

GRACE NOTES

December 2019



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



Sunday, December 1st is the First Sunday of Advent, the four week period of preparation for Christmas. It is a rather strange season in which we anticipate and look forward to our celebration of something that took place more than two thousand years ago!

This advent, as part of our own congregational commitment to “growing in grace,” we will have a three-session Bible Study on what it means to “wait” for Jesus. What does the Old Testament teach us about the expectations of the Jewish people at the beginning of the Common Era (A.D.—Anno Domini) “in the year of our Lord” in popular western culture. Why did first century Palestinian Jews not recognize Jesus as the Messiah foretold by their prophets and teachers? How do we understand the place of our Jewish neighbors in the story of God’s commitment to the world. We will explore how the Christian church drew on expectations and understandings of the Messiah to shape the story of Jesus.

Advent Bible Studies will take place during the first THREE weeks of December, on Tuesdays at 1:00pm and Thursdays at 7:00pm.

As we move toward the celebration of the birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve, let us also consider our own expectations about what it means that Jesus came into the world. How is it that the incarnation (enfleshment) of God’s Word continues to be seen and heard and felt in this broken world? How is it that we—individually and as a church—continue to put flesh on the good news message that God is with us?

Yes, Jesus was born a long time ago. And yes, he continues to live and reign among us! Are we open to *seeing* his presence in the world around us? Are we open to *being* the presence of Jesus and his message of forgiving and reconciling love?

Grace and peace to you and yours during this holy time leading up to the celebration of Christmas. May Christ be born in our hearts again this year!

In Christ’s love, joy, peace and hope!

Pastor Daniel Schwick

Music NOTES

Please join the Grace Choir in a joint Advent program on December 7, 2019 at 4pm at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Schaumburg (930 W Higgins Rd, Schaumburg, IL 60195).

The Adult choir will rehearse beginning at 10am, and the Grace Sunday school children will join the rehearsal at 3pm. Dinner will follow.

I also have opportunities for lectors (of any age) to be a part of the service, so please let me know if you are interested in reading a lesson.

Hope you can join us there!

Susan Nelson

GROWING GRACE ROUNDTABLE *Update*

At the November 10th Growing Grace Roundtable meeting, Pastor Schwick reported that the Grace Green Team had met on November 4th. Many possible initiatives to pursue were identified at the meeting. Dan Reimann will put up a poster identifying the initiatives with the most support within the team. Kathie Schwich shared some of these initiatives. The next meeting of the team is scheduled for December 16th at 7pm.

Pastor Schwick reviewed the list of outside organizations that might be involved in the May 16, 2020 event. These include:

- Mount Prospect Public Works Department;
- Mount Prospect Water Reclamation District;
- Mount Prospect Park District;
- River Trails Park District;
- River Trails Nature Center;
- University of Illinois Conservation Group;
- Wheeling Township;
- Other area churches

Volunteers were identified to contact these groups and provide a report at the December Roundtable meeting.

Pastor Schwick will contact the environmental reporter at WBEZ as a possible keynote speaker for the event.

The next Roundtable meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 1st

GRACE GREEN *Team*

Grace Green Team has Sprouted

Grace's first Green Team met on November 4th to brainstorm ideas on ways Grace could become more environmentally focused. The group included Ardell Mueller, Sharyl Hanna, Kathie Schwich, Nancy Greaves, Mike Drelicharz, Dan Schwick and Dan Reimann. Three church members, Margit Willis, Jennifer Stutheit and Libby Reimann, could not attend but sent in ideas.

The group decided to focus planning for the following eight ideas:

- Educate Church Members on how to be Green at home/In the community including use of reusable grocery bags and recycling
- Prairie Restoration project on Church property
- Use silverware instead of plastic ware
- Replace existing coffee with Fair Trade coffee – coffee that gives a fair price to the farmer and is grown in a way that is good for the environment
- Have an Energy Audit – Are windows leaking air? Where are we less efficient?
- Seasonal bulletin to be reused each week with insert for hymns and lessons
- Compost area for garden, Kitchen compost and for church members to bring their compost -- potential to use worms in the compost
- Install Solar Panels

If you are interested in these ideas or other Green ideas please join us at the next Green Team meeting on Monday, December 16th at 7pm.

Sincerely – Dan Reimann – Green Team Chair

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Christmas Eve: Join us on Tuesday, December 24, 2019 at 4:30pm for the Family Celebration Service, at 10:30pm for caroling, and at 11:00pm for the Candlelight Eucharist Service.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

Mail Holiday Wishes: Share CHRISTMAS blessings by sending a card to those on our list of homebound members and "Just Because Friends" who will be cheered when receiving your greetings. An updated list of their names and addresses can be found on the poster with the tree on it in the atrium.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

Advent Bible Study: Join us the first 3 weeks in December on either Tuesdays at 1:00pm or Thursdays at 7:00pm for a study on what it means to “wait” for Jesus. If you need transportation, please call the church office.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Service*

Save the Dates: On Saturday, November 30, 2019 at 9:00am we need your help for the “Hanging of the Greens.” On Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 9:00am we need your help for the “Unhanging of the Greens.” Let Pam Walger know if you are available to help.

