

GRACE NOTES

January 2017



Gifts of the Wise Kings celebrate the Epiphany of Jesus as King, God and Savior. Celebrate the gift of God's grace in Jesus as we begin the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.

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

After the Gifts have been Opened



Christmas worship music has faded. The gifts have been opened. The decorations are being put away. What is left of the celebration, joy and glitter? Well, it may take forever to get that glitter from ornaments or greeting cards off your carpet or sofa.

But you know, as much as the church is decked out and its people are moved by the Christmas message, the birth of Jesus and his gift of hope can quickly become a distant memory and fade away among the worries of the day.

There still is the day of Epiphany on January 6. Kings, or wise men, or astrological advisors known as magi are still coming to visit and worship the new king in Bethlehem. So, the season of Christmas lasts a little longer until Jesus is revealed to the whole world.



**“... the free gift of
God is eternal life in
Christ Jesus
our Lord.”**
(Romans 6:23)

We need the gift of Jesus and not Christmas gifts when reality hits in daily life. It's a good thing that God's gift of love in Jesus gives us real help. The magi clearly knew this when they offered gold, frankincense and myrrh to the infant. For these gifts reveal Jesus as our reigning King, praiseworthy God, and dying Savior.

>> Begin the New Year with a revelation that can open your mind. Get real hope and strength from the epiphany of Jesus. Jesus was born to bring God's kingdom, presence and salvation. Those are gifts that will last long after the Christmas gifts have been opened.

Grace and peace, *Pastor Stefan Munker*

MISSIONARY SUPPORT *Update*

For several years Grace had supported The Rev. Kevin Jacobson and his work in Suriname. Pastor Jacobson accepted a call to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services in Baltimore. Starting January first, we will be sponsoring The Rev. Carrie Ballenger Smith in Palestine. Pastor Carrie serves as pastor of the English-speaking congregation of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem's Old City. She also serves as special assistant to Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). Additional information on Pastor Carrie is posted on the Social Ministry bulletin board by the north entryway.

500 YEARS *and Counting*

Celebrating Reformation by Grace in 2017

In 1517, the church was renewed by God's grace when Martin Luther asked for the discussion of reforms based on the good news of Jesus. Now 500 years later we still celebrate and participate in God's renewal of the world through our celebration and witness to grace. Grace is the gift of Jesus' love which makes us free to live a new life in abundance through faith.



Throughout the coming year, we will commemorate the 500th anniversary of Luther's reformation, and renew our church's contribution to sharing the good news of God's grace. Under the central theme of "*Renewed by Grace*" experiences will include Reformation movies, studies of Luther's writings, outreach activities, music events, special worship and more.

- >> On January 16, at 7:00pm we will show the feature movie "Luther" with Joseph Fiennes in the starring role. Learn how a German monk changed history by rediscovering the good news of Jesus and standing up against the powers of church and state.
- >> Watch a new TV special "Luther and the Reformation" by Rick Steves on Thursday, January 26, 8:00pm on WTTW (PBS). ELCA member and travel personality Rick Steves sheds light on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation by visiting key sites.

PRAY FOR *Christian Unity*

Compelled by Christ's Reconciliation

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an international Christian ecumenical observance kept annually between January 18 and January 25.

This year, with the commemoration of the 500-year anniversary of the Reformation, the theme invites us to pray the prayer of Jesus "that all be one." (John 17:21)



The "love of Christ compels us" (2 Corinthians 5:14) to seek reconciliation among diverse faith traditions of the Christian church.

- >> On Sunday, January 22, our worship will prayerfully emphasize the theme of Christ's reconciling gift of grace, and materials for individual prayer on the theme will be made available before the beginning of the week.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

New Year's Day: On the 2nd Sunday of Christmas, January 1, we will gather only at 10:00am for worship as we begin the New Year and celebrate the Epiphany of Jesus.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Coming in 2017: Grace Lutheran's 1st indoor 9- hole Golf Tournament. Would you like to use your God given talent and construct a putting green hole? The groundwork is laid. I am looking to put that extra effort to make the course really awesome. If interested, call Barb Nagle 847/800-6674 or email bnagle273@gmail.com for details. Have any golf putters? Please consider sharing for an evening. The date will be determined in February or March.

