

# Grace Notes

Volume 72, Number 12

December 2020



*Merry Christmas!*

# The Pastor's Pen

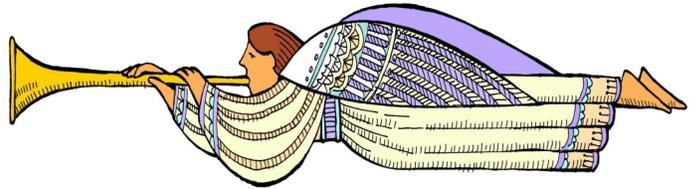


Pastor Shane Koepke  
*Lead Pastor*  
pastorshane@gracealbertlea.org

The season leading up to Christmas is often filled with hope as we await the coming king of kings. As we wait, we sit in a world that is also sitting and waiting. We sit in the cold of the coming winter and we hope. We hope others will do the work they need to do to keep others protected. To keep themselves protected. We also hope for joy this Christmas season. And so as we do as Christians before must have done for centuries, we look out into the world in need. We pray for those we love and pray for those we don't like so much. We continue to be in favor to God's grace in the midst of the world that often feels ungraceful. Below I have reprinted a prayer for those wearing masks. And while I know emotions run high around this issue, I also know that as Christians we are called into the mystery of God's grace, which calls us into things which we don't fully understand, and maybe don't always fully agree with, but yet we do for the

sake of others; in this case the health of others. I pray with you this Advent season, and as we approach Christmas, I pray we see the joy of our savior's birth as hope for the world.

Peace as you journey, PShane



## PASTORAL ACTS FOR NOVEMBER

### BAPTISM

Jade Sanden  
(daughter of Santisouk Sisouvanh  
& Tierra Sanden)

### FUNERAL

Shannon Wadding  
(son of Connie Wadding)



## A PRAYER FOR PUTTING ON A FACE MASK

Creator God, as I prepare to go into the world, help me to see the sacramental nature of wearing of this cloth. Let it be a tangible and visible way of living love for my neighbors, as I love myself.

Christ Jesus, since my lips will be covered, uncover my heart, that people would see my smile in the crinkles around my eyes. Since my voice may be muffled, help me to speak clearly, not only with my words, but with my actions.

Holy Spirit, as the elastic touches my ears, remind me to listen carefully and caringly to all those I meet. May this simple piece of cloth be shield and banner, and may each breath that it holds, be filled with Your love. In Your name and in that love, I pray. Amen.

Rev. Richard Bott, Moderator Presbyterian Church of Canada

## Musings



Deacon Robert Tewes,  
*Director of Worship and Music*  
music@gracealbertlea.org

“Happy New Year!”

In our secular world we hear this greeting on January 1<sup>st</sup>, but, like so many aspects of the Christian life, things are a bit different in the church. The church, in its rich history of being a liturgical community, begins each year with a four-week-long celebration of the season of Advent. As each “new year” begins, the church makes use of a new Gospel account on which to focus its attention for the year ahead.

This year we turn to the gospel of Mark, the very first gospel to be written down, most likely around 70CE. Mark’s story begins not with the story of pregnant Mary and concerned Joseph and the story of an impending birth of Jesus. Rather, it begins by recounting “the gospel (the good news) of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” The good news is the story of the resurrection. The resurrection becomes the focus, or thesis, of the entire account of Jesus’ life, as told by Mark.

John the Baptist announces the impending appearance of the promised Messiah, but Jesus appears not as a baby, but as a grown man, some thirty years, old who seeks to be baptized before beginning his intensive three-year-long ministry.

In the years that followed the appearance of Mark’s gospel, other gospel accounts appeared; Matthew, Luke and John. Each of these shared aspects of Mark’s account, but each put their unique angle into telling the story of Jesus. By reading each of these accounts we get to know Jesus more completely.

We benefit from the regular cycle of the changing years and the changing gospels, as it parallels our own life story. We are not the same person we were a year ago. We have changed. We have matured? We have certainly been affected by a global pandemic that has impacted each of us in similar and unique ways.