Poinsettia Garden: Help set up the Christmas Poinsettia Garden on Saturday, December 21st at 9:00am. Contact Betty Carlson at 847-803-9646 if you can help.

Luminaria for Christmas Eve: Margit Willis would like several people to help her set up the Luminaria around the church parking lot on Christmas Eve at 4:00pm. If you are willing to help with this beautiful Christmas ministry please let Pam Walger or Margit Willis know. A volunteer is also needed to re-light the candles prior to the service at 10:30pm. Let us know!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR Outreach

“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 5th. We had about twenty volunteers from Grace, including several first-time volunteers. I hope that all of you who came for the first time found it to be a rewarding experience, and you will consider volunteering again. We packed a total of 93 boxes, totaling 20,088 meals, enough to feed 55 children for an entire year! This food is being sent to Haiti.

This was our last scheduled group outing for 2019. Stay tuned to this space for notice of our first opportunity next year!

God’s work. Our hands. Indeed.

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 8th 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, December 1st any tags not picked up on Thanksgiving Eve along with tags for La Trinidad will be available on the tree in the East entryway. La Trinidad is asking for hats, scarves and gloves. The unwrapped gifts for La Trinidad should be placed under the tree by Sunday, December 15th.

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

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. This year you can purchase the ever popular farm animals, provide school kits or help disaster victims 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 repairing electrical grids! Instead, the gift will go to someone in need in an underdeveloped country or here, 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?

Order forms will be in the Church bulletins after Thanksgiving. Orders will be accepted December 8th and December 15th.

AROUND The Parish

Congratulations: to Amy Pracko who competed in the Chicago marathon finishing with a time of 6:18 and the New York City marathon with a time of 6:47. Way to go, Amy!

Birthday Card Shower: To distinguish our members who are 90 or better we ask the congregation to shower them with birthday wishes (cards & postcards) to brighten their special day. On December 15th we will celebrate Harvey Willis's 91ST birthday. Harvey is a charter member of Grace. Please shower him with birthday wishes at 411 North Pine Street, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-2054. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Harv!

60th Anniversary Celebration: Please join us on Sunday, December 15, 2019 as we mark the 60th anniversary of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. A catered luncheon will follow the worship service. A free will offering is suggested. Reservations are required and can be made through December 8th in the Atrium following the worship service or by contacting Amy Pracko at apracko@gmail.com or 847-975-1453.



Youth Splash: On Sunday, October 27th a bunch of people from Grace traveled to downtown Chicago for this year's Splash. They visited the Bean and Millennium Park and handed out lunches to homeless people that they met. It was a beautiful day and their giving and caring fed a good number of people in need and brightened their day. A big thank you to Minda Josten, Andrew Stutheit, Addison Stutheit, Shyanne Martinez, Grace (Shyanne's friend), and Megan Nickl for handing out the meals. Also, thank you to Thomas Roth, Noah Roth, Kendall Grimpe, Presley Grimpe, Amy Drelicharz, and Mariah Fontaine for making the sandwiches and packing the lunches.

Confirmand Retreat: Shyanne Martinez and Addison Stutheit, Grace's confirmands, gathered on November 8-10, 2019 at Lutherdale in Wisconsin with 60 other confirmation students from the Chicagoland area for a fun and wild weekend retreat. The weekend was filled with talks about the Ten Commandments, hikes, music, games, and ga-ga ball. The girls sang a duet during the Saturday night worship service which was conducted by Bishop Yehiel Curry, the newly installed Bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, who traveled to Wisconsin to meet and visit with the confirmands.



FINANCIAL Update

Financial Report ending October 31, 2019

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$236,667	\$241,278	\$ 4,611
Special Income	30,000	30,225	225
Prepaid Income	8,707	9,622	915
Total Income	\$275,374	\$280,604	\$ 5,230
Expenses thru October	286,473	276,616	
Current Year Surplus or (Deficit)		\$ 3,988	
<i>2018 Operating Surplus Carryover</i>		38,696	
Remaining Surplus		\$ 42,684	

October numbers are looking very good year to date. This can be attributed to income being \$5,000 better than expected and expenses being \$10,000 under budget. There are still 2 months left in the year. We have \$2,000 left to meet our special benevolence commitments and a major expense for a boiler repair. We thank you for your support and please continue the good works.

