

GRACE NOTES

December 2020



Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

through

-  Meaningful
Worship
-  Caring
Community
-  Inspirational
Learning
-  Loving
Service
-  Gracious
Invitation

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A Note FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Saints of Grace:



As the sun seems to fade or even fail us in this season, we Christians are excited—yes, EXCITED-- by a whisper of promise, a flicker of light. A light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

I suspect that everyone's favorite part of our usual Christmas Eve service is when we share the light from the Christ candle and stand in the glow of many candles as we sing, "Silent Night, Holy Night." We won't be doing that this year. Instead we will be "gathering differently" to celebrate Christ's birth. In our own homes. I hope with our own candles.

How many of you have advent wreaths? Remember those? They hold four Advent candles (some deluxe models include a "Christ candle in the middle). If you have one, I would like to encourage you to set it up for our month-long approach to Christmas aka Advent. On all four WEDNESDAYS in Advent, (Dec. 2,9,16 and 23, we will gather by Zoom to celebrate Advent Evening Prayer featuring the beloved Holden Evening Prayer setting, sung by our own Susan Nelson and other Grace members. Tune in and be prepared to light a new candle on your advent wreath each week. If you don't have an advent wreath, there are many simple designs available on-line. Or you could just gather four candles together—they don't even need to match!

In the midst of the winter darkness, we will "gather" to watch the light grow brighter and brighter each week until the Light of the World shows up, not in a flash of fire and light, but wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven." His command to us: BE LIGHT!

In Christ's love, joy, peace, hope AND LIGHT!
Pastor Daniel Schwick

Music NOTES

Dear friends of Grace:

I can't believe that it's been since March that I've seen most of your faces in person!

In the now almost 5 years that I've been at Grace, one of the things that I value is the hearty singing of our congregation, a Lutheran tradition that continues with the work of our choir, our organist and the sung liturgy of our members. I remember receiving so

many compliments about what the choir sang that morning, which would frequently be followed by, “but I can’t carry a tune in a bucket!” I knew this wasn’t true, because I could hear all of your glorious voices from up in the loft every Sunday morning. I know the times are different now as you are listening to me singing from my living room to your living room, mostly alone, but we are still making music together from afar.

As this has been a difficult time for all of us, I really appreciate all of the work of you all as fellow members of the body of Christ. The continual financial support of the music ministry, even if it’s only from home, means so much to me. I’m working on a special Advent and Christmas project for all of you right now and I hope that it brings a little bit of joy into your lives during the darkest time of the year, but one that is followed by the coming of the light of Christ.

Love to all of you from my Lincoln Square apartment! Looking forward to the day that we can safely commune with one another back in the sanctuary!

Susan

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Zoom Worship Service: Join us on Sundays at 10am for worship.

THE ALL GRACE ALL THE TIME CONNECTION INFORMATION IS:

**Grace Lutheran Church, Mount Prospect
All worship services, Bible Study and Meetings**

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86543729643> Meeting ID: 865 4372 9643

One tap mobile: +13126266799, 86543729643#

Dial (audio connection only) +1 312 626 6799 Meeting ID: 865 4372 9643

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Zoom Christmas Party for Grace Youth (6th Grade through high school) and Young Adults (18-25). Ice breakers, Trivia and other fun. “Bring” a gift to give away. Tuesday, December 15, 7:00-8:00pm.

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86543729643> Meeting ID: 865 4372 9643

Intergenerational Buddy System: Would you like to have a pen pal, an email or phone buddy? We're trying to set up an Intergenerational Buddy System. If you're interested in participating, please contact the church office. Let us know if you'd like to write letters, write emails, or phone your buddy. Please think it over and give this idea a try. You won't have to wear a mask to participate.

Christmas Cards: At this time of year we usually put up a list of names for people to deliver Christmas gifts to our homebound members. Since we can't have any posters up with lists and no people in the building, why not think of someone in the congregation who would enjoy a greeting. Scan through your directory and find a few friends you haven't talked to in a while and send them cards. Wish them a Merry Christmas.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Sunday Morning Zoom Readers: Pam Walger is working on a new schedule,. If you would like to be added to the list, please contact Pam Walger at 847-827-7431 to be added.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Outreach*

La Trinidad Community Dinners: Grace will be delivering food that will be packaged by members of La Trinidad for guests to pick up. If you would like to donate funds to help cover that cost of this food, please send your donations to church and mark it for La Trinidad. Future dates are December 13 and January 10, 2021. Your support is appreciated.

