

GRACE NOTES

November 2016



Entitlement says, you deserve it. Gratitude says, it's a gift. We believe that God graciously gives us everything in this world. There is nothing we could do to earn our life, possessions and joys. We follow Jesus with gratitude for God's blessings..

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

Attitude of Gratitude



Are you someone who has downsized, or is thinking seriously about it? Or are you someone among us who has more stuff than you need, and wishes you knew where to put everything? **Let's be honest, most of us definitely have enough.** And in this country in general we certainly have more than most people around the world.

How is it then that so many of us just are not very happy? Why are we getting more and more stuff? When will we have enough to be content?

From conversations I have had with other members of Grace like you, my guess is that **we simply think we will not be happy unless we have everything we want.** And yet we forget that one cannot buy happiness.



“And be thankful”
(Colossians 3:15c)

This past fall, we learned that our purpose comes from God, and that we experience fulfillment when we live for God instead of our ambitions. Ambitions in themselves are not bad, but most of the time we focus them on the wrong things. When we turn our focus on what is good in God's wisdom, we will recognize that our lives can be rich with faith hope and love regardless of our circumstances.

>> Reflect on God's blessings in your life. You may experience difficulties and have unmet needs, and yet, there is always something to thank God for and to celebrate. Follow Jesus with gratitude to belong to the Saints, and to be gifted in many material or immaterial ways.

Yours gratefully, *Pastor Stefan Munker*

Funeral AND Memorial SERVICES

Support in Grief and Celebration of Life

When someone dies the church is a source of compassion and encouragement through the community of faith and care. We support one another in grief and remind each other of our hope in Christ's promise of the resurrection of the dead and reunion with them in the company of all the saints.

† If death can be anticipated the pastor should be made aware when time comes close, so an opportunity for accompaniment and closure through practices of faith can be provided to the dying person and loved ones.



- † When a death has occurred, please notify the church office and pastor as soon as possible, before making arrangements with a funeral home or other places, in order to check availability of date and time for a funeral or memorial service.

It is a good idea to prepare for one's own death and celebration of eternal life by giving thought and discussing with other family members what might be meaningful to you.

- >> *A guide to "Funeral Preparation Information" is on our website, or ask to speak with Pastor Munker.*

Consecration SUNDAY

Commitment of Support for Grace

All members of Grace are invited to join for our annual Consecration Sunday on November 13. With the dedication of our pledges to God we express our commitment to support God's mission through our congregation's ministries of worship, learning, fellowship, service and invitation.



An "Estimated Giving" pledge card will be provided to indicate the amount of financial offering, and a "Time and Talent" form will be included so that you may indicate those areas for which you are willing to volunteer in the coming year. In our worship we will consecrate your commitments, and invite you to place them on the altar at the conclusion of the service.

- >> *If you are unable to attend on Consecration Sunday, we hope you will mail your commitments, place them in the offering, or bring them to the office later in the month.*

CONSIDER *Simply Giving*

Electronic Funds Transfer for Offerings

Have you considered to have your offerings drawn from your bank account as you do other monthly drafts? The Simply Giving program endorsed by Thrivent Financial Bank is for people who wish to have offerings transferred electronically to Grace's church's account. It's simple. It is convenient to you. And it helps our congregation.

There are several benefits to you and the church. There is no cost to you and the church will receive your gifts regularly without need to count cash or checks. You can choose the frequency of giving, and adjust the amount at any time. You



can still use envelopes for the offering plates in worship by marking them “Simply Giving” or “EFT”.

>> To begin using the EFT Simply Giving program for your offering contact the church office to request an enrollment form.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Remember All the Saints: On Sunday, November 6, we will again remember the saints from our congregation who have joined the church triumphant in God’s presence, and give thanks for all the saints past, present and future who are giving a witness to our Christian faith in eternal life with God.

Consecration Celebration: On November 13, join us in worship for the grateful dedication of our commitments to support our congregation’s mission and ministries.

Thanksgiving Eve Service: On the evening before the Thanksgiving holiday we gather gratefully to “Count our Blessings” at a special 7:00pm service on Wednesday, November 23. Bring food donations for the offering. A time for fellowship with light refreshments follows after worship.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

November Friendship Group Meeting: November 16, 2016 at 12:30pm. - Program to be announced - stay tuned.

Mail Holiday Wishes: Please share Thanksgiving blessings by sending a card to those on our list of homebound members and "Just Because Friends". They will be cheered when receiving your greetings. An updated list of their names and addresses can be found on the poster with the large pumpkin.

Birthday Card Shower: To distinguish our members who are 90 or better we ask the congregation to shower them with birthday wishes (cards or postcards) to brighten their day. Judy Holbrook will celebrate her 93rd birthday on November 11th. Please shower her with wishes at Brookdale, 800 S. River Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JUDY!