May the urgent story of Jesus’ love, as told to us this year through the voice of Mark, remind us all of what matters most: That Jesus Christ was born to save! So, Good Christian Folk, rejoice in this good news! Happy New Year and Merry Christmas!

# WORSHIP TECHNICIANS NEEDED

**Please contact Deacon Bob  
for further information.**

# Grace Children, Youth and Family Ministry



Ashley Kuhlman,  
Youth Director  
youth@gracealbertlea.org  
1-651-280-9502

We, as the staff have been working hard this last year to stay connected with our Grace family in person and online. As I write this article in mid-November, the case numbers are rising in our county. To ensure the safety of our younger families, we have decided to move our Children, Youth & Family programming online for the month of December.

Although things look a little different this year, we are so lucky to work with such a creative staff to allow our programming to continue. We are still having a Christmas program (written by Deacon Bob) that will be shared virtually this month on Facebook. Instead of having our traditional Advent Festival, our families have been given home kits and devotions to be completed through the season of Advent. Our Confirmation programming has been moved online weekly, where we will still continue to learn about the Old Testament and build community with one another. The Youth Group has also been moved to Zoom, where we will gather for devotions and activities each week. Although this time of year may look a little different, how awesome is it that we have this technology to connect with each other.

## Youth Group Schedule

*(schedule is subject to change):*

- Dec 6:** Jackbox & Online Game Night
- Dec 13:** Bingo (print out a few Bingo Sheets – there will be prizes!)
- Dec 20:** Christmas Celebration (wear a Christmas sweater, more details available later)

**Sunday School** is held on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am on Zoom. Deacon Bob will be leading our kids through the Christmas program each week. Zoom links to join are emailed to parents each Sunday. Contact Pastor Jennifer with any questions.

**Confirmation** will be taking place online for the duration of December. Families have been contacted with details. Sermon notes can be found at [www.gracealbertlea.org/confirmation](http://www.gracealbertlea.org/confirmation). Contact Ashley with any questions.

**High School Youth Group** will be gathering on Sunday evenings on Zoom from 7:00 – 8:00 pm! We will gather for a devotional, then play games or do an activity listed below. No need to sign up ahead of time, just show up! (Zoom links will be emailed to parents and shared on Instagram at @youthgracealbertlea). Connect with Ashley with any questions at 651-280-9502.

## FEAR NOT!

On that first Christmas night, the angel said to the shepherds: “Do not be afraid” (Luke 2:10). What is there to fear from a baby? A baby is powerless, with no guile, no anger and no judgment, only needing from us without fearing we will not provide: simply trusting, and content to be resting in our arms. This is how God came. This is Christmas. This one child, and for a time, perhaps too brief, our fears are taken over by our love for this child, and he is able to change our hearts. ...

In Jesus, we are free to live life as fully and as joyfully as we will allow ourselves. For it is only we who hold ourselves back. God does not. For God has forgiven us in this baby and will not restrain us from living with sheer abandon, trusting in this gentle and gracious God, who keeps telling us: “Do not be afraid.”

—Gary Westgard, *At Break of Day*

# Parish Nurse Notes



Lori Tuchtenhagen,  
*Parish Nurse*  
parishnurse@gracealbertlea.org

Dear Grace Family,

As we celebrate the miracle of the virgin birth, I am reminded how miraculous the birth of any child is, and what a gift from God. In Deuteronomy 30:20, we are reminded that **all life is a gift from God**. As God's people, we are called to carefully nurture this gift of life. As responsible individuals, I thank all of you that are respectful of yourself and others for wearing masks, doing good handwashing and keeping a safe distance when around others. We at Grace are only doing what is caring and compassionate for the lives of others by returning to virtual worship, asking that you all be as safe as possible and stay home.

Continue to pray for others, reach out by phone, snail mail, use of technology to stay in contact and embrace each other during the holidays and during these times. All people can benefit from our prayers, and may you have the willingness to listen, and support each other.

