



# Grace Notes

Gather • Feed • Send

December 2023



## *Advent and Christmas Worship and Fellowship*

### What's Inside

Advent and Christmas Worship Schedule ..... 1  
 From Our Senior Pastor.....2  
 From Our Associate Pastor .....4  
 Financial Page .....6  
 Council Highlights .....6  
 Worship Words .....7  
 Preparing for Worship .....7  
 Super Wednesday.....8  
 Congregation News/Events... 8-12  
 Disciples Together. .... 10  
 DEIB Team News..... 10  
 Green Tip of the Month ..... 11  
 Anti-Hunger Update ..... 12  
 Calendar .....13-14  
 God is With Us. .... 15  
 Faith Formation .....16-18  
 Campus Ministry ..... 19  
 Preschool News.....20-21  
 Worship Sponsors & Volunteers ..... 22  
 Pastoral Acts, Birthdays & Prayers ..... 23

### Midweek Advent worship, Nov. 29 and Dec. 6

Both of these Wednesday night services will start at **6:15 p.m.** and include the ever-popular Holden Evening Prayer liturgy which so prominently features light and hope.

### AdventFest Sunday, December 3, 11:40 a.m.

Join us in Harkins Hall directly following morning worship to experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of Advent and the Holy Lands!

### Fellowship Christmas Dinner, Dec. 13, 5-6:15 p.m.

Our traditional Christmas fellowship dinner will be served on **Wednesday, December 13** in Harkins Hall with extended time: **5-6:15 p.m.** See p. 8 for menu items.

### A Night for Weary Hearts, Dec. 14, 4 p.m.

We gather together in the midst of suffering to remember: God is good. God is strong. God is near. O Come, Emmanuel, be God with us and hold our weary hearts in your heart. See p. 9 for more information.

### Christmas Caroling Caravan, Dec. 17

Join the pastors as we visit our homebound friends on **December 17 from 1-3 p.m.** to share Christmas joy. See p. 8 for more details and sign-up information.

### 4th Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve Services, Dec. 24

There are 4 opportunities to worship on Christmas Eve:

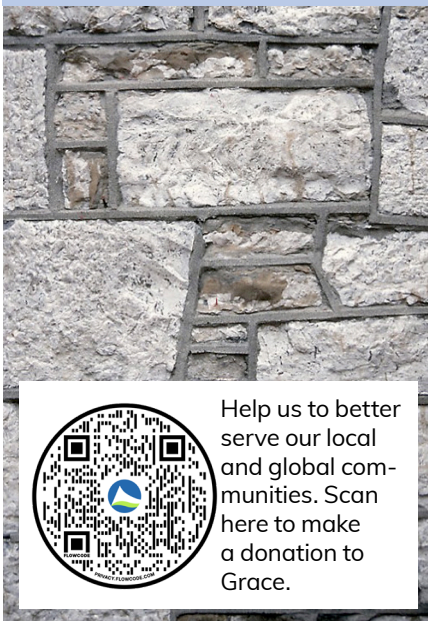
- **4th Sunday of Advent Service at 10:30 a.m.** - This service will be live-streamed and on the radio, like any other Sunday.
- **Christmas Eve Family Service at 4:30 p.m.** complete with live nativity and a visit from Santa
- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7:00 p.m.** - live-streamed and on the radio
- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 9:00 p.m.** - not live-streamed

### Christmas Day - Monday Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m.

Join us for this **10:30 a.m.** service. It's a wonderful way to further enter into the joy of Christ's nativity. This service will be on the radio but will not be live-streamed.

### New Year's Eve Sunday, Dec. 31, at 8, 9 and 10:30 a.m.

Time to ring out the old and ring in the new. Let's worship together on the first Sunday of Christmas at our normal Sunday morning worship times.



Help us to better serve our local and global communities. Scan here to make a donation to Grace.

## From Our Senior Pastor



The Rev. Scott E. Schul  
pastorschul@glcpa.org

### Smiling with Mary

Religion can be such grim business. I'm not exactly sure why that is. But read enough theology books and visit with enough pious people, and you begin to see a pattern. We have equated faithfulness with misery, seriousness, and an unwillingness to admit to happiness. Certainly we should take our faith seriously, and there is plenty in the world that could and should make us sad, angry, and resolute in our commitment to justice and mercy. But that's a very different notion from the idea that to be authentically pious, one must be grim and miserable.

There are plenty of passages in the Gospels which contain quips and other evidences of humor from Jesus himself. Not all the saints had the sourpuss expressions we see in their iconography either. For example, when the Romans were roasting St. Lawrence (255-258) on a gridiron, Lawrence is reported to have said, "I'm well done on this side. Turn me over!" That's the kind of thing only a person with a true sense of humor might say. And given that those were likely among his last words, it's the kind of thing only a person with rock-solid faith might say.

And that is the point I most want to make. If we truly believe that Jesus loves us, has saved us, is present among us, and has made a room just for us for our eternal blessing, then we have a LOT to make us smile. Again, I fully acknowledge that life is full of difficulties and suffering. But if we believe that Christ has the last and best word on all of it, shouldn't that lead us to a greater sense of happiness in this life? Billy Joel famously sang that he'd rather "laugh with the sinners than cry with the saints," but I think the saints – defined broadly as we who believe in and follow Christ – have much that should make us laugh and smile.



I think about this whenever I visit the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. As you make your way to a steep stone staircase that leads to the very spot where Jesus was born, you pass a very large icon that is mounted to the right of the staircase entrance. It is my favorite icon in all of the Holy Lands, because it shows Mary holding the infant Jesus while she is smiling. Being a mother of a newborn is hard work, and Mary had special insight that being Je-

sus's mother would entail a measure of suffering. Nevertheless, I am certain that being his mother likewise gave her great joy, not only because Jesus was her son, but because she knew that his mission was to bless and save the world.

During the upcoming Christmas season, I want to encourage all Christians – especially our Grace Lutheran Christians – to smile a little more, not because everything is perfect or painless, but because we are loved by Jesus Christ, who came into the world to defeat all the things that would oppress us and enslave us. Jesus clothes us in righteousness, crowns us with forgiveness, and equips us with hope - not just at Christmas, but every single day. There is no better way to share the Gospel than to be a Christian who lives in authentic hope and a faith that puts not just a prayer in your heart but a smile on your face.

### Easier Access to Grace

Speaking of things that should make us smile, we have signed contracts to complete ADA access and curb cuts at both Grace's Main Entrance and our Miller Center entrance. Especially at the Main Entrance, the curb is perilously high (8"). We had hoped that construction would begin at the end of November, but our construction company just notified me that delays on their other projects may delay our work until January. Once we get the green light to begin, it will take about two weeks to finish. This project will be a huge benefit for those with mobility concerns and will enable wheelchair users to roll right into the main entrance and into the elevator.

### Narthex/Welcome Center Refurbishment

The re-visioned Narthex/Welcome Center space is slowly but surely



beginning to take shape as old, unused fixtures are removed and the Welcome Center table repositioned near the main entrance at the top of the steps. We will eventually install cabinets behind the new Welcome Center space, and fresh carpet at the old Welcome Center space will spruce that area up as it takes on new life as the hub for all member engagement and sign-ups. I think the changes, coupled with the brighter, more energy-efficient lighting we have already installed, is making this well-used space more welcoming. It even feels larger.

### **Honoring our Military Veterans**

**On Thursday, November 9,** Pastor Hetrick and I were honored to dedicate Grace's new Veterans Memorial as part of Grace Lutheran Preschool's annual Veterans Day event. It is near the columbarium. I encourage you to take a look at it and, while there, offer a word of thanks to God for the many people from Grace who have protected our nation. Many thanks to Don and Deana Coine for suggesting the memorial.

### **Advent**

I always find Advent to be one of my favorite church seasons. I love the blue of the paraments, the hymnody, and the scriptures assigned to the season. Those Biblical texts aim at the heart of fundamental human questions we have about Jesus. Why did God assume flesh and become human in the first place? And when Jesus comes back to us, what will that be like? Spoiler alert: the answer is always love. It is love that brought Jesus to the manger and love that will spur Jesus's return to us when the heavenly kingdom someday finally and fully takes its place here on earth.

Midweek Advent worship will take place on **Wednesday, November 29 and Wednesday, December 6.** Both services will start at **6:15 p.m.** and include the ever-popular Holden Evening Prayer liturgy which so prominently features light and hope.

And while we're on the topic of Advent, check out my little article on Advent wreathes on page 7 of this edition of Grace Notes.