Friendship Group: We will meet on January 25, 2017 at 12:30pm. Watch the pink sheet for program details.

Mark your Calendars: Our Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday, February 5.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

Life of Purpose Group: Learn about God's plan for your life and find support for fulfilling your 5 purposes. Currently, we are focusing on "Your Life's Mission". We will meet again Tuesday, January 3 at 2:00pm.

Luther Movie: We will show the feature movie "Luther" at Grace on January 16 at 7:00pm.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

"Unhanging of the Greens:" Save the Date – Saturday, January 7, 2017 at 9:00am. Come help us take down the Christmas decorations.

Coffee Servers: We would like some new people to consider signing up to serve coffee on Sunday mornings between services. We all enjoy the fellowship during this time. Why not offer to serve the treats. Let Pam Walger or Barb Willis know if you'd like to volunteer.

Offering Counters Needed: The Finance Committee is looking for a few volunteers to become offering counters. Please consider being a part of a counting team. If you would like to volunteer or receive more information on the process please contact Jerry Sharlog at 847-253-0636.

Altar Guild: The Altar Guild is in need of some helping hands, especially for the month of January. Please speak with Betty Carlson at 847/803-9646. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Ushers Needed: We are in need of ushers for all services. Please let us know if you'd like to serve. Contact the church office at 847-824-7408.

Website Volunteers Wanted: We are in the process of redesigning and updating our website to make it even more attractive and easier to use for everyone. Please let the office know if you want to help Grace's online outreach and communication.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR Outreach

Share a Gracious Invitation: 2017 can be the year to share God's gift of grace with someone who does not have a relationship with God in the church. As we celebrate 500 years of Reformation we will offer different opportunities for inviting others to special events.

>> Why not bring your friends to watch the movie "Luther" at 7:00pm on January 16?

Valentine Care Packages: The Social Ministry Committee is collecting treats to put into the care packages for our college kids. They enjoy both sweet and salty treats. Watch for the poster and donation box in the parlor starting January 15. All donations need to be in the box by 10:00am on February 5 when the committee will pack the boxes for shipping. If you would like to donate money towards the cost of postage for the care packages, place your donation in a pink pew envelope marked "College Care Packages."

The church office will be printing labels for the packages. Please make sure that your college student's address is on file with the church office by February 1. We do not assume that last year's address is still valid. Let's make sure all our college kids get a box of goodies this year.

"Feed My Starving Children" – Our Latest Contribution: A heartfelt thank you to all of you who were able to volunteer and come out to work at the Feed My Starving Children location in Schaumburg on Tuesday, November 29th, which also happened to be Giving Tuesday throughout the United States. We had over twenty-five volunteers from Grace, and there was a good turnout of many other volunteers for that shift. We packed an amazing total of 124 boxes, totaling 26,784 meals, enough to feed 74 children for an entire year! This food is being sent to Haiti in response to the devastation they have experienced due to Hurricane Matthew.

Stay tuned to Grace Notes for news of our next packing date.

God's work. Our hands. Indeed. Submitted by Greg Linwood

FINANCIAL Update

Current year financial status thru November 30, 2016

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$264,143	\$232,597	(\$31,546)
Special Income	29,370	32,509	3,139
Prepaid Budget Income	10,699	12,460	1,761
Total Budget Income	\$304,212	\$277,566	(\$26,646)
Operating Expenses thru Nov	<u>304,206</u>	<u>283,802</u>	
Surplus or (Deficit)		(\$ 6,236)	

Again we are showing a significant improvement for the 2nd consecutive month in reducing a deficit which at the end of September had risen in excess of \$20,000 for the current year. In addition to the funds received from Salem Korean Methodist Church use of our facilities, many of you have also stepped forward to help reduce this deficit. We thank you all. With one month remaining in this year, let's see if we can eliminate the 2016 short-fall entirely.

