

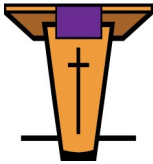


Grace ABOUNDS

January 2024

A Center of Mission and Ministry - Celebrating and Sharing God's Grace!

From Our
Interim
Pastor



New Year's blessings to you in this year of our Lord 2024! My mother always told me that the older you get the faster time flies – and that certainly has proven true for me.

As we begin the new year together, I have two questions – questions that turn into challenges – or more so - opportunities. At least I'd like to

think so. As we know, the Covid pandemic took its toll on everything, including church attendance and financial giving. And that certainly is a challenge for us here at Grace. But I'd like to see it as an opportunity – an opportunity to struggle together throughout this year (because the answers will not come easily or quickly) with these two questions: 1. How do we define and vision what church is in 21st century North America? 2. What's the difference between being a member of a church rather than a disciple of Jesus? I'll begin by suggesting some things to start our conversation about these two questions, but I hope we will find ways to keep the conversation going until we are both comfortable and united in our answers!

So, first – how do we define and vision what church is in 21st century North America? For many of us, especially those of us with some age on us, church and community often were interlocked one with the other. Everyone went to church on Sunday mornings, Sunday and Wednesday evenings. In many ways, the church served as a community center. It was easy to go to church – and hard not to! But now, that's all changed. Church is no longer the center of the community. It's often not even on the priority list of many people. And now, we must (challenge or opportunity, you decide) reclaim who we are as the body of Christ, the church, on this earth, in this time and in this place. What does it mean to be the body of Christ? What is the source of our good works, our ministries? Do we do the ministries we do like any good social organization – or – do we do the ministries we do in response to God's gift of mercy and grace to us? And that, for me, makes worship the most important thing we do because it is in worship that we are fed with Word and Meal and then sent out to be the hands and feet, brain



Thanks to everyone who donated poinsettias, decorated the Sanctuary and Chrismon trees, shared seasonal music, and planned worship to glorify God, make our Sanctuary beautiful, and add joy and meaning to our Advent and Christmas Eve services.

and heart of Jesus. How does starting with that concept in mind help shape your understanding of church?

And then, secondly, what's the difference between being a member and being a disciple? Members of social clubs and civic organizations pay their dues, attend the functions they tend to enjoy, and enjoy the benefits that come with membership. Disciples of Jesus, on the other hand, by the power of the Holy Spirit, strive to live lives – all aspects of life - as persons transformed by Jesus – loving God and loving neighbor! Again, food for thought!

And to sum it all up – actually to connect the two questions – I'll end this month's discussion with the words of a quote by Luke Edwards showing up these days on Facebook. "The church is called not only to feed the hungry, but to eat together. When the table is set, and all sit down, labels melt away and relationships are formed. That is the beauty of Christ's table."

Looking forward to pondering these questions, challenges, opportunities together!

Happy New Year!

Pastor Jane

Contact Pastor Jane by cell phone at 803-530-2045 or by email at pjmitcham@gmail.com.



JANUARY

Baptisms

- 1 - Tommy Neel
- 2 - Suzanne Medlock
- 5 - Tim Harmon
- 8 - Jonathan Shealy
- 13 - Riley Eldridge, Anna Kay Singley
- 15 - Ronnie Cromer
- 19 - Joshua Nelson, Jacob Nelson,
Charlie Nelson
- 21 - Nick Long
- 28 - Richard Mercer, Parker Metts,
Elizabeth Warner
- 31 - Mollie Waters



JANUARY

Birthdays

- 1 - Thomas Mewbourn
Marysue Rivers
- 3 - Kristen Sandor
- 7 - Raelynn Wessinger
- 9 - Kris Lindler
- 13 - Brittany Templeton
- 14 - Jessica Culbreth
Donna Hawkins
- 17 - Robert Neel, Lee Wessinger
- 18 - Nikki Dominick, Wayne Mitchell
- 21 - Luke Black, Beverly Hawkins,
Craig Metz
- 23 - Robert Martin
- 26 - Kay Chandler
- 29 - Rev. Al Potter



JANUARY

Anniversaries

- 2 - Jordan and Matthew Jackson (2nd)
- 5 - Lisa and Dave Riley (43rd)
- 14 - Walt and Clyna Quattlebaum (56th)

Grace People in the News

RON BROWN was recently pictured in Lutheran Services Carolinas *Voices* magazine along with an article about his walk to support LSC's New Americans program.