Jayne’s Christmas Cookie Walk: Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 18 for the annual cookie walk. Donations are welcome. Please bring your favorite holiday treat to church by 9am that Sunday. All proceeds from the free will offering will be donated to the Grace Youth Program in memory of Jayne Boom.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

Rich: With all the advertising it can make you feel like what you have is not enough. But maybe what we have is enough; maybe it’s more than enough. What if we are not

deprived but rich? Watch a thought provoking video and engage in biblical faith reflection about God's blessings. Join Pastor Munker on Wednesday, November 16, at 1:30-3pm or 7-8:30pm.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Bake for the Thanksgiving Eve Service: Volunteer to bake cookies to be served after the 7:00pm Thanksgiving Eve Worship service on Wednesday, November 23rd. Please let Pam Walger know if you will be baking.

Save the Date: November 26, 2016 at 9:00am for the "Hanging of the Greens."

Offering Counters Needed: A few new volunteers are wanted to become offering counters. Please consider being a part of a counter team. If you would like to volunteer or receive more information on the process please contact Jerry Sharlog at 847-253-0636.

Website Volunteers Wanted: We need new webmasters. Are you interested in helping set up a redesigned and user friendly website for our church? Would you help keep it up to date? Can you post special announcements, or enhance its appeal? Please let the office know if you want to help Grace's online outreach and communication.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Outreach*

Invite a Friend to Worship: Our special Thanksgiving Eve service is a great opportunity to ask someone to join you for worship at Grace at 7:00pm on November 23. It can be a way to bring unchurched friends to worship. You can also invite others whose church may not offer a service for the holiday.

Turkeys for La Trinidad: The Social Ministry Committee is collecting frozen turkeys (14-16 pounds), or the money to buy them, for La Iglesia Luterana de La Trinidad in the Humboldt Park area of Chicago. Please bring your turkey to church by Sunday, November 13 or place a donation in a pink pew envelope marked TURKEYS in the offering plate by November 13th. The Committee will purchase the turkeys and deliver them to La Trinidad on Monday, November 14th. Your donations to this project are greatly appreciated.

The Giving Tree: A Grace tradition of collecting Christmas gifts for children in need begins on Thanksgiving Eve. Gift tags with the gender and age of the child in either School District 21 or School District 26 will be available. New, wrapped gifts of approximately \$15 should be brought to church by Sunday, December 4th and placed under the tree in the East entryway. Toys or games are especially welcomed. All other necessary details can be found on the tags. On Sunday, November 27th any tags not picked up on Thanksgiving Eve will be available on the tree in the East entryway.

On Sunday, December 4th tags for hats, mittens and gloves for La Trinidad will be on the tree. Items for men, women and children are needed. Unwrapped items should be brought to church by December 18th in time for Christmas delivery.

Thanks for your continuing support of this special holiday Social Ministry Committee project.

Bring a Non-Perishable Food Item to Church on Thanksgiving Eve: The food brought to church for this service will be delivered to a food pantry in our area. Please remember those less fortunate during this season and throughout the year.

“Feed My Starving Children” – Our Next Group “Appointment” Our next chance to go as a group from Grace to the Schaumburg location of Feed My Starving Children, 1072 National Parkway, to pack “Mannapacks” will be Tuesday, November 29th, from 6 p.m. to 7:30pm. There are thirty-three spots reserved for our group.

Sign-up sheets will be available starting Sunday, November 13th. But, if you want to reserve your spot right away, access the website www.fmssc.org and follow the prompts to “join” the group named Grace Lutheran Church (group leader Greg Linwood). Or, another way of volunteering now is to contact me directly, at either 847-502-7744, or via e-mail at gregorylinwood@sbcglobal.net, and I will add you to our group.

In addition, for those of you unable to pack that evening, or even for those of you that can, as we have for our recent outings, we will make it possible for you to donate to cover the expenses of the supplies used to provide the meals. Feed My Starving Children doesn’t get any government grants and none of the food they use is donated – they rely on individual donations. The cost of the food we pack on each of these outings is usually between \$2,000 and \$3,000! You can donate by stopping by the sign-up table, starting November 13th, or by seeing me directly at any time.

Mallternative: Soon the Christmas season will be upon us, which means it is time for Mallternative once again. Please consider buying one of the gifts listed below in honor of a friend or relative. This year you can purchase the ever popular farm animals, provide health supplies, help refugees, or help the less fortunate right here in the United States.

Don’t worry. After you buy one of these gifts, your friend won’t have to worry about taking care of a pig or sleeping under a mosquito net! Instead the gift will go to someone in need in an underdeveloped country, and your friend will receive a card saying that you gave a gift in his or her honor. It 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?