### **Christmas Eve/Day Worship**

This year, the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve both fall on **December 24.** So as we previously announced, and consistent with past practice here at Grace, we will hold just one worship service in the morning to commemorate the final Sunday of Advent. That service will take place at **10:30 a.m.** and will be live-streamed and on the radio, like any other Sunday.

Christmas Eve worship will include our family service at **4:30** (complete with Santa) and candlelight worship at **7 p.m. and 9 p.m.** The **7 p.m.** service will be on the radio and live-streamed. This year, because of the extra obligations placed on our volunteers and staff by the morning service, we will not hold an **11 p.m.** service. Attendance at that service has been declining because our seniors prefer not to drive that late and for young families it interferes with bedtime.

On **Monday, Christmas Day,** join us at **10:30 a.m.** for worship. It's a wonderful way to further enter into the joy of Christ's nativity. That service will be on the radio but will not be live-streamed, so that our Tech Team can take a well-earned break.

### **Other Important Upcoming Dates**

- **12/13:** Christmas Dinner prepared by our Super Wednesday Team (our Thanksgiving Dinner drew well over 200 diners, so get there early!)
- **12/14:** Night for Weary Hearts worship (see page 9 for details)
- And looking ahead to next year, circle **January 14** on your calendar if you or someone you know is feeling drawn to join Grace Lutheran. We will be receiving new members on that day.



### **Our Next Pilgrimage: Following the Footsteps of Paul in Greece**

Last summer, it was such a joy to lead a group of pilgrims from Grace and the Allegheny Synod to the Holy Lands. Our faith was transformed by the experience of walking in Jesus's footsteps. Our next trip to Israel is scheduled for **January 2025**, when the weather is a little cooler. That trip is still on, despite the war. Things change rapidly in the Middle East and so it would be premature to draw any conclusions now about what life will be like there in over a year.

But in the meantime, my partners at Elias Travels and I are going to continue our faith journey next October by walking in the Apostle Paul's footsteps to Greece. The trip is scheduled for **Oct. 1–12, 2024.** It's the perfect time to visit Greece; the "high season" of tourism is over and the temperatures (highs in the 70s and low 80s) are perfect. Places you've read about in the New Testament, like Athens, Thessaloniki and Corinth, will come alive for you and ignite your faith in new ways as we walk and pray together in this "other" very holy land.

Interested? See me for more information. I would love to have you aboard for this amazing journey.

~ Cont'd on p. 5

## From Our Associate Pastor

*“Wait, what day is it?”  
“Where is that message they sent?”  
“When do we need to be there?”*

Do any of these quotes above ever sound like you? Maybe it is because you are balancing the needs of kiddos and work and activities. Maybe you are in the sandwich generation between caring for elders and trying to celebrate grand babies. Maybe it is work, or heavy emotions of news and events that fill your moments. These things may be a mix of the good and the necessary, and some things that have fallen to you no matter what. Or maybe your world has gotten smaller and the things and people who once grounded you are far away and the roadmap now feels foreign. If you feel like you no longer know what time it is, you are not alone. In the world buzzing around us, Walter Brueggeman writes, “dominant culture in North America no longer knows what time it is, because every season has now been homogenized into an uninterrupted ‘shopping season’ and when we do not know what time it is we are unlikely to remember ‘former times’ and surely have no ground to hope for ‘new things’.” Referring all our seasons back to the Lord of all time may, in quite concrete ways, resist the timelessness of consumerism back into the timefulness of our faith.”

By the time this reaches you, the buzz of the holidays will be in full swing. I am not issuing a “bah humbug,” about when you listen to Christmas music or shop, as much as giving a companion for how our days can remain grounded in the story that is deep and sustaining. We have just begun a new year in Christ’s church where we are remembering and living in the story of Jesus as those who live in

cultures that have forgotten or never heard the Christian story. Christ is the marker of our time. We can reclaim how the church lives as our marker of time. It will not happen perfectly, but I hope and pray for God’s love to give you what you most need, beloveds. Keep those lights and music on every day; they help you spend time with our Savior.

But, let’s slow down for just a moment and think about what Advent is calling us into. To help, I offer one way that has come from my own experience in letting others help me carve out time with God. Beginning on **Monday, December 4**, there will be a once-weekly 12-minute reflection posted on “Pocketful of Grace” as we remember how Jesus is coming into our world. To access the weekly reflection just go to our website, [www.glcpa.org](http://www.glcpa.org) and click LISTEN on the homepage. My gift to you.

The first week will focus on “Making Room” just as Mary needed to do when she learned she would be pregnant. How can we make room amidst all we have to do in our lives? The 2nd week, we will spend time with Mary and Elizabeth in their waiting, hoping and anxiousness, and our own. What are your hopes and longings? The 3rd week, we will “Breathe.” Expectant moms and sometimes all of us need to catch our breath or maybe stop holding it. Our final week we will “Rejoice.” Maybe you’ll listen on **December 26**, known as Women’s Christmas, the day to sit back and relax and give thanks and, as The Porter’s Gate sings, “Take it easy, God already loves you completely. Lay down your burdens and rest awhile.” Each “Pocketful of Grace” will give you a scripture, music for



The Rev. Carolyn K. Hetrick  
pastorhetrick@glcpa.org

contemplation, reflection questions, prayer time and a takeaway about other resources listed in the episode notes. Why 12 minutes? My morning drive is my devotion time and this pocketful of time, like any time with Jesus, is good.

I am so looking forward to spending this Advent and Christmas with you as we remember Jesus is right here. Our hopes can indeed be expectations that his appearance will astound and fill us and change us. I hope to see you for midweek Advent on **December 6**, at our holiday meal, or maybe our two caroling opportunities listed in this newsletter (see p. 8), and on Christmas Eve. However we gather, in person or in spirit, remember that Christ was born for you, God’s love has come for you and that love will never let you go. God so loves the world God sent the Son. God is good. God is strong. God is near. Emmanuel comes to be God with us and help us remember we are not alone. We remind each other we have every reason to hope as we walk in the light of this story. Another year in God’s love is beginning, and Michael and I wish you and your beloveds a Blessed Christmas. Yours in Christ,

~ Pastor Carolyn



## Grace Lutheran Website Upgrade

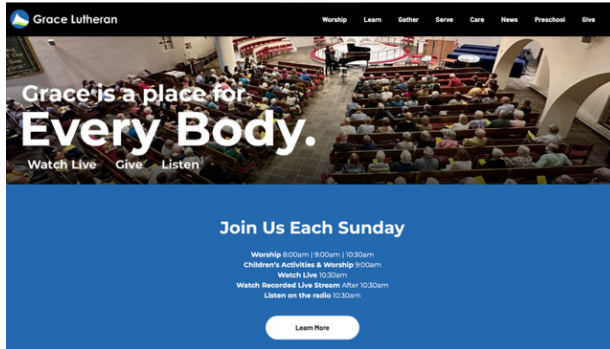
Our Grace website has received an updated look to match the new opportunities for faith and community and to provide the best access to information and our livestream. If you have not visited lately, check it out at [www.glcpa.org](http://www.glcpa.org). We have an important and updated welcome statement - **Grace is a Place for Every Body**. We want everyone to come and experience God's presence with us. Scroll down to the bottom of the landing page to see colorful photo tiles and to be linked to in-depth information about our many groups, activities and ministries.

Here are some other things you will see:

- **WATCH LIVE-**  
Large letters on the homepage and one click takes you to our livestream, and previously recorded worship.
- **TABS AT THE TOP:**
  - **WORSHIP** - This tab takes you to all things related to our worship services, music, bulletins, and even a confidential prayer request that comes to the pastors. Or scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on the **SUNDAYS** photo.
  - **LEARN** - This tab takes you to information about baptism, adult learning and kids, youth and young adults. You can also sign up to serve on Sundays in worship.
  - **GATHER** - This tab takes you to information on Super Wednesdays, Disciples Together, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Women of Grace and our Green Team.
  - **CARE** - This tab takes you to our Stephen Ministry, Faith Community Nurse and Congregation Care team.
  - **SERVE** - This tab takes you to our Serving Hub. Want to match your interest to an opportunity to serve? Want to connect with a ministry but aren't sure how? Choose your interest and you will be directed to a Contact form that will go to the coordinator so you can be connected.
  - **NEWS** - This tab contains our Grace Notes Newsletter, Calendar and Weekly News (formerly called E-Notes).