Continue to pray for the researchers that are working hard to understand and control the virus. May we all do our part to slow the spread...**Please wear a mask.**

We celebrate the precious gift of Jesus at Christmas. May you all celebrate the precious gift of family and friends. Be creative as you reach out to others to share your love in safe and healthy ways.

May God Bless You,  
Lori Tuchtenhagen,  
Parish Nurse

## A Prayer to Jesus for Healing and Guidance

Savior, heal and comfort the sick so that, with health restored, they may give you praise. Divine Physician, accompany our caregivers so that serving with patience, they may heal wisely. Eternal Wisdom, guide our leaders so that seeking remedies they may follow your light. Christ, the Anointed, protect us in body and spirit so that, freed from harm, we may be delivered from all affliction. Who lives and reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.



# Grace Activities

## EFFA

It's time, once again, to focus on an 'Enough Food For All' effort. In December, we will be asking you to participate in a reverse Advent Calendar. Each day, you will add a food item to your box. At the end of Advent, the boxes of food can be dropped off at the church. They will be distributed to those in our community who are experiencing food insecurity. Please consider participating in this opportunity using the Advent Calendar found at <https://media.myworshiptimes31.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/58/2020/11/13141106/Reverse-Advent-Calendar.pdf>. There will also be a container on top of the mailbox at the church in which you can pick up a copy, **Monday through Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm**. Thanks in advance for your generosity making Christmas more special for our neighbors, and for doing God's work with your hands and feet.

## FOOD FOR BACKPACKS



In the spirit of Thanksgiving and Christmas, please consider making a contribution to the Food For Backpacks Program. Just print and cut the backpack found at <https://media.myworshiptimes31.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/58/2020/11/06173305/Backpack-image-to-print-for-Food-For-Backpacks.pdf>, and return it to the office at Grace Lutheran. The outside drop box is available for contactless delivery. Your generosity during this time is greatly appreciated. Thank you so much!

WE LOVE BECAUSE CHRIST  
FIRST LOVED US  
1 JOHN 4:19



## Angel Tree

There are pick-up/drop-off options available for both the tags and gifts, both at church and (contact-less) at the home of Jen Zoller.

Please note! There is a very convenient online shopping option, in which the toys are shipped directly to our local Salvation Army. Super easy way to donate! - <https://www.walmart.com/registry/registryforgood/DBE0D40F-F8B4-4CC9-8177-F38D33AC197F/view>.

**Please contact Jen (info below) or stop at church for a tag!**

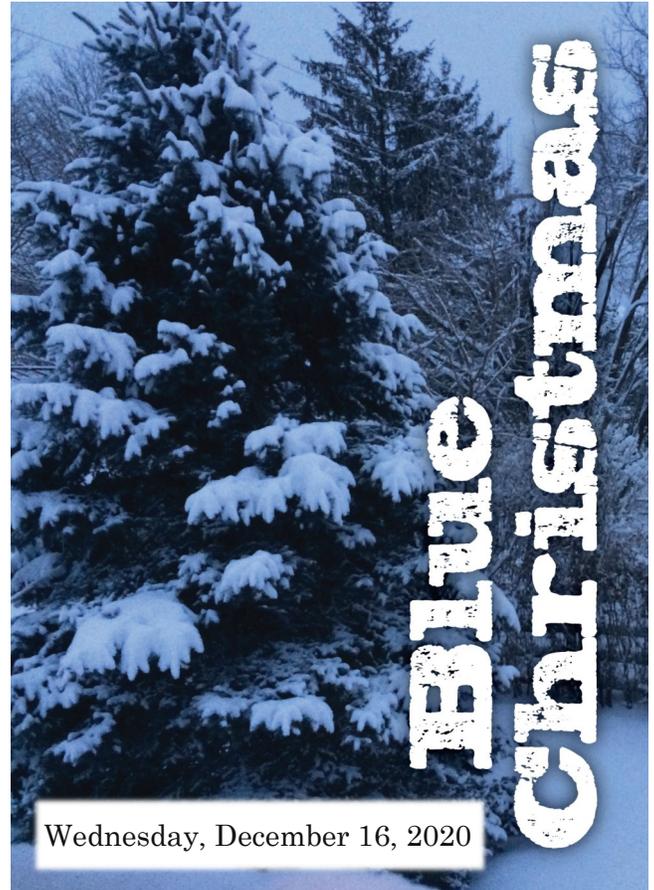
- Jen's number (call or text): 507-383-6215
- Email [jhansonzoller@gmail.com](mailto:jhansonzoller@gmail.com)
- Facebook Messenger — Jen Hanson Zoller