SPECIAL NOTE: Please, if you have not made an estimate of your intended giving for year 2017, do so ASAP as it helps greatly in financial planning for the year. If you have misplaced the card you previously received, please call the church office or ask an usher at this next Sunday's services for another one. Thank You.

Notes of THANKS

Thank You: to the following who helped with the "Hanging of the Greens" on November 26: Rich Buerger, Curt & Betty Carlson, Tom Carlson, Joanne Coy, Jack & Eloise De Carlo, Mike & Sandy Drelicharz, Amy Drelicharz, Danielle Drelicharz, John Gerber, Gordon Greaves, Bill & Kendall Grimpe, Greg Linwood, Ray & Joanne McCullom, Mary Jo Menelle, Ardell Mueller, Pastor Munker, Cory Olson, Mike & Cindy Pirron, Tom & Thomas Roth, Marcia Rovani, Christine Rovani, Suzanne Rovani, Bev Storz, Jerry Sharlog, Pam Walger, Barb Willis, Margit Willis. Apologies to anyone we may have missed.

Thank you for the Halloween box. I really appreciate it! Anthony Ryan

Thank you to many helpful volunteers for the hanging of the Greens and taking down Christmas decorations. Many hands made the work lighter and our church looked beautiful.

Thank you Eileen Clark and WELCA for sharing the joy of Christmas hope, and all volunteers who delivered gifts to our homebound members!

We thank Pam Walger for the annual Friendship Group Christmas party and Susan Nelson for beautiful songs of the season.

A big thanks to everyone, especially CMT leaders, Sunday School children and Confirmation youth, who presented “This Special Night” for our Christmas program.

All the elves who prepared and put up the luminaries on Christmas Eve to light the way to Jesus, we thank you.

Generous gifts for many different needs, including kids in local schools, our youth, homebound members, and recipients of ELCA Good Gifts are gratefully acknowledged.

Pastor Munker and his wife Cindy would like to express their appreciation for the kind wishes and gifts for celebrating the hope we have because of Jesus’ birth.

Praise be to God for the blessings of our congregation and gifts for its members throughout the year. We especially ask God to bless our thank-offerings for local food pantries during the Thanksgiving Eve service, and people served through Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and PADS homeless shelters thanks to special Advent offerings.

Dear Grace Lutheran Church: Thank you for your recent gift of \$1,600.00 and for your support of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*.

We are two years in to this new journey as members of the ELCA, and already your generosity is giving us so much to celebrate and be thankful for. All involved with the campaign – our individual donors, congregations, synods, recipients and volunteers – give thanks to you for your amazing response to God’s call to do more together.

With your help, we are growing our communities of faith, forming new leaders, welcoming our neighbors, overcoming malaria, confronting hunger and poverty, accompanying our global companion churches and so much more. Your gifts make a difference.

This year, we are highlighting the amazing work of ELCA World Hunger. It is our goal to offer the world a proven response to hunger and poverty in even more communities and ways than we do now. With generous, loving hands, we work for a world in which all are fed.

On behalf of all who will benefit from your generosity, I thank you for your continued support.

Your friend in Christ, Rev. Ron Glusenkamp, Director, *The Campaign for the ELCA*

Dear Friends, We would like to thank you for your donation of eight \$25.00 Aldi gift cards to the Mount Prospect Emergency Food Pantry and Financial Assistance program. This program assists residents of Mount Prospect who are experiencing a financial hardship and struggling with every day needs such as food, housing, utilities and medications.

This program is not supported by tax dollars. Throughout the year, we are able to assist individuals and families due to generous donations made by local churches, schools, businesses, civic organizations and individuals.