The photo tiles at the bottom of the page contain the same information by Sundays and Wednesdays. Information about giving and our Preschool is also available.

For those of you who use smartphones we will be rolling out a Grace App for your phones. It will be free and contain similar information, but will also allow for push notifications about events or weather-related information. In the event of inclement weather, the pop-up box on the website will provide this for web users. Information for signing up for the app will be in bulletins and the next issue of Grace Notes. Thank you to Sharyn Everhart for assisting us in maintaining our content!



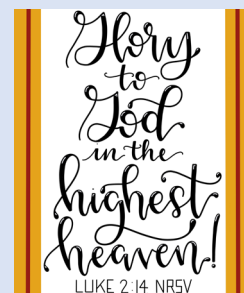
~ Senior Pastor Cont'd. from p. 3

### Finally...

I love the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. An expert in music would be able to cite many technical reasons why our ears find his melodies and harmonies so pleasing. But as a theologian, I credit the enduring popularity and excellence of Bach's music to the fact that every note is infused with faith. He once wrote, "The aim and final end of all music should be none else other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul." Indeed, Bach's compositions do just that. Yet couldn't we say this about all the work we are called to do in this life? Whether teaching children in a classroom, working as an electrician or plumber, forecasting the weather, or any other vocation you can think of, the end of all we do should be the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul. Volumes of books could be written to unpack what this means, how it might be accomplished, and even what it means for one's soul to be refreshed. Instead, I encourage you to make Bach's quote your own. Consider your daily activities and your daily work. Is it giving glory to God? Is it refreshing your soul or someone else's soul (however you might define that)? If not, why not? Perhaps as a new season and a new year dawns, God is calling you to a holier and more peace-filled way to work and to be. Thanks be to God.

Peace be with you.

~ Pastor Schul





## Finances for 2023

Church FINANCES	GLC Actual Income vs. Expense, October 2023	GLC Budgeted Income vs. Expense, October 2023	+ or (-)	%
Income	\$68,447.87	\$83,840.00	(\$15,392.13)	-18.36%
Expenses	\$78,918.89	\$88,398.72	(\$9,479.83)	-10.72%
Net Income	(\$10,471.02)	(\$4,558.72)		

After record-breaking giving in August, both September and October giving at Grace was slightly below average compared to prior years. We did, however maintain our expenses below budget. However, with two months falling below budgeted giving (even with expenses kept in check) it is beginning to impact our bottom line adversely. Any reconsideration of your giving would be greatly welcome. If you have missed Sundays due to travel or football, please consider making up those missed gifts, because Grace's expenses never take a holiday. The most convenient and helpful way to ensure steady support is by a secure, scheduled monthly bank transfer (called an "ACH") from you to Grace. To set this up, or to increase or change your monthly account transfer, email Sally Grine, Finc. Admin. at [sgrine@glcpa.org](mailto:sgrine@glcpa.org) or call her at 814-238-2478. You can also donate using any major credit card via Tithe.ly, which is accessible via the GIVE button on our website at [www.glcpa.org](http://www.glcpa.org). Please consider covering the processing fee (approximately 2% of your donation) to ensure Grace benefits fully from your support. An increase of \$20, \$10, \$5, or even \$1 per week from many people can make a significant difference. *Thank you!*



At its November 2023 meeting, Grace's Church Council:

- Agreed to enter into a contract with LandServ to construct ADA-compliant access points at the main entrance and Miller Center entrance; and
- Gratefully received a presentation from our Faith Formation Team, Cindy Fritz and Peter Horn, about the many Faith Formation youth education programs currently available at Grace, including the recently-returned Munchkin Brunchkin program for toddlers and their parents.

### Did you know...

... that Advent is just around the corner? Grace's first midweek Advent service will be held on **Wednesday, November 29 at 6:15 p.m.** The First Sunday of Advent is **December 3, 2023.**



### Dates to Know About

#### December 6

Regular Super Wednesday in Harkins Hall **5:15-6 p.m.**

#### December 13

Fellowship Christmas dinner in Harkins Hall with extended hours, **5-6:15 p.m.** (see special dinner menu on p. 8)

#### December 20

No Super Wednesday

#### December 27

No Super Wednesday

#### January 3

No Super Wednesday



## Preparing our Hearts and Minds for Worship

Sunday	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Holy Gospel
<b>December 3</b> First Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 64:1-9	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
<b>December 10</b> Second Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 40:1-11	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8
<b>December 17</b> Third Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Psalm 126	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
<b>December 24</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	Luke 1:46b-55	Romans 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38
<b>December 24</b> Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Eve	Isaiah 9:2-7	Psalm 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]
<b>December 25</b> Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Day	Isaiah 62:6-12	Psalm 97	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20
<b>December 31</b> First Sunday of Christmas	Isaiah 61:10--62:3	Psalm 148	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

# Worship WORDS

Each month in “Worship Words” we explore a different word that relates to our worship life. This month, we will examine the **Advent wreath**. Almost ten years ago, the ELCA’s worship staff published a helpful paper on the history of Advent wreaths. I will share a bit of what they wrote:

The Advent wreath has its roots in the pre-Christian practices of northern Europe. People sought the return of the sun in the dark time of the year (at the winter solstice) by lighting candles and fires. As early as the Middle Ages, Christians used fire and light to represent Christ’s coming into the world. Using this same symbolism, the Advent wreath developed a few centuries ago in Germany as a sign of the waiting and hopeful expectation of the return in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. The wreath, a circle, came to represent the eternal victory over death through Jesus Christ. The evergreens were a sign of the faithfulness of God to God’s people, even in death, and the lighted candles were a reminder of the light of Christ brought into the world.

From this we can see that Advent wreaths are powerful symbols as we contemplate both Christ’s incarnation in Bethlehem and his promised return someday in the future. It offers encouragement to live in hope and the assurance of Christ’s victory even as we live in times which often seem riddled with conflict and suffering. Indeed, Christ’s victory has been attained, but we have not yet tasted the full fruits of that victory. It is sort of like a football game where the home team leads by five touchdowns at halftime. You can feel confident that the home team will win, but the rest of the game must be played out, and during those final two quarters there will be injuries, setbacks, and moments of despair, even though the outcome is assured. Amidst such distractions, the Advent wreath helps keep us grounded in the eternal truth of Christ’s victory.



I hope you will consider having an Advent wreath at home. Assembling one can be a fun activity for a family or group of friends. Use the Advent wreath as a time to slow down and refocus on Jesus. Light a candle. Read a prayer. Sit in silence. Pray. Give thanks. Take a break from the hustle and bustle of the season and be renewed with this simple practice that reorients us toward beautiful, encouraging, assuring, eternal truths of God’s love for you and for all of creation. ~ *Pastor Schul*



# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & EVENTS



## AdventFest at Grace on Sunday, Dec. 3

Join us for our annual AdventFest on **Sunday, December 3 at 11:40** (following morning worship) and experience sights, sounds, and tastes of Advent and the Holy Lands! Enjoy a Middle-eastern buffet in Harkins Hall while listening to live

seasonal music. View displays from The Holy Lands; pray The Lord's Prayer in Arabic; hear parish musicians share seasonal carols; sing a carol from the region. The event ends around **1:15-1:30 p.m.** If you can contribute to the displays or donate a side dish to complement the Mediterranean Beef Stew and baklava Grace is providing, contact Cindy or Peter ([faithformation@glcpa.org](mailto:faithformation@glcpa.org)), Laurel ([lsanders@glcpa.org](mailto:lsanders@glcpa.org)), or call the office at 814-238-2478.



## Grace Lutheran 2023 Christmas CAR-oling

Break out that tacky Christmas sweater, and rev up your singing voice! Join the pastors as we visit our homebound friends on **December 17 from 1-3 p.m.** to share Christmas joy. We provide the song sheets and jingle bells. Please sign up to start either at the Village at Penn State or Juniper/Wynnewood Green Hills. Final details will be shared before the big day :)

You can sign up at the Welcome Center or via this electronic link: <http://bit.ly/GraceCaroling>



## Dec. 17 at 10:30 a.m.

Crossfire, our t(w)een choir, will present their 15th annual Nine Lessons and Carols as part of the live-streamed and broadcast **10:30 worship service on Sunday, December 17**. The readings and music, including traditional congregational carols as well as contemporary choral arrangements, will be in place of the sermon at **10:30**. Nine Lessons and Carols has been adopted by churches around the world in multiple denominations and traditions since it first appeared in England more than 140 years ago. It is a beautiful and meaningful way to involve our teens in preparing us for Christ's birth.