Please reach out if you have any questions.

## LONGEST NIGHT: BLUE CHRISTMAS EVENING PRAYER

While Advent is a season of hope and Christmas is a season of joy, not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. Grief, illness, aging, depression, loneliness, unemployment, and loss are magnified. Even those who are not struggling with losses may feel the stress of preparations and expectations around Christmas time. The Blue Christmas service may provide a time and place of solace during the often frenetic days surrounding the celebration of Christmas. We come together seeking healing and room to share grief, sadness, loneliness, or confusion when these emotions often feel out of place during the holidays.

In the Northern Hemisphere, December 21 is the longest night, the winter solstice. It marks the shortest day of the year, the official start of winter. Tradition says that nature and all her creatures stop and hold their breath to see if the sun will turn back from its wanderings, if the days will lengthen and the earth will once again feel the sun's warmth. On this darkest day of the year, we come with our honest yearnings seeking the return of light and hope.



## CREATION CARE CORNER

This year, we may have to practice our Advent and Christmas traditions in very different ways. It may give us a chance to develop new traditions that are also meaningful, maybe based on earlier celebrations from simpler times. If we have more quiet time for meditation in a season of waiting and hope, perhaps we can re-imagine ways to celebrate that rely on fewer physical trappings and evoke deeper spiritual meaning. A less materially-based Christmas is a more environmentally-friendly celebration as well.

"The earth is the Lord's and we are privileged to be stewards thereof. ...The task of the church is thus to nurture lives of restraint as we use resources and charity as we share them." -Elaine Phillips, reflecting on "Stewards of Eden: What Scripture Says About the Environment and Why it Matters" by Sandra Richter

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5



Source: Wikimedia Commons

# Church Council Minutes

**November 10, 2020, 6:30 p.m. (ZOOM meeting)**

1. Call to Order and Roll  
The meeting was called to order by President Tims at 6:32 PM.
2. Opening: Ashley Kuhlman  
Ashley led the Council in devotions and focused on "100 Days of Grace". Referencing Matthew 11, we embrace that with our heavy burdens; there is rest with Jesus.
3. Open Forum – No topics
4. Approval of Today's Agenda – Action MSA (Moved/Seconded/Approved) by Drommerhausen and Munyer to approve the agenda for the meeting.
5. Approval of Minutes  
MSA by Drommerhausen and Schindler to approve the minutes from the October Council Meeting.
6. Budget Update: Drommerhausen and Tewes  
Budget review noted...
  - Unrestricted budget funds have declined to \$114,000.
  - Giving in October was below previous years.
  - Budgeted spending is below the approved annual budget allocations in all categories. Certain line items are above in the areas of Technology and Worship & Music. This is due in a large part to the church's response to the COVID-19 virus.
  - Review was started on a proposed budget for 2021. At this point in time, the proposed budget is approximately \$42,000 below the budget for 2020.

MSA by Munyer and Groenewig to approve the budget report .

## 7. Reports

Lead Pastor Report: Pastor Koepke

- Chapel work is completed. Immediate uses include Confirmation gatherings and overflow space for worship.
- A \$3000 estate gift is being designated to technology.
- Staff involvement in budget planning was praised.