Sincerely, Julie Kane, LCSW, Human Services Director

Dear Grace Lutheran Church: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come! As the dark nights grow deeper and longer, our hearts yearn and turn toward the Christ who brings new light and new life. In him, we are given the power of faith, the power of forgiveness and the power to respond to the holy presence of God in our lives. Thank you for your gift of \$150.00 to Lutheran Disaster Response.

With your gift, you are walking alongside those in deepest need, bringing hope and healing. Thank you. With your gift, you are providing care, concern and essential supplies. Thank you. With your gift you are helping the most vulnerable men, women and children rebuild and reshape their lives. Thank you.

May new light and new life be yours this Advent and Christmas season, and thank you again for your generous gift to Lutheran Disaster Response. With gratitude for your partnership in this ministry. The Rev. Daniel Rift, Director, ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal

Dear Friends at Grace Lutheran Church: We gratefully acknowledge your recent donation of food and Aldi gift cards to Northwest Compass, Inc. Your contribution enables us to provide families access to core safety-net programs. These programs provide families with necessary support during times of hardship. Your contribution benefits your neighbors in the Northwest Suburbs as they navigate through difficult times. Our mission is to enhance our community by providing supportive services, education and empowerment which foster personal responsibility for those who are vulnerable or in crisis.

On behalf of Northwest Compass and our neighbors who we serve, thank you for your generous gift. You have made a difference in the lives of many families who will be able to turn a crisis into an opportunity. Thank you!

Sincerely, LeRoy Messenger, Chief Executive Officer. Northwest Compass, Inc.

Dear Grace Lutheran Church: Thank you for your incredibly generous donation of school supplies. I know how much your donations have assisted and benefited our students this year and in past years.

Since the start of the school year, our families have continuously commented on how thankful they were to receive the school supplies that you generously donated. Many of the students often start the school year without materials and it was so wonderful to be able to provide them with supplies. Our families and teachers were so thankful to be able to give students materials for the first day of school. We also distributed your donations to the staff to use in schools for projects.

Our parents, students, administrators, staff and teachers are incredibly thankful for your generosity and kindness. Our students will continue to benefit throughout the year from your donations.

Your donations are items that will be used in the schools so please keep us in mind for next year. I hope you have a wonderful year. Thank you again on behalf of the students and staff.

Naomi Rubin, Community Consolidated School District 21 Social Worker

SPECIAL Events

- ***New Year's Day Worship:*** Sunday, January 1, 2017 at 10:00am.
- ***Life of Purpose Group:*** Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 2:00pm.
- ***"Unhanging of the Greens:"*** Saturday, January 7, 2017 at 9:00am.
- ***Luther Movie:*** Monday, January 16. 2017 at 7:00pm.
- ***Friendship Group:*** Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 12:30pm.



Birthday LIST

January

3	Don Linder	18	Barbara Nagle Matt Menelle
4	Greg Linwood Janet Bouris		Oliver Mejia Sofie Young
5	Rebecca Trsar	19	Jeanne Weidner Joan Budruweit
7	Jake Altmayer		Bernadette Dalton
9	Susanna Harty	20	Molly Mejia
10	Ryoko Howell Presley Grimpe	21	Paul Kjeldbjerg Marilyn Behnke
11	Heather Polfuss	24	Julie Walger Elisa Kjeldbjerg
12	Loretta Horigan Anita Taylor Sally Riordan	25	Judith Bataille Katie Dewar
13	Eric Adams	26	Lori Drozd
14	Ann Gartner	28	Virginia Mock Alec Garza
15	Stephen Carlson		
16	Robert Holzer	31	Harmon Loeb Judy Peltekian

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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 June Brickwood and family on the death of her son-in-law, former Grace member, Tom Wendlandt on December 6, 2017.



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A congregation 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.

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ARTICLE *Deadline:* January 15