## Fellowship Dinner

Our traditional Christmas fellowship dinner will be served on **Wednesday, December 13** in Harkins Hall with extended time: **5-6:15 p.m.** Our menu will include: Baked ham, roast loin of pork, au gratin potatoes, candied sweet potatoes, cranberried green beans almondine, Christmas fruit salad, rolls, Christmas cookies and drink. Suggested donation: \$6/person with \$15 family max. Note: please bring a dozen cookies to share. Thank you.



## Christmas Comfort Tree

Have you seen the tree in the narthex sponsored by Women of Grace? It is overflowing with hats, scarfs, gloves and mittens for Children and Youth Services, Bellefonte. Did you know socks are also being collected for Out of the Cold? Please help us continue to collect an abundance of these items. Let's make the winter a little warmer for those in our community. Thank you.



## A Night for Weary Hearts

On **December 14, at 4 p.m.** we will gather for "A Night for Weary Hearts." Some of us come because we are mourning the death of a loved one. Some of us feel far from home. Some of us wrestle with illness, addiction, or estrangement and can find no rest. Some of us are lonely, struggling financially, or in conflict with another and longing for peace. Some of us groan because of the great pain, need, and violence in our nation and world. The reasons for our coming are many.

We gather together in the midst of suffering to remember: God is good. God is strong. God is near. O Come, Emmanuel, be God with us and hold our weary hearts in your heart. Help us remember we are not alone, and we have every reason to hold on to hope. Following worship, our Stephen Ministers will offer refreshments and conversation.



## Ring the Bells for IHS

Thank you to all who have signed up to ring the bells for Interfaith Human Services. If you would still like to volunteer, call Sue Forster at 814-876-2029.

**The IHS Representative Payee Program:** Imagine you live on a little over \$800 a month and your spending money was supposed to be in the mail.

The bank shows your check was cashed. You never got it, but your son did. He also spent it. An estimated 5 million Americans are financially exploited each year. Imagine how much more vulnerable you would be if you are suffering from emotional or intellectual difficulties like many Interfaith Representative Payee clients. Ninety percent of financial abuse occurs at the hands of family members or close friends. It happens right here in Centre County. The above scenario was caught, stopped and corrected because of our Representative Payee program.

Thank you, Grace Family, for your continuing support of all IHS programs. Merry Christmas!

## Cookies, Cocoa & Caroling at the Café

Three great things all at once and one more chance to wear that tacky Christmas sweater. We ho-ho-hope you will stop by Good Day Café on **Wednesday Dec. 20 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.** to buy some good treats and sing along. Every body is welcome!



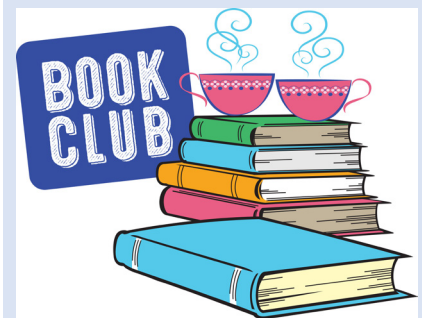
## Christmas Cards for Inmates Update

Because the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections is no longer allowing cards to be sent to their inmates, CentrePeace has postponed, for a year, the Christmas Cards for the Incarcerated Program. The hundreds of cards received from Grace Lutheran were greatly appreciated by CentrePeace coordinator Barbara Squires. Any questions can be directed to Lois Lynn at [loissteve@comcast.net](mailto:loissteve@comcast.net) or 814-590-5695.



## Sisters of Grace Meeting Time Change Coming in 2024

There will be no meetings of Sisters of Grace until March 2024. Starting in March, the Sisters of Grace Circle will take advantage of Daylight Savings Time and milder weather. **Members will meet on the second Monday each month from March to October at 6:30 p.m.** The first meeting will be **Monday, March 11, 2024.** The focus of the group will be spiritual practices as described in *The Sacred Way* by Tony Jones. All women are welcome to attend.



## The Garden of Readin' meets December 19

The next meeting of the Garden of Readin' (Women's Book Club) is **Tuesday, December 19 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Stinson Library (also available on Zoom). The selected book is *I Will Always Write Back* by Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda with Liz Welch. The discussion will be facilitated by Cindy Keith. Contact Lois Lynn ([loissteve@comcast.net](mailto:loissteve@comcast.net)) for details.



## Disciples Together / Super Wednesday Event, Dec. 6

Make sure to come for Super Wednesday dinner on **Wednesday, December 6** at Grace. St. Nicholas will visit with treats!

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century. He dedicated his life to serving God and became known for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships. He was a gift giver. As early as 1163, French nuns began leaving candy and gifts outside the doors of children in need. The St. Nicholas Day children's gift-giving custom spread.

Whether gifts are given on Nicholas' feast or at Christmas, his example still inspires acts of charity and generosity and Santa Claus.

Tradition has it that people set out an empty shoe and St. Nicholas fills it with clementines, or a gold coin or candy. You can keep your shoes on and still leave with a holiday treat on the 6th! Join us for fun and fellowship!



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity & Belonging DEIB Team News

“For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works.”  
~ Psalms 139: 13-14



God created every part of who we are. God knows what is in our hearts and minds because God placed it there when we were created. God created a diverse humanity that is sometimes difficult for humans to comprehend.

At times, our diverse gifts from God can be a barrier. We sometimes struggle to understand the experiences of people who are different from us, and that can create unintentional but significant barriers in our relationships that obstruct our call to share God’s good news.

Grace’s DEIB Team was formed in the Summer of 2022. DEIB stands for Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Belonging. As a team, we have identified 4 focus areas: Age, Race, LGBTQIA+, and Disability.

### DEIB’s mission is twofold:

1. help every body understand they are fully known and fully loved by God, and
2. help all of us know and love one another more fully and completely.

Brene Brown tells us, “True belonging never asks us to change who we are, and it demands that we be who we are.” DEIB strives to identify and remove barriers while building bridges to affirm that every body belongs at Grace. One part of belonging relates to the physical space of our church grounds. Grace is currently executing plans to improve access to the church for wheelchair users and mobility-challenged worshippers at both our main entrance and the Miller Center entrance. This is another example of the DEIB Team at work - a physical representation of extending a welcome to all, and literally removing barriers.



### Interested in joining the DEIB conversation?

Contact Natalie Slane at [nataliejslane@gmail.com](mailto:nataliejslane@gmail.com) or Sarah Rodgers at [skrodgers@hotmail.com](mailto:skrodgers@hotmail.com).

- Our next DEIB meeting is **Monday, January 15 at 7 p.m.** via zoom or in person in the fireside room.
- Join us with Disciples Together on the **1st Wednesday of each month** as well as for other special gatherings.



## Stephen Ministry One-on-One Relationships of Care

Grace’s Stephen Ministry offers one-on-one care to those that are facing some crisis in life, such as, illness, death of a loved one, divorce, relocation, or financial setback. They do this by meeting one on one with those experiencing life’s hurts and supporting them by listening, understanding and prayer. Stephen Ministers are guided by pastoral support.



Stephen Ministers also fill a supportive role in special services at Grace. This **December 14th at 4:00 p.m.** they are helping with the “Night for Weary Hearts” service. The “Night for Weary Hearts” services reaches out to those who are struggling during the Christmas season. It holds up God’s love to those who come, in the midst of the pain we know in our everyday lives and in those around us.

If you or someone you know think they would benefit from a Stephen Ministry relationship please reach out to Grace’s Stephen Ministry Coordinator Brenda Palmgren at 814-574-1039.

**NEW  
MEMBER  
SUNDAY**

Grace’s next New Member Sunday will be on **January 14, 2024**. Contact Pastor Schul or Pastor Hetrick if you would like to become a member.



### The Jared Box Project Thank You

Thank you to all who packed Jared Boxes! We collected 163 boxes! This year, we will spread the smiles around by delivering Jared Boxes to Clearfield Hospital, Tyrone Hospital and Altoona Hospital. We will be back again next year to help fulfill Jared’s mission for sick children. Watch the clearance aisles for Jared box-size fun!

### Green Tip for December

If your home mailing address is like ours, the majority of your mail is likely comprised of catalogs and other unsolicited mail. You can stop any you choose. Contact the company and tell them to take you off their mailing list immediately and forever. You can also try using an unsubscription hub. Create accounts at [dmachoice.org](http://dmachoice.org), known as the Direct Marketing Association’s consumer website and/or [CatalogChoice.org](http://CatalogChoice.org), a non-profit organization that helps you opt out of catalogs and other junk mail. By taking action, you’ll save trees, emissions and annoyance.