Animals

1 Goat \$50

1 Pig	\$30
1 Hive of honey bees	\$20
10 chicks	\$10

Help for those at home who need it

One week of basic necessities for a family	\$50
Feed 10 people at a soup kitchen	\$20
Stock a backpack with food	\$10

Health

Stock a health clinic	\$75
Vaccinations for a child	\$30
Mosquito net	\$10

Assistance to Refugees

Feed a refugee family for a week	\$50
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Order forms will be in the Church bulletins after Thanksgiving. Orders will be accepted December 4th and December 11th.

PADS Volunteers: PADS especially needs help from male volunteers at the PADS site at St. Mark’s church on Tuesday mornings once a month between the hours of 6:00-7:15am. If you have questions about this opportunity please contact PADS volunteer Cory Olson at 847-909-5509. Or contact Donna Rusk at 847-400-4589.

Shop for the Food Pantry: Here are some new food pantry ideas: Cans of tuna, chili, Spam, stew, corn, green beans, peaches, pears, spaghetti sauce, chicken noodle/or rice soup, vegetable or vegetable beef soup, Spaghetti O’s, or pork & beans. Boxes of Tuna Helper, macaroni & cheese, boxed potato mixes, toilet paper, dish soap, laundry soap, hand soap, cookies, Kleenex, crackers, cake mix, frosting and birthday candles. Thanks for your generosity. If you don’t have time to shop, why not donate money toward a grocery store gift certificate this month. Place your donation in a pink pew envelope and mark it "Food Pantry Certificates"

FINANCIAL Update

Current year financial status thru September 30, 2016

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$216,117	\$183,639	(\$32,478)
Special Income	24,030	17,365	(6,665)
Prepaid Budget Income	8,754	10,510	1,756
Total Budget Income	\$248,901	\$211,514	(\$37,387)
Operating Expenses thru Sept	248,896	232,106	
Surplus or (Deficit)		(\$ 20,592)	

Do you need information on these numbers or want further explanation of the numbers? You need only ask a member of the finance committee. These numbers are of great concern to us and we would be happy to share that concern with you.

MISSIONARY SUPPORT *Update*

“Greetings Friends: As I write in my newsletter through guidance by God’s spirit and much prayer I have made the decision to accept a new call with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services in Baltimore, Maryland. While this is a very difficult decision I feel it is best at this time to begin another chapter in my life and ministry. Thank you for your support and prayers. I look forward to connecting with many of you over the next year related to my new position as Assistant Director of Outreach for LIRS.”.

Godspeed, Kevin Jacobson, ELCA Missionary in Suriname

COUNCIL *Update*

Update on Council Response to the CAT Survey: In the last update that we provided to you on the Council’s response to the CAT survey, I indicated that, in addition to our planned conversations with you regarding the quality of the worship service and the perception that conflict was present in the congregation, the Council was planning to meet with Bishop Wayne Miller of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod to discuss possible options for Grace moving forward.

We made this plan because we believed that we could not ignore the results in the CAT that indicated that many of the critical success factors affecting the level of satisfaction that respondents to the survey were experiencing were directly tied to various aspects of Pastor Munker’s leadership.

Accordingly, the Council has met twice in October for a total of approximately five hours, including a lengthy, informative and productive session with Bishop Miller.

At the conclusion of these deliberations, your Council has determined that the best way forward for us at this time is to have Pastor Munker continue as our pastoral leader. Although this decision means there is no immediate visible change, we felt an obligation to inform all of you of this decision as soon as it was reached. Now that this decision has been made, we are hopeful that we can all work together toward a bright future for Grace.

We appreciate all the input we have received on this issue, and I want to assure you that we considered all input seriously in arriving at our decision.

Please continue to pray for our congregation. Greg Linwood, Council President

Notes of **THANKS**

To the Congregation of Grace Lutheran Church: Thanking you for another generous gift of eight Aldi \$25 gift vouchers. Very needy families receive these vouchers. All families receive a pre-packed bag of food and perishable donations of bread, bakery,

meat, vegetables, fruit, dairy and prepared meals, filling a banana box. These perishable donations are from local stores, the GCFD Food Rescue Program and church vegetable gardens.

A very generous donation, helping our LCC Food Pantry to feed the needy families of our five- town Community. All donations, 100%, are used to buy food for our recipient families. All non-food expenses, are covered by fund raising events such as our Annual Rummage Sale and Family Game Nights. Almost 100% of our cash income is from churches and church members....

THANKING You...Grace Lutheran Church....

WALKER R. REACH, Director, Lutheran Church of the Cross Food Pantry

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: How can we ever thank you enough? Because of your prayers and generous financial support, Good Shepherd Sunday 2016 was an overwhelming success. Not only did we meet our anonymous donor's match of \$30,000 – we nearly doubled it! As of this writing LSSI has received over \$68,000 in offerings from individuals and congregations. Thank you.