La Trinidad Wish List: La Trinidad is asking for new or gently used men's hoodies, sweaters or jackets. They can be dropped off at church in the mornings while the building is open. Thank you for your support.

The Giving Tree: The Social Ministry Committee has been in contact with Districts 21 and 26 and La Trinidad about Christmas gifts. Both school districts are struggling with getting students back into the classroom and have not given much thought to gifts for the children. The school districts are asking for monetary donations so families can be given \$25 gift cards to Walmart that sell both toys and food. In order to fulfill this request, the committee is asking for monetary donations which will go towards Walmart

gift cards.. Please make your donation to church and mark it Christmas gifts. We will need the donations by December 14th

Mallternative; Soon the Christmas season will be upon us, which means it is time for Mallternative once again. Please consider buying a gift in honor of a friend or relative. Make your check payable to church and list on it or on a separate piece of paper which gift(s) you would like to purchase. This year's list is:

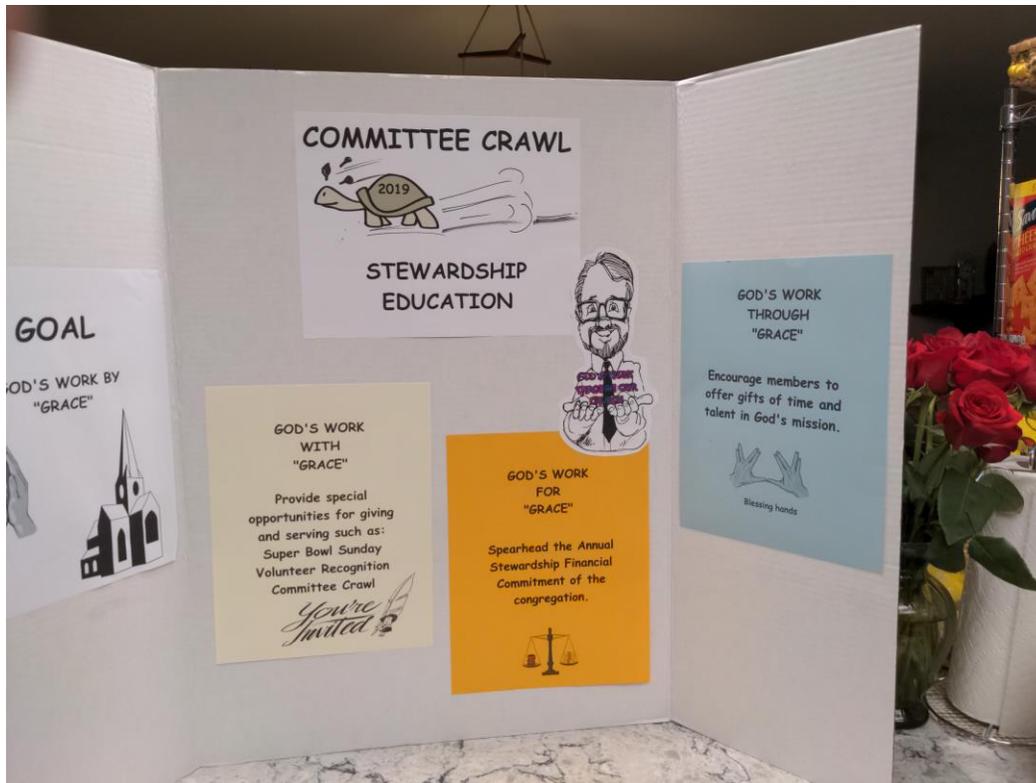
- Chicks \$10
- Hives of Honeybees \$20
- Piglet \$30
- Goat \$50
- School supplies for a child \$10
- Send a girl to school \$40
- Soap and sanitation supplies \$25
- Personal protective equipment \$25
- Food for orphans and vulnerable children \$25
- Feed a refugee family for a week \$50
- Ten warm meals at a soup kitchen \$20

This is a wonderful way to share the bounty of our lives with those who are less fortunate. What better way to celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Food Pantries: The needs of the pantries are changing as we continue to struggle through Covid-19. To make things easier, we are asking that you send monetary donations to church, marking it for the food pantry, and the Social Ministry Committee will purchase gift cards to deliver to the food pantries that we support. Thank you for your generosity.