### Did you know...

...that Grace’s Christmas dinner will be held on **December 13**? It always culminates with a joyful, participatory singing of the 12 Days of Christmas. We hope you will be with us for this wonderful meal and fellowship experience!

**Christmas Dinner**

## Anti-Hunger Update

We are continuing to pre-bag food in the Narthex and Distribute food the **2nd and 4th Thursday of the month**. I am so grateful for all of the people who help out with the various duties. It is wonderful to see the cross-generational volunteers. We have two youth who are regularly helping after school. What a great way for parent(s) and youth to bond while helping our neighbors in need.

Typically we hand out milk, eggs, frozen meat/protein, and several types of fresh fruits and vegetables along with a vegetable box. We often have a bread product, a snack item, cheese, rice, and cereal to hand out as well. Occasionally we get pudding, frozen fruit, sherbert, cookies, baked goods, lemonade, and orange juice.

## Please consider helping us on December 28, 2023

Are you in town on **December 28, 2023** and able to help out??? Since many of the volunteers may be traveling, we are looking for individuals and families who have a few hours to help out! Please contact Kathy Kalbach at [kathymkalbach@gmail.com](mailto:kathymkalbach@gmail.com) with any questions or to let her know you are able to help out!



## Upcoming Food Distribution Dates at Grace Parking Lot

Thursday, November 30, 2023

Thursday, December 14, 2023

Thursday, December 28, 2023



## SC Food Bank Needs

The Food Bank of the State College is always in need of donations. Grace Lutheran church collects donations monthly in the church narthex on the first Sunday of each month at each worship service. Cash/check donations, grocery store gift cards, and brown paper grocery bags are always accepted.

- **GREATEST NEED!** Ready-to-Serve Soups (Progresso, Campbell's CHUNKY, etc.)
- Pasta Sauce
- Tomato Product (diced, stewed, paste, sauce, etc.)
- Canned Fruit (peaches, pears, pineapple, applesauce)
- Snack Items (crackers, cookies, chips/pretzels, granola bars, etc.)
- Gluten-Free items (pasta, flour, baking items, snacks, etc.)
- Ground Coffee
- Condiments
- Oil (vegetable, canola, olive oil)

### Non-Food Items

- Laundry Detergent
- Liquid Dish Soap
- Liquid Hand Soap
- Toothpaste & Toothbrushes
- Bar Soap
- Body Wash

### PLEASE NOTE:

We are not in need of the following:  
Baby Food

We cannot accept expired or opened food items. Please check the expiration dates on items before donating them. Our food donation guidelines provide assistance in determining what can be accepted.

<https://scfoodbank.org/donate/current-needs-list>










# 2023 December

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 205 South Garner Street • State College, PA 16801  
 Phone: 814-238-2478 • Webpage: www.glcpa.org

	Friday, December 1	Saturday, December 2
	9a - 2:30p GLP School Wide Advent Walk  7p Adam Smith Holiday Benefit Recital / Sanctuary  	
	9a - 2:30p GLP Toys for Tots Collection Ends  5:30p NA Group/Library  <b>The Weekend - Youth            Retreat Dec 8-10</b> 	Saturday, December 9
	9a - 2:30p GLP Stephen Ministry / Fireside Ministry Coordinators AA Group Scouts BSA  1p Fireside 1:15p Ministry Coordinators 7:30p AA Group 7:30p Scouts BSA	Thursday, December 7
	9a - 2:30p GLP Worship at the Village FitLink / Miller Cntr REJOICE Music class / Choir Rm. Joyful Noise/ Rm 203 Super Wednesday / Harkins Hall Disciples Together / Harkins Hall Midweek Advent Svc 	Wednesday, December 6
	9a - 2:30p GLP Christmas Concert 6pm  9:30a Staff Meeting / Fireside 6p GLP Christmas Concert / Sanctuary  	Tuesday, December 5
	9a - 2:30p GLP Christmas Concert Practice  10:30a Worship 10:45a Cafe S.S./Narthex 11:30 Bell Choir Rehearsal / Sanctuary AdventFest/ Harkins Hall 	Monday, December 4
	9a - 2:30p GLP Children's Chapel  10:30a Children's Chapel 	Monday, December 11
	9a - 2:30p GLP Staff Meeting/Fireside Church Council/ Fireside  9:30a Staff Meeting/Fireside 7p Church Council/ Fireside	Tuesday, December 12
	9a - 2:30p GLP Children's Chapel  10:30a Children's Chapel 	Tuesday, December 13
	9a - 2:30p GLP Children's Chapel  10:30a Children's Chapel Food Distribution/ Grace Parking Lot A Night for Weary Hearts / Sanctuary AA Group Scouts BSA 	Thursday, December 14
	9a - 2:30p GLP Staff Meeting No Enrichment Classes  5:30p NA Group/Library 6p Middle School Fun Night / Board & Brush  	Friday, December 15
	8a Worship 9a Worship, Echo S.S. 10a Coffee Hour/Harkins Crossfire Rehearsal 10:30a Worship 10:45a Cafe S.S./Narthex 11:30 Bell Choir Rehearsal / Sanctuary AdventFest/ Harkins Hall 	Sunday, December 3
	8a Worship 9a Worship, Echo S.S. 10a Coffee Hour/Harkins Crossfire Rehearsal 10:30a Worship 10:45a Cafe S.S./Narthex 11:30 Bell Choir Rehearsal/ Sanctuary LCM Luncheon 7p QINA/Fireside	Sunday, December 10
	8a Worship 9a Worship, Echo S.S. 10a Coffee Hour/Harkins Crossfire Rehearsal 10:30a Worship 10:45a Cafe S.S./Narthex 11:30 Bell Choir Rehearsal/ Sanctuary LCM Luncheon 7p QINA/Fireside	Sunday, December 16

cut here



<p><b>Sunday, December 17</b> <b>Third Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8a Worship 9a Worship, Echo S.S. 10a Coffee Hour/Harkins Crossfire Rehearsal Munchkin Brunchkin/Miller Cntr 10:30a Worship - Lessons &amp; Carols 10:45a Cafe S.S./NartheX 1p CAR-oling Caravan 4p Confirmation / Miller Cntr 5p Youth Group / Miller Cntr 7p Young Adult Bible Study / Miller Cntr</p>	<p><b>Monday, December 18</b> 9a - 2:30p GLP</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, December 19</b> 9a - 2:30p GLP</p> <p>9:30a Staff Meeting/Fireside 10:30a Garden of Readin' / Library</p> 	<p><b>Wednesday, December 20</b> 9a - 2:30p GLP</p> <p>6:30p Cookies, Cocoa &amp; Caroling at the Cafe</p> 	<p><b>Thursday, December 21</b> 9a - 2:30p GLP</p> <p>7:30p AA Group/Library Boy Scout Troop / Harkins Hall</p>	<p><b>Friday, December 22</b> GLP Closed for the Holidays</p> <p>5:30p NA Group/Library</p>	<p><b>Saturday, December 23</b></p> 
<p><b>Sunday, December 24</b> <b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> <b>Christmas Eve</b></p> <p>10a Crossfire Rearsal 10:30a Worship - 4th Sunday of Advent 11:30a Bell Choir Rehearsal 4:30p Christmas Eve 7p Family Worship Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 9p Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</p>	<p><b>Monday, December 25</b> GLP Closed for the Holidays</p> <p>10:30a Christmas Day Worship</p> 	<p><b>Tuesday, December 26</b> GLP Closed for the Holidays</p> <p>9:30a Staff Meeting/Fireside</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, December 27</b> GLP Closed for the Holidays</p> 	<p><b>Thursday, December 28</b> GLP Closed for the Holidays</p> <p>3:30p Food Distribution / Grace Parking Lot 7:30p AA Group/Library Boy Scout Troop / Harkins Hall</p> 	<p><b>Friday, December 29</b> GLP Closed for the Holidays</p> <p>5:30p NA Group/Library</p>	<p><b>Saturday, December 30</b></p> 

December 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
						31

January 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



cut here

---

# God Is With Us

*This article from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is from [www.livinglutheran.com](http://www.livinglutheran.com).*

Sometimes the world just seems so solid. Reality is uncompromising and immutable. Literally, what you see is what you get, and our sight, our perception, is limited. So we forge on with all the obligations of daily life—family and work and taxes and deadlines. Our scope of existence becomes closed in, and our world gets smaller. Can this really be all there is?