Mark Stutrud, President and CEO, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

Dear Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church: On behalf of the River Trails Park District, I would like to thank you for supporting the River Trails Community. I'm not sure exactly how many years this program has been effect, but I can tell you it is over 34 years; how great is that?

Due to the generosity of your church and school district 26 in conjunction with the park district, so many families over all these years have been able to cool off and have fun at the Woodland Trails Pool each summer. Many of them would not be able to purchase a pool pass without this program.

So again, thank you for making this cooperative effort possible.

Patti Mitchell, Superintendent of Recreation, River Trails Park District

Thank You: In 1991, Evergreen Trails Park on Boxwood Drive looked very different. There was a basketball court in the back of the park, a small playground for children to have fun on and a lot of open grass to run around on. In August there was a small little Festival there called "the Boxwood Bash." That first year we had a dunk tank, Prospect Christian Church and Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church along with the Mount Prospect Police Department and Social Services. 76 people attended.

This year we had 18 agencies and churches join us. The Boxwood Bash has tripled in size and we had to close off an entire street to make everything fit. Without your prayers and support, this event wouldn't be possible. Thank you.

Rob & Jan McKenzie, Higher Up Ministries

Lutherans in a Lather: Thank you from the Social Ministry Committee for your generous donation of soap for Lutheran World Relief. Approximately 150 pounds of soap was dropped off at the LWR truck on October 2nd.

Thank You for the donations to help buy tables for La Trinidad. The Social Ministry Committee had asked for your ideas on how to raise \$800 to purchase 10 tables for the church to use for its monthly community dinners. Donations started coming in and we've received \$650 towards our goal. Committee members are planning to purchase the tables so that La Trinidad has them by Thanksgiving.

Hello: I just wanted to send a thank you for the scholarship I received. Knowing my family at Grace is supporting me and my college education is such a blessing. During even the busiest time in life, its great to have the support from everyone at Grace.

Thank you again, Samantha Rude

Thank You to Rich and Chris Rogers for their initiative and gift of getting our church parking lot striped. Your support for Grace is much appreciated and keeps us vibrant and inviting.

Dear Women of the ELCA at Grace: Your dedication and work to offer meals for families at funerals or memorial services is always appreciated. But it was especially gracious of you to provide food and fellowship after a late afternoon service. You show God's grace in your actions. It is a witness to all who attend.

Church Gardeners: Thanks to all the dedicated gardeners who kept our church grounds looking beautiful throughout the summer.

Halloween Care Packages: Thanks to everyone who donated candy and treats that filled the boxes for our college kids. Also, thanks for the monetary gifts to help with the shipping costs. The Social Ministry Committee thanks you for your support of this project. The next planned sugar rush is the Valetine's Day packages.

SPECIAL *Events*

- **All Saints Celebration:** On Sunday, November 6, we will again give thanks for all the faithful and remember the saints from our congregation who died in the past year.
- **Consecration Sunday:** Join for the grateful dedication of our pledges to God in worship, and breakfast between the 9 and 10:45am service on November 13.
- **Thanksgiving Eve Service:** Gather with us in grateful worship to "Count our Blessings" at 7:00pm on Wednesday, November 23. Bring a food donation. Join for light refreshments following the service.

Birthday **LIST**

November

2	Daniel Ellertson	19	Robin Greaves Andrew Grimes
3	JoAnne Panzer	20	Jarod Lorenz
5	Dan Reimann Vincent Lazzara	21	Louis Leone Jeff Greaves Kelsie Caraba
8	Jane Hartfelder Kristin Grimpe	23	Paul Jozefat Jay Lazzara
9	Cory Cordier	25	Betty Benson Lynn Shaffer Jill Stephanie Christopher Vasanth
10	Nancy Eschbach	26	Aime Hammer
11	Judy Holbrook Ashley Adams William Trsar	27	Wendy Kjeldbjerg Elizabeth Gharagoziou
14	Steve Hanna	28	Tom Wiebe Lisa Sayers
15	Eric Beer Jack Dietrich Samantha Knopoff	29	Joanna Josten
16	Gianna Lauletta		
17	Bob Buehrle		
18	Cindy Pirron ...		

CELEBRATIONS OF *Life*

Baptisms

Receiving Christ's gifts of grace with water and word, we are welcomed into God's family of the church.

Ally Bell, infant daughter of Michael and Jenna Swiatkiewicz and granddaughter of Karen Bell, was baptized on October 9.



Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

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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**

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Prepare
the way
of the
LORD.
ISAIAH 40:3

ARTICLE *Deadline:* November 13