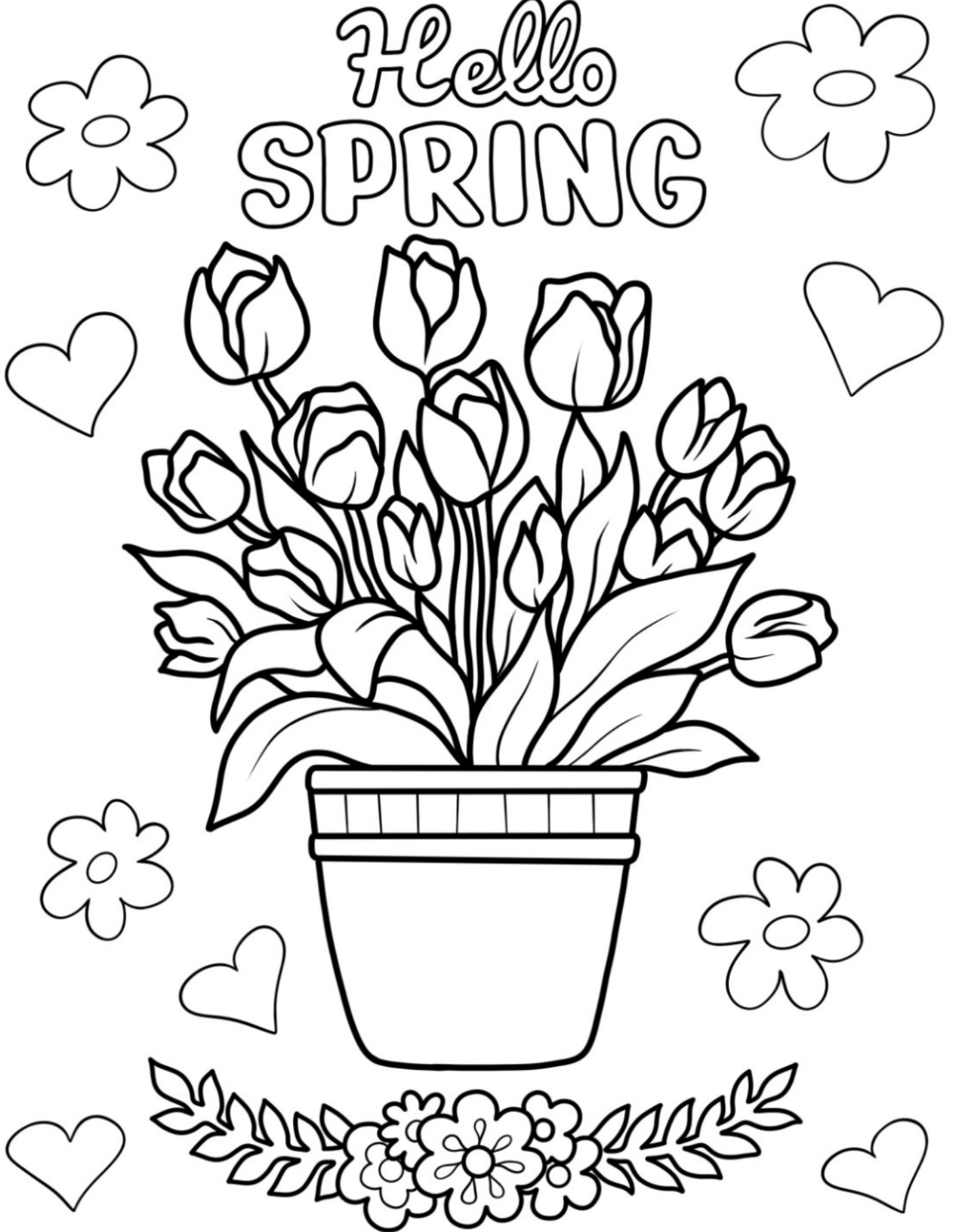


M	O	T	H	S	G	N	A	T	B	H
A	N	T	A	L	L	C	H	P	E	O
G	R	A	S	S	H	O	P	P	E	R
G	F	C	R	I	C	K	E	T	S	N
O	L	S	P	I	D	E	R	S	B	E
T	E	C	L	O	C	U	S	T	D	T
S	A	E	F	K	A	T	Y	D	I	D
G	F	L	I	E	S	W	O	R	M	S



Answers: ant, flies, gnat, bees, worms, locust, grasshopper, hornet, maggots, flea, moths, spider, katydid, cricket

Hello SPRING



**GRACE
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REFORMED CHURCH**

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gracechurch@gccrc.org
www.gccrc.org

This newsletter is a publication of Grace Community Church. Contributions to the newsletter are welcome and will be considered for publication provided they are one page and are within the guidelines and tone of this newsletter.

If you have any questions concerning this newsletter, please contact:
Barb Wassenaar
708.636.2848
gracechurch@gccrc.org

Contributions for the April / May 2025 issue are due no later than March 15, 2025.

Grace Community Church

Called to be a community of externally focused people who foster authentic, grace filled relationships.



Our Values

Care is expressed in being open and accepting, in being non-judgmental and respectful, and in welcoming people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. We continue to learn to be authentic in our caring by being honest about the ways our brokenness takes shape. In humility, we treat others with respect and integrity, as we would want to be treated.

Compounding recognizes that God's grace is fruitful; it brings deep change and growth in our life. As we follow Jesus, God multiplies our efforts into something more than we can ask or imagine. God multiplies our efforts of acceptance and care for people outside our circles of relationships. We will be enriched by others because we can see God at work in them.

Cultivating is the act of building others up, encouraging each other to share God's gifts. Each person matters. We are not passive. We foster personal responsibility for spiritual growth. In our worship and life together, members are welcomed to participate freely. Filled with the Spirit, we all grow as participants share what God is doing in their life.

Connecting to God through Scripture and prayer. We want to see clearly what God is saying to us in the Bible, enabling us to live freely for God. In worship, we connect our story with God's story. We respond to God in ways that show how the truth of the Bible fits into our life. We pray together, believing that all growth is the result of God's work.

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