The Christmas specials have started on TV, the familiar carols and songs are piped into grocery stores and shopping malls, and all kinds of media invoke the magic of Christmas. I don't know about you, but for me the result is not uninterrupted joy but longing and a sense of loss. Look at the war in one part of the world that brings starvation to many, including children who are powerless. The pandemics of COVID-19 and racism and hate speech cause us to be suspicious of each other and turn inward upon ourselves. Peace on earth, goodwill to all cannot withstand the sharp limits of the real world.

Yet every Christmastime we try to create perfection. If we just get it all right—the decorations, the celebrations, the traditions, the family gatherings—we can push past the limits of the solid world. This effort leaves me exhausted and nostalgic. There must have been a better time, a simpler time, a purer time. And even, if by some superhuman effort, we can create the perfect holiday,

how does it feel on Dec. 26?

It's a funny thing, nostalgia. The word comes from the Greek *nostos*—return—and *algos*—pain. One scholar defined nostalgia this way: “the suffering evoked by the desire to return to one's place of origin.” We have our origin story. It is the account in Genesis of Eden, where humankind lived in harmony with creation, a place of peace and plenty where God and God's creatures walked together. I believe that in some mystical way the memory of our place of origin exists in each of us.



When we listen to the prophet Isaiah at Christmas, we are assured that God will restore that place: “The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6).

The Incarnation is God's supreme liminal work. It is the Thin Place where heaven and earth touch.

We can't bring this about by ourselves. We can't go back, nor can

we will Eden into the present. And yet there are times and places where the space between heaven and earth seems to dissolve. The Celts called these “Thin Places.” The distance between heaven and earth collapses. It may only be a moment or feeling, but the sense that we are standing in the presence of the Holy becomes palpable.

During Advent and Christmas, the contrast between what the world is and what it was created to be is stark. We know that something is not right, but we also know that something is right. It's out there somewhere. Nostalgia becomes more acute and so does our desire to bring heaven to earth during this season. This is God's work, not ours.

The Incarnation is God's supreme liminal work. It is the Thin Place where heaven and earth touch. It is the tie and place where the suffering caused by our desire to return to our place of origin is ended because God has begun a new story where heaven and earth are joined. “Unexpected and Mysterious” describes this: “In a momentary meeting of eternity and time, Mary learned that she would carry

both the mortal and divine” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 258).

Our seemingly solid world with its own reality and truth gives way to the blessed inbreaking of heaven with the true reality. Our origin, present and future are one in God, and God is with us when we perceive it and, more importantly, when we do not.

This is the gift of Christmas.

~ ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton

## CALENDAR

### Sunday, December 3

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex
- 12:00 p.m. Advent Fest: Holy Lands / Harkins Hall

### Sunday, December 8-10

- **The Weekend** - Synod Youth Event - St James Lutheran, Huntingdon, PA

### Sunday, December 10

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex

### Friday, December 15

- 6:00 p.m. Middle School Fun Night - Board & Brush

### Sunday, December 17

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Munchkin Brunchkin / Miller Center
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex
- 1:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling
- 4:00 p.m. Confirmation / Miller Center
- 5:00 p.m. Youth Group / Miller Center
- 7 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study / Miller Center

### Sunday, December 24

- Christmas Eve Worship (No Sunday School)

### Sunday, December 31

- No Sunday School

### Contact Us!

Any interest or questions about any Faith Formation activity, please email Cindy and Peter at [faithformation@glcpa.org](mailto:faithformation@glcpa.org).



## AdventFest at Grace on Sunday, Dec. 3

Join us for our annual AdventFest on **Sunday, December 3 at 11:40** (following morning worship) and experience sights, sounds, and tastes of Advent and the Holy Lands! Enjoy a Middle-eastern buffet in Harkins Hall while listening to live seasonal music. View displays from The Holy Lands; pray The Lord's Prayer in Arabic; hear parish musicians share seasonal carols; sing a carol from the region. The event ends around **1:15-1:30 p.m.**

If you can contribute to the displays or donate a side dish to complement the Mediterranean Beef Stew and baklava Grace is providing, contact Cindy or Peter ([faithformation@glcpa.org](mailto:faithformation@glcpa.org)), Laurel ([lsanders@glcpa.org](mailto:lsanders@glcpa.org)), or call the office at 814-238-2478.

## CALENDAR

### January Preview

#### Wednesday, January 3

- No Super Wednesday

#### Sunday, January 7

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex

#### Friday, January 12

- 6:00 p.m. Middle School Fun Night / Miller Center

#### Sunday, January 14

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Munchkin Brunchkin / Miller Center
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex
- 4:00 p.m. Confirmation / Miller Center
- 5:00 p.m. Youth Group / Miller Center
- 7:00 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study / Miller Center

#### Sunday, January 21

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex

#### Sunday, January 28

- 9:00 a.m. ECHO Sunday School / Sanctuary
- 10:45 a.m. Cafe Sunday School / Narthex

## Christmas Eve Worship Times

Christmas Eve Worship will feature the **4:30 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service** with Santa and live nativity. Look for a nativity character sign-up in December. Christmas Eve Worship opportunities will be held in the sanctuary at **4:30 p.m., 7 p.m., and 9 p.m.** Livestream will be during the **7 p.m.** worship service. A special music prelude will precede **9 p.m.** worship.





### Munchkin Brunchkin

Calling all families of little ones (ages 0-4) and their siblings: We are hosting a once a month gathering in the Miller Center. Our first Munchkin Brunchkin will be **Sunday, December 17 at 10 a.m.** in the Miller Center! Munchkin Brunchkin is a ministry for any family with one or more children ages 0-4 years. This is an intentional time for parents to gather not only as a family, but with other parents, as well.



Expect to have a family bible study time using the Frolic First Bible, and playtime for children as well as coffee and snacks for adults. Older siblings are welcome, too; this is a family sharing time. Please come, let's grow our faith together.



### Middle School Fun Night

Middle School Fun Night dates for your calendar: **December 15, January 12, & February 16.** We plan to eat, hangout, and play games together. Friends are welcome. Check your email for a sign-up link for the Board & Brush event on **December 15, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.** This will be a drop off and pick up at Board & Brush. Board & Brush is located at 2766 W College Ave, Suite 400, State College.

### HS Youth Group

All High School Youth and friends are welcome to join us for Youth Group on **December 17.** We will be in Miller Center from **5:00-7:00 p.m.** We will share a meal and discuss the topics of the Youth Gathering of Brave, Authentic, Free, Disruptive, and Disciples. These discussions are helpful to everyone, even for youth who are not attending the gathering in New Orleans.



### ECHO Sunday School Continues

Children and parents will attend **9 a.m.** worship in the sanctuary. After the Ministry Moment, children through 5th grade may leave with Cindy and Peter to Harkins Hall. We will storytell the gospel lesson, have a game, craft, science, and music. After approximately 20 minutes youth will return to the sanctuary to join their family for sharing the peace, communion, and closing hymns. We continue this format for families to attend worship together, support all family members to hear the Word of God in many and various ways, and to encourage participation in a life of faith.

**\*Note: No Sunday School December 24 & 31\***



### Cafe Sunday School

Calling all Middle School and High School youth: Join us for Cafe Sunday School! We will meet at **10:45 a.m.** in the Narthex each Sunday to depart for a cafe downtown. Options are Starbucks on Pugh Street, Bagel Crust in Calder Way, or any other takeout

cafe, which we will decide once Sunday School gets rolling. Bring money or order from your phone as we walk. One Sunday a month we will stay in the Miller Center Kitchen and cook our own food too. Come join in the fun and discussion!

**\*Note: No Sunday School December 24 & 31\***

### Confirmation

We will meet in the Miller Center on **December 17 at 4:00-5:00 p.m.** and **January 14 at 4:00-5:00 p.m.** We will continue our study of Luther's Small Catechism.



Confirmation at Grace is geared toward students entering 6th through 8th grade. This is our instructional time and will be very classroom-like. For the social and teambuilding time, please see Middle School Fun Night. Both events go hand in hand. These two events along with Cafe Sunday School on Sunday mornings form our Middle School opportunities.