Associate Pastor Report: Pastor Gonsalves

- Education was the focus for October... Confirmation curriculum and Sunday School
- At-home Advent Kit materials have been secured and will be prepared for distribution.

Deacon's Report and Technology Update:  
Deacon Bob Tewes

- The new Sunday School Christmas Program musical is completed. There is a preview on the Grace webpage. Next step is to rehearse and record the performances.
- Chancel and Bell Choirs are practicing and performing.
- Bandwidth issues appear to be impacting the quality of the Sunday Facebook services. Grace may limit broadcast on YouTube to alleviate the problem.

Commission & Committee Report Highlights

- Pandemic Team – In light of the increased virus cases in Freeborn County, Grace is encouraging members to worship at home. Live Sunday worship in the chapel will continue with continued application of social distancing practices. The Governor's guidance has limited non-worship group gatherings but did not modify previous church service guidance.

*Continued on page 9*

## Church Council Minutes Continued

- Capital Campaign – Giving to the campaign totaled \$36,329 in October and that amount was matched by the Grace Foundation. Total giving to the campaign now stands at \$1,196,190. The Foundation has reached \$48,441 of its pledged match of \$75,000.
  - Capital Campaign Restroom Project – Approved bids for the project include Johnson Heating and Master Plumbing. Another bid is pending for contracting services.
8. Old Business  
75<sup>th</sup> Celebration: October 10, 2021  
(Committee: Pastor Shane, Jim Munyer, Marsha Smith)
- Celebration will include visiting pastor sermons and a visit from the bishop
  - A budget will be proposed to the Council and congregation for 2021.
- Constitution
- Reviewed and discussed proposed language changes, including Council approval of contracts, annual meeting attendance, and the process for initiating amendments.

- MSA by Schindler and Drommerhausen to approve the draft and send it on to the Synod for their review and feedback.

### 9. New/Other Business

Plan for holiday worship services

- A 1:00 PM worship was added to the Christmas Eve schedule of services at 3:00/5:00/11:00.
- Christmas Day worship will be at 10:00 AM.
- Thanksgiving worship will be Tuesday, November 24 at 7:00 PM.
- Blue Christmas worship will be Wednesday, December 16.

Tasks to Complete Prior to Next Council Meeting – No items

Any other business – No items

10. Prayer Intercessions – Deacon Tewes led the Council in prayer
11. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Schindler

Grace Lutheran Church Council Secretary

There is Simply  
— NO —  
Christmas without Christ

# Gifts of Love

## BATHROOM RENOVATION/BOILER/BUILDING/ ROOF/FURNACE FUND

### Gift Given By:

Carroll & Mavis Hanson

## BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAMS

### In Memory Of:

Ron Godtland given by Dale & Lunn Reich

### Gifts Given By:

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin, Marsha Wolfgram,  
Mick & Becky Hanson

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

### In Memory Of:

Julie Jasperson given by Kent Jasperson

## FOOD SHELF

### In Memory Of:

Marvel Schewe given by Solveig Peterson,  
Ross & Shelly Peterson

Dick Godtland given by Sandy Godtland

### Gift Given By:

Faith Ryan, Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

## GODTLAND SCHOLARSHIP

### In Memory Of:

Ron Godtland given by Gordon Johnson &  
Marie Herrenschildt

## LOVE OFFERING

### Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

## MARTIN LUTHER FUND

### In Memory Of:

Roald Tweet, brother-in-law of Ona Meyer given by  
Dex & Jan Henschel

## MEMORIAL FUND

### In Memory Of:

Marilee Citsay given by Mark Citsay

Edwin Johnson given by Gaylen & Kathy Johnson

## MUSIC FUND

### In Memory Of:

Ron Godtland given by Carmen Skophammer

## PRAYER GARDEN

### In Memory Of:

Rondal Telfer given by Lester Perschbacher

Christine Jahnke given by Richard &  
Darlene Jordahl

Shannon Wadding, son of Connie Wadding given  
by Dex & Jan Henschel

Julie Jasperson given by Kent Jasperson

## QUILTERS

### In Memory Of:

Marilee Citsay given by Sandy Fredrickson

**PLEASE NOTE** that any additional "Gifts of Love" recorded by the church office after November 22, 2020 will appear in the next issue. If you have given a gift and your name has not been recorded, please call the church office so the correction can be made. Thank you.



# DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> 9:30a Staff Meeting 10:00a NO Bible Study 6:00p NO Bells of Praise	<b>2</b> 9:00a Sewing Group 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs <b>5:30p Online Worship Only</b> 6:30p Confirmation/Online	<b>3</b> 6:00a Early Bible Study 1:30p NO SAIL	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6 2nd Sunday of Advent</b> <b>9:00a Online Worship Only</b> 10:00a Sunday School Online 7:00p Youth Group/Online	<b>7</b> 1:30p NO SAIL 6:00p Hardanger Group	<b>8</b> 9:30a Staff Meeting 10:00a NO Bible Study 6:00p NO Bells of Praise 6:30p Council Meeting	<b>9</b> 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs <b>5:30p Online Worship Only</b> 6:30p Confirmation/Online	<b>10</b> 6:00a Early Bible Study 1:30p NO SAIL	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13 3rd Sunday of Advent</b> <b>9:00a Worship Service</b> 10:00a Sunday School Online 7:00p Youth Group/Online	<b>14</b> 1:30p NO SAIL 6:00p Hardanger Group	<b>15 Newsletter Deadline</b> 9:30a Staff Meeting 10:00a No Bible Study 6:00p NO Bells of Praise	<b>16 BLUE CHRISTMAS</b> 9:00a Sewing Group 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs <b>5:30p Blue Christmas Worship Service</b> 6:30p Confirmation/Online	<b>17</b> 6:00a Early Bible Study 1:30p NO SAIL	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20 4th Sunday of Advent</b> <b>9:00a Worship Service</b> 10:00a Sunday School Online 7:00p Youth Group/Online	<b>21</b> 1:30p NO SAIL 6:00p Hardanger Group	<b>22</b> 9:30a Staff Meeting 10:00a NO Bible Study 6:00p NO Bells of Praise	<b>23</b> 9:00a Martha Circle 4:30p Cherub & Chancel Choirs 6:30p NO Confirmation	<b>24 CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <b>1:00p Worship</b> <b>3:00p Worship</b> <b>5:00p Worship</b> <b>11:00p Candlelight Worship</b>  OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON	<b>25 CHRISTMAS DAY</b> <b>10:00a Worship Service Online only</b>  OFFICE CLOSED & BUILDING (after worship)	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> <b>9:00a Worship Service</b> 9:45a NO Sunday School 6:00p NO Youth Group	<b>28</b> 1:30p NO SAIL 6:00p Hardanger Group  <b>Annual Reports Due</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31 New Year's Eve</b>		

**PLEASE NOTE: TIMES AND EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

# Grace Prays

## Prayers of Healing

Sharon Dickson  
Bob & Doris Miller

## Prayers for those Grieving

The family and friends of **Ronald (Ron) Godtland**  
(brother of LuVerne Godtland  
& brother-in-law of Sandra Godtland)

The family and friends of **Shannon Wadding**  
(son of Connie Wadding)

**Jan Kedrowski**  
(mother of Karen (Mark) Sanderson)

## Prayers of Joy

Birth of **Arthur William Field** on November 8<sup>th</sup>  
to parents Brady & Dani Field,  
grandparents, Doug & Jan Field and  
great-grandparents, Bob & Bev Field.