BAILEY STEWART made the Dean's List at USC-Union for fall 2023.



IN THE MAIL . . .

Dear Grace Family,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. More so, thank you for being you - I'm more than honored to be serving as the interim pastor with you as we discern God's plans for Grace in the coming months and years. *God's blessings, Pastor Jane*

Dear Friends at Grace,

Thank you for the generous Christmas bonus and generous retirement gift. I deeply appreciate these monetary recognitions of my work at Grace and will put them to good use in my retirement.

I am thankful to Grace congregation for entrusting me to serve as Grace's office secretary for the past 13 years. When I was hired, I told the Personnel Committee that I wanted this to be not just a job, but a ministry. I have tried my best during this time in this position to use my talents and energy to serve the Lord and support the members of Grace congregation and the congregation's ministries.

While I will no longer be in the church office, this is not "goodbye" as my family and I plan to continue to be active in the ministries of Grace alongside each of you. See you at church!

In Christian Love, Julie Shealy

Thank you for your gift of \$1,773.97 to your synod received by Lutheran Disaster Response in Oct. 2023. Your Spirit-filled generosity helps families and communities reeling from disasters. No matter the variety of disaster, no matter the variety of need, your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response enable people to rebuild their lives and livelihoods now and far into the future.

Thank you. May our spirits, like Mary's rejoice in God for the great things God has done for us all.

In Christ, Amanda White, Director, Congregational Generosity, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Building Loan Paid Off in December!

With thanksgiving to God, we celebrate the payoff of our Ministry Center building loan on Dec. 12. Through faithful giving, special principal gifts, some wise financial moves, and fundraisers, Grace was able to pay off the debt that was more than \$195,000 at the beginning of 2023. Any funds given to the Building Fund before the end of 2023 will be transferred to the Maintenance Fund.

We encourage the congregation to continue to faithfully give to our Current Fund, the foundation for funding all of our ministries here at Grace, and to our Maintenance Fund, as we begin preparing for anticipated large maintenance expenses such as roof and boiler replacement.



Welcome, Valerie!

We welcome Valerie Reed as our administrative secretary, effective Jan. 2. Valerie comes to us with a strong church secretarial background.



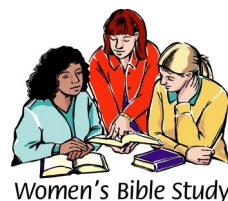
Valerie grew up in Columbia SC. She and her husband Mike have lived in The Pointes neighborhood in Prosperity (on the lake) the last 13 years. They have three children and seven grandchildren that they adore and with whom they try to spend as much time as possible.

Valerie has worked as a Ministry Assistant for Kathwood Baptist Church in Columbia for the last 20 years. She enjoyed her position there but the commute just became too dangerous and long with all the road construction on I-26.

She and Mike are active members at Chapin Christian Community Church (formerly Chapin UMC). Valerie loves to sing and is a member of the choir. She also enjoys Bible study, reading, cooking, gardening, and being outdoors.

We are very fortunate to have found someone with Valerie's church office credentials. Of course, she obviously has to learn the people of Grace and has to become accustomed to our operations procedures as well as learn about our Lutheran liturgy and background.

Please be patient and supportive, and please introduce yourself to her when you first come in contact.



Women's Bible Study will not meet in January 2024.

Women's Bible Study



Heartland Conference Lay School of Religion Four Tuesdays in January January 9, 16, 23 and 30 7 - 9 p.m. at Grace

Bible as Soap Opera

Led by Pastor Michele Fischer
A study of 1st and 2nd Samuel

Lutheran Confessions

Led by Pastor Terry Hundley
A look at Luther's Small Catechism

The Holy Land

Led by Pastor Bobby Morris
A survey of Palestinian and Israeli relations in the 20th and 21st centuries

Registration Information

Brochures with more information and registration forms are on the narthex table near the entrance to the Ministry Center. Registration is \$20 per participant, and payment can be mailed to Brenda Fulmer, 2811 Dreher Island Rd., Prosperity, SC 29127.