### Food Distribution for Food Insecurity

**Youth and Families - Your help is Needed!** Grace Lutheran Church continues our bi-monthly food distribution. Volunteers are needed beginning at **3:30 p.m.** and **4:00 p.m.** to fulfill requests. We meet in the Grace Lutheran Church parking lot to distribute free food to any and all persons that come to receive food; we have served as many as 125 families. Please think about joining us for the distribution on **Thursday, December 28**. All youth and families are invited to help. Cindy & Peter are happy to sign any "service hour requests." Don't worry, we'll send you a reminder.

### Christmas Party



### Grace Young Adult Bible Study Save the Date on Dec. 17

Calling all Grace Lutheran high school graduates - of any year! Cindy & Peter have planned a Christmas Party on **December 17 at 7 p.m.** Come in an Ugly Sweater if you have one and we will have food and fun conversation on Christmas. Don't forget to come bowling too!



### Free Piano Recital on December 1 to Benefit State College Area Meals on Wheels

Pianist Adam Smith will kick off the holiday season with a recital in support of State College Meals on Wheels on **Friday, December 1 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary of Grace Lutheran Church.



Admission is free, but we hope Adam's beautiful music – his gift in support of Meals on Wheels – will encourage generous donations to support the organization's mission and programs. The recital includes arrangements of sacred and secular carols and will last 50-60 minutes, including a brief interval. Please join Adam in supporting Meals on Wheels on **December 1**, or consider sending a donation to Meals on Wheels at 205 South Garner Street, State College, PA, 16801 in gratitude for Adam's music and the organization's mission. Thank you!





## Lutheran Campus Ministry / Lutheran Student Community at Penn State

As these final weeks of the semester unfold, Lutheran Campus Ministry offers a place where you can step away from deadlines and other demands and find community and support, share worship and a meal, learn about God, yourself and the world, and simply be welcome to come as you are!

Our weekly events and programs will run through finals week, then will be on hiatus through Semester Break. Everything will resume again the week of **January 8**. Enjoy the break and have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year's celebration!

### Student Community Weekly

**Thursday Evening Worship at 6 p.m. in the** Worship Hall at Pasquerilla Spiritual Center on campus (Corner of Allen Street and Curtin Road), followed by dinner with the student community in the Harshbarger Room.

### Student Meal After Morning Worship

Sunday late morning after **10:30 a.m.** worship gather with other students for lunch. Build connections and community with other students. Check the bulletin for location and more info!

### Sunday Evening Survey - Share Your Thoughts!

With the end of the 6 p.m. Contemporary Worship Service, we are exploring other possibilities for campus ministry events on Sunday evenings and we'd like your input! Whether your Sunday evenings are usually filled with all the school work you didn't finish earlier in the weekend, binge-watching a favorite show with friends, or getting ready for the week ahead, we want to hear from you!

Go to <http://lutheranpennstate.org/2023/11/survey-on-sunday-evening/>

Share your thoughts and ideas in the survey link and help guide Lutheran Campus Ministry as we make plans for the spring semester!

### Other Opportunities!

We offer service events, formal and informal discussions, social gatherings, and more! Check our website and calendar for additional opportunities and info!

You can also add yourself to our listserv at [lutheranpennstate.org](http://lutheranpennstate.org)

Follow and Like our social media on Instagram and Facebook [@lutheranpennstate](https://www.facebook.com/lutheranpennstate)

Reach out anytime to [lutheran@psu.edu](mailto:lutheran@psu.edu).

*Lutheran Campus Ministry provides a community of faith for students while they are at Penn State. You are welcome to bring doubts and questions, to explore what it means to be a person of faith as you grow and discover who you are and what you are going to do with your life. We gather around worship, discussion/study, service opportunities, and community that are designed with students in mind. Student leaders help to guide our plans and our gatherings – and everyone is welcome. Come as you are. Really.*



### Questions, Not Answers

Questions, Not Answers "QNA" will meet on **Sunday, Dec 10 at 7 p.m. in Fireside**. Please come to join in our discussion. Previous participants and those who just want to check it out once or occasionally are all welcome.

We plan to discuss the question, "Can loved ones and others who have died reach back to us?"

Contact Carla Rossi – [ckrossi@comcast.net](mailto:ckrossi@comcast.net) – for more information or with any questions.

*Did you know in the Gospels that Jesus asks more than 300 questions and he is asked nearly 200, but he directly answered only a handful of them? So, come to QNA to continue the biblical tradition of asking good, complicated questions, but be prepared to leave without answers.*

### Super Wednesday Dates to Know About

#### December 6

Regular Super Wednesday in Harkins Hall **5:15-6 p.m.**

#### December 13

Christmas dinner in Harkins Hall with extended hours, **5-6:15 p.m.** (see special dinner menu on p. 8)

#### December 20, 27 & January 3

No Super Wednesday

Menus are published each week in Grace E-notes and the Sunday Church Bulletin. Suggested donation: \$6/person with a \$15 family max.





## Dates to Remember!

### December 1

School-wide Advent Walk

### December 4

Christmas Concert Practice, Sanctuary, 10-11 am

### December 5

Christmas Concert Practice, Sanctuary, 10-11 a.m.

### December 5

Christmas Concert, Sanctuary, 6 p.m. (Snow date: December 7)

### December 8

Toys for Tots collection ends

### December 11 & 14

10:30 a.m. Chapel

### December 15

GLP's Staff Meeting 12:15 pm; No Enrichment classes

### December 22-January 1

School Closed for the Holidays

### January 2

School Resumes

**Butter Braids and Cake Rolls Fundraiser**  
 Our Butter Braids fundraiser was a huge success! We sold 313 pastries and cake rolls, giving us a \$50 bonus. We earned \$1,834.10. The money raised will go toward tuition assistance and all-school events.

*Thank you for your support!*

## Christian Focus Box for December

**Christian Theme** – “We Celebrate Jesus’ Birthday”

“I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.” ~ Luke 2:10



**Science Theme:** Winter Expedition

**Enrichment Theme:** Can’t Catch Me!



## Grace Lutheran Preschool Presents, “We Wish You a Merry Christmas”

Grace Lutheran Preschool’s annual Christmas concert will be held on **Tuesday, December 5 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. (If there are school closings due to weather, the program will be held on **December 7 at 6 p.m.**) Please join us!



## Toys for Tots

The Toys for Tots collection is underway. Grace Lutheran Preschool is accepting new, unwrapped toys



in their original packaging for needy children in our area. Collection boxes are located at the school entrance and in the church Narthex. The toys will be picked up on the morning of **December 8**. If you want to make a cash donation or volunteer, go to <http://lemont-pa.toysfortots.org> for details. In addition, the newer boxes have a QR code that makes donating even easier. Thanks for your support!

## Veterans Day Recognition at GLP

We had beautiful weather for our annual Veterans Day assembly and parade. GLP has recognized our church and community veterans by holding a Veterans Day parade since 2004. This year was extra special because Grace Lutheran Church installed a memorial marker near the Columbarium for Grace’s Veterans. Pastor Schul and Pastor Hetrick dedicated the marker during our school’s Veterans Day celebration.



**VETERANS DAY**  
 HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED

---

## Veterans Day Recognition at Grace Lutheran Preschool



Church members Rich Rivell, Ed Strong, and Paul Mackes, as well as veteran father, Nate Brezovic visited with Miss Cathy and Mrs. Wylie's classrooms to talk to the students about military life and answer their questions. These classes made Thank You cards and mailed them out to the veterans.

---

Church and school family members who attended our Veterans Day assembly and parade.

---



We paraded around the church to the Columbarium.

---

Pastor Schul and Pastor Hetrick dedicated the Grace Lutheran Church Veteran's memorial marker with a prayer.