*If you know anyone needing prayers of our congregation, please let us know so we can include them on our list. Requests for the Prayer Chain can be arranged by calling the church office.*

## December

*(The list below is to remind us to pray for our Grace family members on the following dates.)*

1. Keith & Angie Flatness
2. Jay & Debbie Flink
3. Wynnette Flores, Joey
4. David & Jean Frank
5. Becky Freden, Riley
6. Sandy Fredrickson
7. Scott Fredrickson
8. Gretchen Gade
9. Robert Gade
10. Dolores Gavle
11. Raymond & Pierrette Gavle
12. Philip Gehring, Kasey
13. Mary Gilbertson
14. Melvin & Dawn Gilbertson
15. LuVerne Godtland
16. Sandra Godtland
17. Pastor Jennifer Gonsalves
18. Kay Goodmanson
19. Phillip Goodmanson, Kennady
20. Janiece Gordon
21. Kevin & Julie Grahn
22. Ryan & Kristin Green, Ethan, Tanner
23. Mark & Nancy Greiner
24. Lucille Gripentrog
25. Kathe Grodhaus
26. Ed & Julie Groeneweg
27. Jackie Groeneweg, Connor
28. Ben & Griebana Groff, Kaitlyn Hanna
29. Bill & Gwen Groskurth
30. Talora Grosland
31. Natasha Grove, Benett, Averie



## Caring and Sharing

### Co-Chairs: Pat Arends and Gwen Groskurth

Bonnie & Terry Adams  
Denise & Paul Andersen  
Debbie & Tom Baas  
Gerri & Kenn Breamer  
Danielle Bure  
Melissa & Matthew Cichon  
Darlene & Paul Diemer  
Charlotte & Dale Elvebak  
Sandy Fredickson  
Mary Hallum  
Janice Helgeson  
Pat & Ron Holton  
Lisa Johnson  
Nicole & Matthew Johnson  
Pat Johnson  
Dianne & Eugene Knudtson  
Pam & Bill Leland  
Teresa & Joel Matheson  
Betty & Ron Mathews  
Charlene Meyer  
Lorraine & Paul Nagel  
LaDonna Nelson  
Donna Oakland  
Tonia & Darin Palmer  
Keli & Andy Petersen  
Barb & Lowell Peterson  
Carol Peterson  
Susan Ranney  
Faith Ryan  
Jo Sandler  
Lynn & Blake Stadheim  
Kim Stevens  
Tina & Tony Strom  
Tiffany & Robert Syverson  
Lanae & Larry Thorstad  
Carlyn Tufte  
Justine VanRyswyk

### **STUDY OPPORTUNITIES for Adults at Grace**

We invite you to join any of our regular Bible study groups at Grace Lutheran.

#### **Sunday Morning Adult Forum September — May**

(Postponed until further notice)

#### **Tuesday Morning Bible**

Tuesday mornings, 10:00-11:00 am

(Postponed until further notice)

This study for women offers fellowship, singing, and great discussion.

#### **Thursday Morning Bible Study**

6:00-7:00 am (*Online*)

Consider joining this group where there is an opportunity for good discussion and good fellowship.

#### **Grace WELCA Women's Circles**

**Mary Circle** (Postponed until further notice)

**Lois Circle** (Postponed until further notice)

**Martha Circle** (meeting 4th Wednesday, 9:30 am)

New members are always welcome! Call the church office, 373-6496, for more information.

*Merry Christmas*

**A most blessed Christmas to you, each and every one, from the Grace staff:** Pastor Shane, Pastor Jennifer, Bob, Ashley, Marsha, Kandy, Darin, Lori, Sherry, Wynnette, Joey, Brecken and from our families to you and yours. May the birth of the Christ Child be the beginning of a new year of blessings and deepest joy in following Him as Lord!



## QUARTERS FOR WORLD HUNGER

Thank you for your response to Hunger Awareness during the year with gifts to ELCA World Hunger and to the local food shelf. Every time we look at an empty bowl in our cupboard, let it remind us that hunger happens every day! Hunger happens to people in our community, in the United States and in countries all around the world. As we prepare for Christmas and think about buying gifts for family and friends, we are once again reminded that God gave us the ultimate gift. God sent his only Son to free us from our sins. With thankful hearts we pass on blessings to those in need. Thank you for your continued support to ELCA World Hunger and our local food shelves.