AROUND *the Parish*

Showcasing Grace's Committees: The Stewardship Education Committee will be showcasing the various committees and groups at Grace each month in the *Grace Notes*, beginning this month. We are building on the Committee Crawl event that we sponsored in September 2019. These showcase articles will include how the committees and groups have had to adapt to the pandemic experience. In this issue, we are showcasing ourselves. (Please see the showcasing article and poster from the Committee Crawl). We hope that you enjoy learning more about the ongoing work being done by Grace members.



Stewardship Education Committee

1. The Stewardship Education Committee was reformed in February 2019. The role of the Committee is to encourage members to financially support the work of the congregation and be involved in service to the church and wider community.
2. The Committee responsibilities include: spearheading the annual stewardship emphasis toward members' financial commitment to God's work through the church; encouraging members to offer gifts of time and talent in God's mission through the church; and providing special opportunities for giving and serving.
3. The Committee sponsored the Committee Crawl in September, 2019 and gave a temple talk related to pledging in October 2019. The Committee recently sent a letter to members thanking them for their continued support through this pandemic.
4. The pandemic has impacted the Committee, just as it has impacted everything else. We had been having discussions with a company that has developed a comprehensive stewardship program for churches, which we had hoped to implement this past spring. That has been put on hold indefinitely.
5. We invite you to join the Stewardship Education Committee. If you would rather just participate in some of the activities we hope to have, we would welcome your contributions.

6. Our meetings have been scheduled as needed, both pre-pandemic and now. Since the pandemic began, we have met via zoom and once outdoors at a member's home (wearing masks and maintaining social distance).

7. Please feel free to contact any Committee member with questions. We are: Lynn Sivertsen (224-347-5104), Chris Rogers (847-827-0929), Pete Varley (224- 808-2071), Margit Willis (312-607-2684), and Cynthia Lauletta (847-917-3636).

FINANCIAL *Report*

Financial Report ending October 31, 2020

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$ 244,500	\$ 227,149	\$ (17,351)
Special Income	31,700	18,626	(13,074)
Prepaid Income	9,102	14,852	5,750
Total Income	\$ 285,302	\$ 260,627	\$ (24,675)
Expenses thru October	298,444	274,566	
Current Year Surplus or (Deficit)		\$ (13,939)	
<i>2019 Operating Surplus Carryover</i>		<i>40,001</i>	
Remaining Surplus		\$ 28,062	

God is Great! God is Good! Let us thank Him for all He has provided to us, Let us thank Him for continuing to provide as He always does. He is present at all times, even in this time of a pandemic. Trust in Him.

Thank you all for your continuing support of Grace.

Notes of THANKS

Hi, I just wanted to give a thank you to you and the rest of the scholarship committee and church council for the scholarship that you all have trusted in my hands. I appreciate the contribution greatly in this period of high college tuition. If you could extend my gratitude to the scholarship committee in particular that would be much appreciated. Thank you. Jack Dietrich

Grace Family, On behalf of Bishop Curry and the Metro Chicago Synod!

Thank you for the faithful and generous sharing of benevolence by your congregation. The Synod acknowledges receipt of your September giving. Benevolence is one way we are church together, It's essential to who we are as the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. Thank you for your continued partnership in God's mission.

Blessings, Heather

Dear Grace Lutheran, Thank you for your gift of \$120.00 to ELCA World Hunger.

As a church, we believe that God's grace is freely given to us. This brings us peace and hope. It makes a difference in our lives. Through your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, you are sharing this amazing grace with others. You are helping people around the world feel the transformational power of God's love.