Make checks payable to Heartland Conference School of Religion.

Grace Prayer List

Grace Family: Evelyn Harmon; Pastor Al Potter; Wayne Mitchell; Raelynn Wessinger; Margaret Kluttz; Cissie and Bob Dibble; Glenda and Everett Crafts; Heather and Bob Harris; Marysue Rivers; Faye Hartman; Lois Amick; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.



Residential Care: Sadie Epting (*Springfield Place, Rm. 11*); Allene Dawkins (*Springfield Place, Rm. 19*); Wendy and Michael Riley (*J.F. Hawkins, Rm. 221*).

College Students: Zach Frick (*USC*); Hayden Hall (*Piedmont*); Bryce Medlock (*Bluefield University*); Lexi Medlock (*Midlands Tech*); Payton Metts (*Piedmont*); Taylor Metz (*MUSC*); Bailey Stewart (*USC-Union*).

Extended Family: Grey Westbury (*Sue Mitchell's great-niece*); Brittany Merck, Broko Boland (*Melodie Waters' cousins*); Brittany Cumalander (*Lynn Wessinger's cousin*); Mary Ellen Hartzog (*Eddie Rivers' cousin*).

Military: SGT. Anderson Dibble (*Marines/Iraq - Cissie/Bob Dibble's granddaughter*); Everett Crafts V (*Air Force/Guam - Glenda/Everett Craft's grandson*); Walker Eldridge (*Coast Guard/VA*); Sgt. Caleb Salyers (*US Army/Ft. Hood, TX - Rev. Al Potter's grandson*).

Community: Dan and Becky McGlohorn and Family; Dean Wise; Jackie Perry; Amy Frick Wicker; Davida Monsanto; Violet Wilmot; Mary Lawson; Pastor William and Karen Hightower; Brian Cassidy.

God's World: victims of gun violence; Ukraine, Israel, and Palestine and neighboring countries; those affected by wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and other natural disasters; military families; homeless; jobless/underemployed; refugees; those suffering due to unrest and fighting throughout the world; our enemies.

To add or remove a name from the Prayer List, contact the office at 803-364-3331 or gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com or leave a written note in the office box. Thank you!

December Memorials and Honorariums
Gifts to the Building Loan Fund

In memory of Glenn Kluttz by Kathryn and Bob McCartha

In honor of Judy Bedenbaugh and in memory of John Bedenbaugh by Brian and Amy Rossett

In honor of Emmett Wicker by the Kevin Wicker Family

In memory of Bill Ackerman by Billy Ackerman

Gift to the Campership Fund

In honor of Raelynn's 9th birthday on Jan. 7 by Lynn and Larry Wessinger

Gift to the Bedenbaugh - Chariker Scholarship Fund

In honor of Tara and Greg Stewart's 28th wedding anniversary by Lynn and Larry Wessinger

Gifts to the Current Fund

In honor of Judy Bedenbaugh and Amy Rossett by Beth Fulmer Haggard

In memory of all Grace members who have passed to life in the Church Triumphant by Anonymous

**Christmas Memorials and Honorariums were published in the Dec. 10 bulletin insert.*



Christ in Our Home Devotionals

Christ in Our Home devotional books for January - March 2024 are available on the narthex table. Pick up a copy for yourself and one to share with a friend.

Annual Reports Due Jan. 15

Year-end annual reports from all church groups, teams, and treasurers are due in the church office by Monday, Jan. 15. Each team chair is responsible for seeing that their team reports are submitted.