Notes of **THANKS**

Dear Grace Congregation, Thank you for the Halloween treats! My roommate, Abby, and I have been enjoying them for the past couple of weeks. It is nice to get a reminder from everyone that they are thinking of the college students.

Many thanks, Danielle Drelicharz and Abby Slenker

Dear Grace Congregation. I just wanted to thank you and everyone at Grace for sending me the Halloween package! I appreciate all the work that goes into sending out these packages. I hope everything is well back home!

Thanks again, Taylor Greaves

Thank You

Thank you for feeding me when I don't feed myself enough. I really appreciate the Halloween treats. Alex Nickl

Dear Grace Congregation,

On behalf of the Board of trustees, the staff and residents of Wheeling Township, we would like to express our gratitude for your thoughtful donation of produce items on October 18, 2019. Your contribution will make sure that residents in need will be assisted.

Your commitment and generosity to our community is greatly appreciated. Thank you again for assisting us in fulfilling our mission of "Neighbors Helping Neighbors".

Sincerely, Kathleen M. Penner, Supervisor; Julie Villarreal, MA Director of General Assistance

SPECIAL *Events*

- **Hangin' of the Greens:** Saturday, November 30, 2019 at 9:00am
- **Advent Begins:** Sunday, December 1, 2019
- **Advent Vespers/Concert:** Saturday, December 7, 2019 at 4:00pm at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Schaumburg
- **Jayne Boom Cookie Walk:** cancelled
- **Children's Christmas Program:** Sunday, December 15 at 10am worship service
- **60th Anniversary Celebration and Luncheon:** Sunday, December 15, 2019
- **Poinsettia Garden Setup:** Saturday, December 21, 2019 at 9:00am
- **La Trinidad Community Dinner:** Sunday, December 22, 2019 leaving church at 9:00am
- **Christmas Eve Services:** Tuesday, December 24, 2019 Family Celebration at 4:30pm, Caroling at 10:30pm, Candlelight Eucharist at 11:00pm
- **Unhangin' of the Greens:** Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 9:00am

Birthday LIST

December

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 2 | Allison Gharagozlou | Jennifer Roth |
| 4 | Nick Lovdjieff
Joanne Schulze
Linda Pettingill | 15 Harvey Willis
19 Mark Loeb |
| 6 | Colton Kochanski | 21 Ardell Mueller |
| 8 | Barbara Carlson
Daniel Garza
Lynda Weiss | 22 Carol Victor
23 Sandra Johnson
Michael Pirron |
| 10 | Teddy Reimann | 26 Holly Schirmer |
| 12 | Nicole Soukup | 28 Brady Bell |
| 13 | Amy Pracko | 29 Veronica Grimpe
James Schaffer |
| 14 | Kari Nickl | |
| | ... | |

CELEBRATIONS OF *Life*

Baptisms

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

Aurora Faith, infant daughter of Timothy Gerber and Jordan Bonner, was baptized on November 10, 2019. She is the great granddaughter of Joanne Coy.

Madelyn Joyce Novak, infant daughter of Amanda Novak and Joseph Panzeca, was baptized on November 17, 2019.

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 Bridget Doerner and family on the death of her husband George Doerner on November 15, 2019. A funeral service was held on November 22, 2019.



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

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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

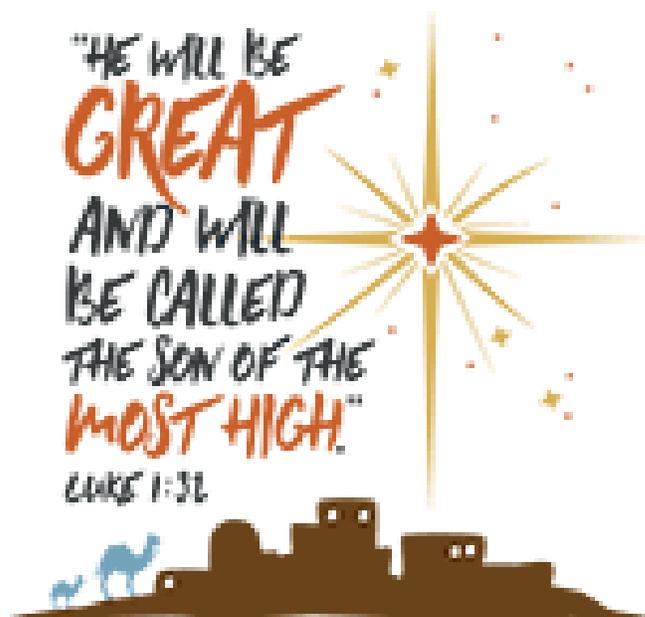
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Mission Partner: Rev. Carrie Smith
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ARTICLE *Deadline:* December 15