Your generosity is getting at the root causes of hunger and poverty in over 60 countries including the United States. It is providing access to clean water, health care, agriculture, livestock, education, and peace and justice. Through your gifts, you are joining with the whole church as we work toward a just world where all are fed.

Thank you for your gracious gifts. The glory of God is shining through you.

In Christ, the Rev. Robin Brown, Mission Funding Director, Congregations

Dear Grace, Thank you for all the goodies from church. Now I have so many yummy snacks.

Thanks again. Samantha Nickl

Hi! Thank you so much for the Halloween candy and for thinking of me! I have been enjoying it throughout the past week! I can't wait to see everyone soon whether it is over zoom or in person!

Thanks again. Danielle Drelicharz

THANK YOU to all the folks at Grace who sent the great cards. It's so nice to get that kind of mail. Thank you again! Phyllis Begun

Dear Ms. Reimann: I hope you and your family are doing well. I wanted to reach out to you to thank you and Grace Lutheran Church for the school supplies you donated to District 21. The school supplies you provided helped us support our students and staff as they adapt to a new way of doing things in 2020. We are so incredibly grateful and appreciative for your support of our students, families, staff and district.

As we continue to be challenged by the pandemic, the school supplies you provided helped us to make sure our students and staff are ready to take on this school year. The headphones you donated were essential for our students to have privacy while participating remotely for their lessons. The extra school supplies and backpacks provided much needed support to our families who are currently in temporary housing and are struggling to make ends meet. Finally, your whiteboard donations were able to assist many of our students in the home settings as they work hard to continue to learn and grow. Many parents voiced their gratitude as backpacks with school supplies, headphones, and whiteboards were delivered and distributed. Due to your generosity, we were able to ease a burden for our families during this time.

Thank you again on behalf of the students and staff. I can confidently say that the students, parents and staff of District 21 are forever grateful for your generosity. I look forward to hearing from you again, Have a wonderful school year!

Sincerely, Lauren Schmidt, Social Worker

Community Consolidated School District 21

Super Grateful: A thank you text from Euclid School for the earbuds and microphones that Grace donated to them at the beginning of the school year.

Birthday LIST

December

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---------------------------------|
| 2 | Allison Gharagozlou | 14 | Kari Willis
Jennifer Roth |
| 4 | Linda Pettingill
Joanne Schulze | 19 | Mark Loeb |
| 6 | Colton Kochanski | 21 | Ardell Mueller |
| 8 | Barb Carlson
Linda Weiss
Daniel Garza | 22 | Carol Victor |
| 10 | Teddy Reimann | 23 | Sandy Johnson
Michael Pirron |
| 12 | Nicole Soukup | 26 | Holly Schirmer |
| 13 | Amy Pracko | 28 | Brady Bell |
| | | 29 | Veronica Grimpe |

CELEBRATIONS OF *Life*

Funerals and Memorials

We support one another in our grief through mutual support and the assurance of our faith in Christ's promise of everlasting life.

We extend our sympathy to Suzanne Buerger, Betty Dietrich and family on the death of Richard Buerger on November 15, 2020. Private services were held on November 23. A memorial service will be held at a future date.



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

1624 E. Euclid Ave.
Mount Prospect, IL 60056

Phone 847-824-7408
www.gracemtprospect.org
www.facebook.com/gracemtprospect



egation of the
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in America (ELCA)

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OUR *Mission AND Vision*

Our mission is to tell the good news of Jesus and touch people with his love.

Our vision is to joyfully praise and serve God, committed to being a church of friendship, openness and diversity.

Staff **DIRECTORY**

Pastor: Daniel Schwick
d.schwick@gracemtprospect.org

Church Secretary: Barbara Willis
b.willis@gracemtprospect.org

Director of Lay Ministry: Pam Walger
p.walger@gracemtprospect.org

Director of Music: Susan Nelson
sopranosusannelson@gmail.com

Organist:

Pre-school Director: Jaime Wright
preschool@gracemtprospect.org

Mission Partner: Rev. Carrie Smith
carrie.smith@elca.org

Grace Notes Editor: Debbie Bodett
bodettdeb@sbcglobal.net



ARTICLE *Deadline:* December 20