Reports are published in the annual *Grace Yearbook* and serve as a record of the ministries at Grace during the year. Your help is appreciated (and needed) in compiling this important information. We need reports from those listed below:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Council Chair | All treasurers: |
| Care and Fellowship Team | Current Fund |
| Good News Team | Sunday School |
| Lifelong Ed. Team | Building Loan Fund |
| Youth Team | Maintenance Fund |
| Christian School Board | Comm. Service Fund |
| Worship Team | Scholarship Fund |
| Facilities Team/Haggai | Campership Fund |
| Finance Team | Christian Schools |
| Sunday School | Schools Education Fund |
| Grace Youth | Family Ministry Fund |
| Women's Bible Study | Youth |
| Financial Secretary | Leisure Hour |

Livestream Upgrade Update

The new livestream camera and wiring was installed by Gattis Pro Audio during the week of Dec. 17. We were able to use our new system to livestream for the first time on Sunday, Dec. 31. Those watching at home noticed better quality of the picture and the audio. You can go to Facebook and check out the improvements by viewing the recording of the Dec. 31 livestream. Gattis Pro Audio previously installed our sound system, which is now being used to improve the audio of our livestream.



Lutheroad Day Camp: July 15-20



Mt. Tabor, Grace, Mt. Pilgrim, and Bethel, White Rock

2024 Budget Adopted, Officers

At the annual congregation meeting on Dec. 10, Sally Dominick was elected congregation secretary. At a called congregation meeting on Dec. 31, Johnny Merck was elected congregation vice president. Each of these positions have voice and vote on Council.

At the annual meeting, the congregation also adopted a 2024 ministry budget of \$163,613.

At the Dec. 11 Council meeting, the following were elected as Council officers: Nathan Shealy, chair; Robert Martin, vice chair; and Candace Frick, secretary.

We give thanks for their willingness to serve in these leadership positions and to all who serve on Council.



Update Your Info for New PoG

In January, we will be printing a new *People of Grace* directory. If your contact information or a family member's information changed in 2023, please call or email the office or drop off a note by Monday, Jan. 15. We need our directory to be as accurate as possible.



Update your contact info!

If you have not been receiving emails from Grace, we likely don't have an accurate email address for you. Please share your email address with us as we often send last minute details about events and reminders by email.

Also, let us know if you no longer have a home telephone number so we can delete it from your listing. If you would like your cell phone number included in the directory and it isn't already listed, please let us know that, too. Thank you!



January Manna House Item of the Month 2 lb. bags of grits

Donations can be left in the Manna House box in the narthex. Thank you for supporting Manna House!

Serving in January

Assisting Ministers

- 7 - Teresa Cooper
- 14 - Candace Frick
- 21 - Melodie Waters
- 28 - Susan Dawkins



Altar Flowers

- 7 - Poinsettias and Trees
- 14 - Epiphany Trees
- 21 - Epiphany Trees
- 28 - Melodie Waters

Communion Assistant

Lynn Wessinger

Communion Preparation

Deborah Ruff

Communion Clean Up

Judy Bedenbaugh, Andrea Lewis

Acolyte

Allie Waters

Crucifer - Jan. 7

Helena Mewbourn

Torchbearers - Jan. 7

Thomas Mewbourn, Jonathan Shealy

Ushers

Nathan Shealy (head), Deborah Ruff, Phil Ruff, Camryn Shealy, Jonathan Shealy

Greeters

Cindy Amick, Melodie Waters

Offering Tabulators

Deborah Ruff (head), Phil Ruff, Camryn Shealy, Nathan Shealy

Front Sign

Deborah and Phil Ruff

Altar Guild

Deborah and Phil Ruff

Pew Rack Helper

Nancy Derrick

Altar Flower, Lamp Sign Up

The 2024 Altar Flower and Sanctuary Lamp Chart is posted on the narthex board. Sign up on the chart or contact the church office by phone or email to reserve your special dates. These dates will be published in the 2024 Yearbook.



SANCTUARY LAMP SPONSORS



During the month of January, the Sanctuary Lamp burns to the glory of God and in memory of John Bedenbaugh and Alice Shaver in remembrance of their January birthdays by Judy Bedenbaugh.

For honorary or memorial information to be included in the newsletter and bulletin, information and \$30 donation should be received by the office by the last Sunday of the month prior to the month you sponsor.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Sanctuary	* Online	Total
12/3	57	14	71
12/10	54	22	76
12/17	86	32	118
12/24 (a.m.)	52	26	78
12/24 (4:00)	50	Not streamed	50
12/24(10:30)	50	16	66
12/31	51	24	75

* Total Online viewers = Peak views x 2 per SC Synod instructions.