**NO FAIR TRADE COFFEE**  
Until further notice



Remember your coins for Sunday's Noisy offering!

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER AND BECOMING DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST!

Shane Koepke  
**Lead Pastor**

Jennifer Gonsalves  
**Associate Pastor**

### **Office Hours**

9:00 am—5:00 pm  
Monday—Friday  
507-373-6496

### **Worship Services**

Sunday Morning 9:00 am  
Online

### **Sunday School**

Sunday Morning 10:00 am  
Online

### **GRACE NOTES**

is published monthly by  
Grace Lutheran Church  
918 Garfield Avenue  
Albert Lea, MN 56007

[www.gracealbertlea.org](http://www.gracealbertlea.org)  
[www.facebook.com/  
GraceAlbertLea](https://www.facebook.com/GraceAlbertLea)

## GENEROSITY AT GRACE

**OCTOBER**  
2020

Average  
**ATTENDANCE**  
with online and in-  
person worship was:  
557 per worship  
online  
79 per worship  
in person

**GIVING**  
\$34,059.46

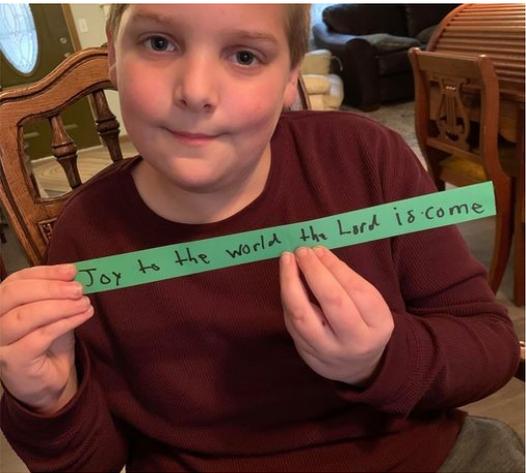
**EXPENSES**  
-\$52,639.33

**YEAR TO DATE**  
**GIVING vs**  
**EXPENSES**  
\$25,712.47

*Thanks for your attendance either In-Person or Live Streaming as we continue to be the church apart and together.*

*The Finance Ministry Team and Church Council appreciate your generous support.  
Your faithful Stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace Lutheran.*

# PREPARING for CHRISTMAS



**I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY:** For Christmas this year, one large tree has been set up front to be decorated with ornaments made by you! **You can pick up kits with all of the materials from Grace or through Jen Zoller.** Included in the kits is also a Congregational Christmas Message Project. The ornaments will be put on the Christmas tree. Our hope is to create a warm, folksy, family-feeling of togetherness, even though we may be apart. Kits come with instructions and slips of paper to participate in the Congregational Christmas Message Chain. You can pick up these materials from Grace Lutheran on top of the mailbox Monday through Friday from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Please return ornaments by placing them in the mailbox.

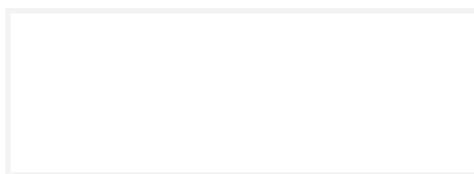
*Pictured: Grace staff setting up the large tree in preparation for the ornaments seen in the example above.*

Grace Lutheran Church  
918 Garfield Avenue  
Albert Lea, MN 56007

Telephone: 507-373-6496  
Email: [office@gracealbertlea.org](mailto:office@gracealbertlea.org)



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Albert Lea, MN  
Permit No. 208



## **Christmas Worship Schedules**

**Blue Christmas Worship Service**  
Wednesday, Dec. 16 — 5:30pm  
A Service of Hope and Remembering

**Christmas Eve Worship**  
Tuesday, Dec. 24 — 1:00, 3:00, 5:00 and 11:00pm

**Christmas Day Worship (Online Only)**  
Wednesday, Dec. 25 — 10:00am