12/3	28
12/10	22
12/17	28
12/24	19
12/31	25

Youth Ministry Christmas Program: 78 attending
Preschool Christmas Program: 293 attending

Newsletter DEADLINE Jan. 22 for February Issue



Monthly GYM TIME
Sunday, January 28
Noon - 1:30 p.m.
Faith, fellowship,
fun, and food!!

What a Great December! A Busy Month for Youth Ministry



Grace Youth Ministry presented the Christmas Program, "The New Star" Dec. 10. Thank you to everyone who came to our presentation and to all who participated in the program.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 11 - Souper Bowl Collection
Feb. 25 - Monthly GYM Time
Noon - 1:30 p.m.
Faith, fellowship, fun, and food!



Grace Youth enjoyed Christmas caroling to several of our members on Wednesday, Dec. 20 then returned to the church to share finger foods and a time of fellowship.



Grace Youth sponsored Grace's float in this year's Prosperity Christmas Parade on Sunday, Dec. 3. Youth got together on Saturday, Dec. 2 to decorate the float. Thanks to all who helped decorate and all who rode on the float!



Church
FINANCES

Our Offerings for
December

Thru Dec. 31 - Includes Dec. EFTs

CURRENT FUND *Our Monthly Need: \$13,344*

Given during month.....	\$15,821.70
Given year-to-date.....	\$124,291.60
Goal through Dec. 31.....	\$160,123.00

BUILDING LOAN FUND *Our Monthly Need: \$4,720*

Given during month.....	\$5,497.58
Given year-to-date.....	\$56,723.90
Gifts to Be Applied to Principal.....	\$3,500.00
Fundraisers for Principal.....	\$1,558.66

MAINTENANCE/UPKEEP FUND

Given during month.....	\$34,479.53
Given year-to-date.....	\$41,097.05

PARSONAGE FUND

Given during month.....	\$00.00
Given year-to-date.....	\$320.00
Fund Balance, Dec. 31.....	\$4,640.38

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Given during month.....	\$86.00
Given year-to-date.....	\$1,193.03

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Given during month.....	\$65.00
Given year-to-date.....	\$426.38

CAMPERSHIP FUND

Given during month.....	\$90.69
Given year-to-date.....	\$843.30

COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND

Community Assistance.....	\$0.00
Given year-to-date.....	\$1,476.58
Bookbag Food Ministry.....	\$60.10
Given year-to-date.....	\$265.10
Thanksgiving Meal.....	\$10.10
Given year-to-date.....	\$355.10
Total year-to-date.....	\$2,096.78

SPECIAL 2023 OFFERINGS

Estate of Larry Spotts.....	\$25,000.00
Disaster Response (Maui bucket offering) ..	\$1,773.97
Bereavement Meal Fund.....	\$1,295.00
St. Jude (Preschool Trike-a-thon).....	\$1,275.00
Manna House (bucket offering).....	\$1,091.55
Youth.....	\$1,003.31
Boston Butt Building Loan Fundraiser...	\$937.51
Shrove Tues. Building Loan Fundraiser...	\$621.15
Scholarship Fund Match 2022.....	\$550.00
Boys' Farm (Preschool Chapel Change).....	\$525.00

	MINISTRY BUDGET
	Needed Thru Dec. 31: \$160,123 Given thru Dec. 31: \$124,292
	Amount Behind Goal: \$ 35,851

**Annual Advent Offering:
Interfaith Community Services**

Through Dec. 31, Grace received \$330 for our 2023 Advent offering for Interfaith Community Services. This organization helps individuals in need in our community with heating bills, electricity, and other basic needs.



Special
Advent
Offering

Thanks to those who donated to help this community organization.

Information about offering envelopes, electronic giving, and alternative designation can be found on pg. 11.



SPECIAL 2023 OFFERINGS *continued*

Livestream Upgrade.....	\$515.15
Interfaith Comm. Services (Lent Off.)...	\$488.00
Manna House (Preschool Closings).....	\$390.00
Advent Offering (Interfaith Comm. Ser.)...	\$330.00
Christmas Poinsettias.....	\$320.13
Vacation Bible School.....	\$310.00
Disaster Response (for Mid East Crisis)...	\$300.00
MC Football Team Meal.....	\$290.00
Easter Lilies.....	\$270.10
World Kitchen (Preschool Program).....	\$250.00
Youth (Thrivent).....	\$240.00
Souper Bowl (Wolves Pantry/Newberry Col.)...	\$212.25
Interfaith Comm. (bucket offering/fans).....	\$184.01
*World Central Kitchen (bucket offering)...	\$175.10
World Series One Goal.....	\$175.00
Christian School.....	\$130.68
ELCA World Hunger.....	\$100.00
LSC New Americans Program.....	\$60.00
Disaster Response.....	\$20.00

** Final total on World Central Kitchen bucket offering not available at time of printing.*



Congregation Council Meeting - December 11, 2023

Congregation Council held its monthly meeting on Monday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. in the Ministry Center.

The Wake Up Team reported that Kim Metz would be paying off the Building Loan the next day on Dec. 12. An announcement will be made Sunday to the congregation. Building Fund money will be rolled over to the Property/Maintenance Fund after the first of the year. There will need to be a celebration planned for this blessing.

The Wake Up Team will need to review the Ministry Site Profile and be sure that it is up to date to be submitted to Synod.

The Personnel Team reported that there is a candidate for the Current Fund treasurer position. More information is needed regarding a flat rate for using her service. Valerie Reed is currently being trained and will be in the office as secretary Jan. 2. All members are asked to consider helping out with tasks that are not in her job description. Valerie will also need a representative from the Personnel Committee to act as her primary contact for questions and concerns.

Council voted to move all funds from First Citizens Bank to First Community Bank (pending Linda's successful transfer) due to the charges at First Citizens for using the night deposit box.

Council voted to have a called Congregation meeting on Dec. 31 for the purpose of electing a Vice President of the Congregation. The notice will need to be in the next two Sunday bulletins.

Council elected officers for 2024: Chair - Nathan Shealy, Vice Chair - Robert Martin, and Secretary - Candace Frick.

All current treasurers have been contacted and agreed to continue in 2024. This was approved.

Council approved the pastor's housing designation at the same rate as last year.

A request from the SC Lutheran Retreat Centers to hold a campaign at Grace was tabled until the January meeting.

Chop Cooper was designated by Council to keep possession of all background checks.

The installation of new livestreaming equipment should occur this week or next.

Spotts' gift money will be placed in a Mutual Fund as previously approved by Council.

A handout was received from the Visioning Team. It was asked that current teams continue as they are and be in conversation on how to implement the mission driven task forces/committees. All new Council members were asked to consider which team they would like to participate in by next meeting.

Council voted to move the time of its monthly meetings to 6:30 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

The next meeting will be the annual retreat on Saturday, Jan. 20 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

From Minutes submitted by Deborah Ruff, Council Chair, Acting Secretary

Annual Retreat
Saturday, Jan. 20
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

November Financial Reports

	<u>Balance, 11/1</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Disbursed</u>	<u>Balance, 11/30</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
Current/Budget Fund	\$48,568.55	\$13,525.57	\$10,766.65	\$51,327.47*	\$11,099.03 CD
Building Loan Fund	\$35,140.93	\$ 5,756.38	\$ 5,819.85	\$35,077.46	(\$37,935.58 balance owed)
Maintenance Fund	\$ 7,186.85	\$ 1,553.85	\$ 320.00	\$ 8,420.70**	n/a
Sunday School Account	\$ 2,427.18	\$ 735.97	\$ 19.38	\$ 3,143.32	n/a
Christian Schools Account	\$21,050.45	\$ 5,581.17	\$ 6,434.95	\$ 20,196.67	n/a
Schools Educational Fund	\$ 7,150.27	\$ 240.50	\$ 271.80	\$ 7,118.97	n/a

*Current Fund Balance does not include designated monies for the LED Bulb Fund (\$534.37); Sound System Fund (\$335.39); Livestream Upgrade Fund (\$515.15); Choir Fund (\$325); Bereavement Meal Fund (\$1,410.44); or Sydney Shealy Memorial Gift (\$5,555.68); or Larry Spotts Gift (\$22,500) contained within the Current Fund Checking Account.

**Maintenance Fund balance does not include Parsonage Fund (\$4,640.38) contained within the Maintenance Fund.



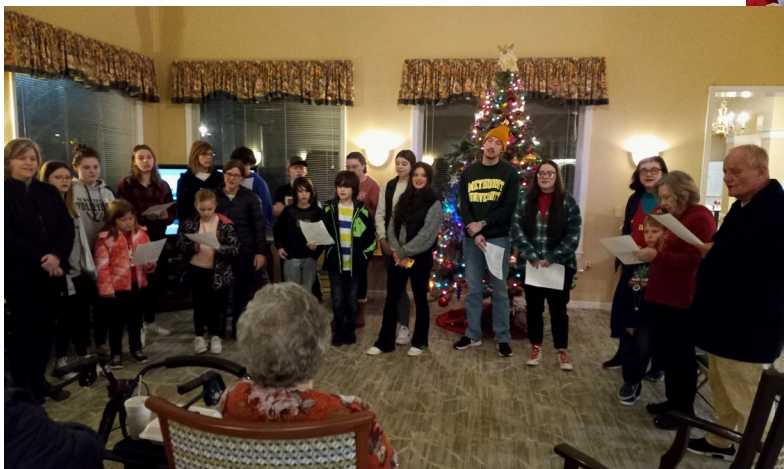
Grace Christian Preschool Christmas Program



Grace Youth Ministry Christmas Program



Advent and Christmas Eve worship services in our beautiful Sanctuary



Christmas caroling by Grace Youth Ministry and friends



Grace's float in the Prosperity Christmas Parade, sponsored by Grace Youth Ministry

2024 Offering Envelopes



2024 offering envelopes are available on the table outside the office window. We are using “old envelopes” this year as a good stewardship practice. If you would like a box and don’t see one, please see Julie Shealy. There are no blue envelopes this year due to the payoff of the Ministry Center loan in December! However, we ask that you continue to give generously to the Current Fund (white envelopes) and Maintenance Fund (yellow envelopes). Current Fund covers basic expenses, such as salaries, utilities, insurance, as well as ministry. Maintenance Fund takes care of repairs and ongoing maintenance to our facilities.

Alternative Designation

Alternative Designation Forms are included in the envelope boxes and on the envelope table for those who would prefer a portion of their offering not be forwarded to the ELCA. **A new form must be completed every year.** Turn in completed forms with your first gift of 2024.

Electronic Giving Update

Electronic giving is an option at Grace through Vanco. Scan the QR Code at right or go to the Online Giving page via graceluth.org to get started.



If you have previously set up a monthly recurring gift to the Building Fund in Vanco, you will need to re-set your giving for 2024 to reflect the removal of the Building Fund option since that loan has been paid off. We appreciate your taking the time to be sure that your monthly gift continues as you desire to fund ministry at Grace. If you need help with this, please see Julie Shealy.

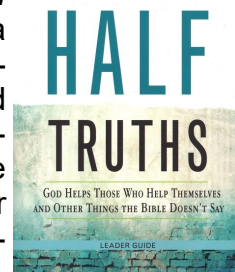
In addition, the General Fund option has been changed to Current Fund, the actual fund name. We are also in the process of adding various funds to the giving options, including a Maintenance Fund option. The “Other” option remains for funds or offerings that are not listed, such as donations for poinsettias, Lutheran Disaster response, or other one-time offerings.



February Adult Sunday School

In February, the adult Sunday school class will be discussing the book *Half Truths* by Adam Hamilton, a pastor of the United Methodist Church. It’s subtitled “God helps those who help themselves and other things the Bible doesn’t say.” Pastor Jane will lead the discussions.

ADAM HAMILTON
Author of 27 Hours That Changed the World, On Jesus and the Way



The chapters include (1) Everything Happens for a Reason, (2) God Helps Those Who Help Themselves, (3) God Won’t Give You More Than You Can Handle, (4) God Said It, I Believe It, That Settles It, (5) Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin and an Epilogue Beyond Platitudes, Cliches and Half Truths.

While not totally necessary, the discussions will be more meaningful if participants have read the chapters before the discussions. Books can be ordered through Amazon or other resources as well! This should make for lively discussion!

Hope you can join us at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. Breakfast is served starting about 9 a.m.

Coming in Lent

Details about time, meals and the like are not yet in place, but this year’s Lenten series will be a worship and drama series titled *The People vs. Judas Iscariot ... the punishment phase*. It takes place in an actual courtroom setting with a judge, prosecutor and defense attorney interviewing various characters from the biblical story. The congregation serves as the jury, and the question for the jury to resolve is this: is God’s grace sufficient, even for Judas?



You won’t want to miss this! February 18, 25, March 3, 10 and 17! Mark your calendars!

Kicking Off the Advent Season

ADVENT KICKOFF
SOUP AND SANDWICH
FELLOWSHIP
MEXL

Thank you to all who stayed after our worship service on the first Sunday of Advent, Dec. 3 and took part in our Advent Kick-off. We enjoyed a delicious lunch of soups and sandwiches with dessert and great fellowship. Our Care

and Fellowship Team sponsored the event and extends special thanks to each of you who provided the yummy soups, sandwiches, and desserts for our meal.



January 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>CHURCH OFFICE HOURS Tues. - Thurs. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.</p>	<p>1 <i>Office Closed</i></p> 	<p>2 <i>Valerie Reed Begins as Administrative Secretary</i></p> <p><i>Office Hours 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Tues.-Thurs.</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p>Adult Choir - 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>4 Newsletter Team - 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline - 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 Epiphany</p>
<p>7 <i>Baptism of Our Lord</i></p> <p>Breakfast - 9 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 Worship - 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Heartland Conference School of Religion - 7-9 p.m. at Grace</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Adult Choir - 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline - 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14 <i>2nd Sunday after Epiphany</i></p> <p>Breakfast - 9 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 Worship - 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Due: Year-end Reports and Updated Contact Info</p> <p>»»»»»»»»»» ANNUAL REPORTS</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Heartland Conference School of Religion - 7-9 p.m. at Grace</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Adult Choir - 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline - 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Council Retreat 10 a.m.-2 p.m.</p>  <p>COUNCIL MEETING</p>
<p>21 <i>3rd Sunday after Epiphany</i></p> <p>Breakfast - 9 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 Worship - 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>22</p> <p><i>Newsletter Deadline</i></p>	<p>23</p> <p>Heartland Conference School of Religion - 7-9 p.m. at Grace</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Adult Choir - 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline - 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28 <i>4th Sunday after Epiphany</i></p> <p>Breakfast - 9 a.m. Sunday School - 9:30 Worship - 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Monthly GYM Time - Noon-1:30 p.m.</p> 	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Newsletter Team - 9:30 a.m. (Ministry Center)</p> <p>Heartland Conference School of Religion - 7-9 p.m. at</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Adult Choir - 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>Bulletin Deadline - 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>



Grace Lutheran Church

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Ministers: The People of Grace

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Jane Mitcham

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January Highlights



School of Religion

Jan. 9, 16,
23, 30



Due Jan. 15

Year-End Reports From
Ministry Team Chairs,
Fund Treasurers and
Other Leaders

Updates for
Telephone, Email,
and Mailing address
for your family



COUNCIL MEETING

Congregation Council

Saturday, Jan. 20
10 a.m.-2 p.m.



GYM Time

Sunday, Jan. 28

Noon - 1:30 p.m.
*Faith, fellowship,
fun, and food!*

Looking Ahead

Shrove
Tuesday
Feb. 13



**SHROVE
TUESDAY**



ASH
WEDNESDAY

Ash
Wednesday
Feb. 14



Lent
First Sunday in Lent
Feb. 18