---





# December Worship Sponsors

Altar Flowers		Radio Sponsors		Bulletin Covers	
Dec. 3	Susan Bardo & Curtis Johnson Dedicated in memory of Susan's father Frank L. Bardo Jr.	Dec. 3	Earl & Lorraine Lutz Dedicated to the Glory of God	Dec. 3	Susan Bardo & Curtis Johnson Dedicated in memory of Susan's Father, Frank L. Bardo Jr.
Dec. 10	Carol & Gorman Findley Dedicated in memory of Michael Swartzlander	Dec. 10	The Nieweg Family Dedicated in memory of Bill Featherman	Dec. 10	Jane & George Myers Dedicated in memory of their parents
Dec. 17	Bruce Rathfon Dedicated in memory of Janet Kott	Dec. 17	Joyce Sipple Dedicated In memory of Scott & Bill Sipple	Dec. 17	Joyce Sipple Dedicated to the Glory of God
Dec. 24	Thrivent Dedicated to the Glory of God	Dec. 24	Sally Keiser-Bankert & Polly Keiser McWilliams Dedicated in memory of Pete & Lois Keiser	Dec. 24	Don & Deana Coine Dedicated in honor of their children & grandchildren
Dec. 31	Pam Carina Dedicated to the Glory of God	Dec. 25	Daryl & Nancy Johnson Dedicated to the Glory of God	Dec. 25	Spence Garvin Dedicated in memory of Vicki Garvin
		Dec. 31	Spence Garvin Dedicated in memory of Vicki Garvin	Dec. 31	Louise Tarman Dedicated in honor of her family

## Live-Stream Sponsors

Dec. 3	Julie & Tim Swavely Dedicated in honor of our Military & First Responders
Dec. 10	Julie & Tim Swavely Dedicated to the Glory of God
Dec. 17	Mark & Karen Mrsa Dedicated in honor of their daughter's birthday
Dec. 24	Sally Keiser-Bankert & Polly Keiser McWilliams Dedicated to the memory of Pete & Lois Keiser
Dec. 31	Jim & Ellen Campbell Dedicated to the Glory of God



## Coffee Hour Sponsors - Joe and Cindy Nicosia 814-571-6922 [jnicosia3@comcast.net](mailto:jnicosia3@comcast.net)

Dec. 3	No coffee hour (Advent Fest.)	Please join our hosts each Sunday in Harkins Hall between 9:45 and 10:30 a.m. for coffee and treats. We rely on volunteers to sponsor and/or host. You may sponsor and host (treats at your discretion) or just sponsor (others will host). The cost to "sponsor only" is \$30 (check to Grace Lutheran Church with "Coffee Hour" and the sponsored date in the memo line).
Dec. 10	Colin and Mary Haynes	
Dec. 17	Paul and Kathryn Mackes	
Dec. 24	No coffee hour (Christmas Eve)	
Dec. 31	Cheryl Kleckner	

## Acolytes - Kristin Knowles [kristinmknowles@gmail.com](mailto:kristinmknowles@gmail.com)

9:00 a.m.		10:30 a.m.	
Dec. 3	Netta and Andy Horn	Dec. 3	Anna Long and Fiona Knowles
Dec. 10	Kaylin Slane and Andy Horn	Dec. 10	Mya and Jordan Hockenberry
Dec. 17	Sydney Lintal and Caitlin Knowles	Dec. 17	Anna Coup and Lauren Knowles
Dec. 24	no service	Dec. 24	Lily & Gunnar Rinehimer ( <b>4th Sunday of Advent</b> )
Dec. 25	no service	Dec. 25	open ( <b>Christmas Day</b> )
Dec. 31	Lily and Gunnar Rinehimer	Dec. 31	Renee Buda and Fiona Knowles

### Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Services

4:30 p.m.	Family Worship	Live Nativity and visit from Santa
7 p.m.	Candlelight Service	Kaylin Slane, Anna Coup and Anna Long
9 p.m.	Candlelight Service	Fiona, Caitlin and Lauren Knowles

## Lectors - Rebecca Arnold Desmarais [beckylynn0621@gmail.com](mailto:beckylynn0621@gmail.com)

8 a.m.		9 a.m.		10:30 a.m.	
Dec. 3	Vicki Sue Golemboski	Dec. 3	open	Dec. 3	Linda Schul
Dec. 10	Julie Miller	Dec. 10	Natalie Slane	Dec. 10	Melissa Hockenberry
Dec. 17	Dennis Snider	Dec. 17	Anne Rohrbach	Dec. 17	Lessons & Carols
Dec. 24	no service	Dec. 24	no service	Dec. 24	Ethylee Nordberg
Dec. 25	no service	Dec. 25	no service	Dec. 25	Ethylee Nordberg
Dec. 31	open	Dec. 31	open	Dec. 31	Janet Lybarger

### Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Services

4:30 p.m.	Family Worship	Live Nativity and visit from Santa
7 p.m.	Candlelight Service	June Walter
9 p.m.	Candlelight Service	Ron Banerjee



# Pastoral Acts for November & December

Lenore Horner passed into eternal rest on Nov. 14, 2023.

Gavin Rinehimer will be baptized and welcomed into the family of Grace on Dec. 3.

## December Birthdays



- |                       |                       |                        |                         |                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Jeya Chandra        | 4 Brenda Palmgren     | 7 Evan Rosengrant      | 13 Jackson Dove         | 22 Brian Humm          |
| 1 Michael Fullington  | 4 Lily Traver         | 8 Andrea Harrington    | 13 Sarah Chapman        | 22 Catherine Pletcher  |
| 1 Christian Waite     | 5 Mary Yarnell        | 8 Jim McDyre           | 14 Sydney Lintal        | 22 Alyson Hoegg        |
| 1 Jack Sylves         | 5 Nora Ruffo          | 8 Alexis Greer         | 14 Nancy Tamminga       | 26 Jane Foor           |
| 2 Anna Bahnfleth      | 6 Robert Byers        | 8 Ainsley Greer        | 14 Paul Cocolin         | 26 Sandra Hall         |
| 2 Terry Hoover        | 6 Zachary Freeman     | 9 Carter Hosband       | 14 Isabelle Williams    | 26 Teri Howes          |
| 2 Walter Kay          | 6 George Weigand      | 9 Rachel Wolkenhauer   | 15 Jason Barber         | 26 Barbara Krumrine    |
| 2 Lydia Peters        | 6 Jeremiah Northridge | 9 Wendell Williams     | 15 Sophia Reutzal       | 26 Alexis Weyandt      |
| 2 Patrick Williams    | 6 Wayne Pauley        | 10 Eleanor Johnson     | 16 Geraldine Slear      | 26 Lois Martin         |
| 3 Charlotte Bahnfleth | 6 Lauren Long         | 10 Christa Sechler     | 17 Alexis Arbutina      | 27 Dawn Anderson       |
| 3 Timothy Everhart    | 6 Charles Long        | 10 Jon Hartzler        | 17 Theresa Facini       | 27 Robert Zipf         |
| 4 Briana Kim          | 7 Paula Droege        | 10 Brian Resor         | 17 George Conklin       | 27 Elizabeth Horn      |
|                       |                       | 11 Caroline Banerjee   | 17 Haley Haller         | 27 Hailee Rusnak       |
|                       |                       | 11 Bret Buterbaugh     | 17 Edward Reutzal       | 28 Alissa Davies       |
|                       |                       | 11 Joseph Cathcart     | 18 Sally Keiser-Bankert | 28 Paul Haris          |
|                       |                       | 11 Erica Edgar         | 18 Barbara Fiscus       | 28 Michael McShea      |
|                       |                       | 11 Saylor Milhomme     | 18 William Gray         | 28 Rachael Taverno     |
|                       |                       | 11 Samantha Smith      | 18 Damon Heebner        | 29 Sydney O'Donnell    |
|                       |                       | 11 Eric Updegrove      | 18 Isaac Myler          | 30 Natalie Giacobe     |
|                       |                       | 12 Nancy Doyle         | 18 Amy Shearer          | 30 Elizabeth Giacobe   |
|                       |                       | 12 Christiane Fleagle  | 18 Edwin Strong, Jr.    | 30 Debra Lambert       |
|                       |                       | 12 Jackson Hockenberry | 18 Rebecca Horn         | 30 James Pletcher      |
|                       |                       | 12 Nancy Reinert       | 19 Jo Bortz             | 30 Carol Shultz        |
|                       |                       | 12 Deborah Balaban     | 19 Elizabeth Walsh      | 30 Andrew Rosenwie     |
|                       |                       | 12 Ronald Smith        | 20 Jessica Griel        | 30 Collette Beuther    |
|                       |                       | 12 Vicki Kellogg       | 20 David Guss, Jr.      | 31 Neil Foster         |
|                       |                       | 12 Alden Taverno       | 20 Kathryn Mackes       | 31 James Graef         |
|                       |                       | 13 Rochelle Debnar     | 21 Andrea Forster       | 31 Nicholas Richardson |
|                       |                       | 13 Amanda Simcoe       | 21 Mia Steward          | 31 Donald Widener      |
|                       |                       | 13 Heather Baney       | 22 Michael Blake        | 31 Rebecca Ann Caylor  |
|                       |                       |                        | 22 Melissa Hockenberry  |                        |

## Prayer List for December

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| All Military & National Guard and all serving in war-torn countries | Steve & Janet Ellis, family of The Louder's | Patti McLean, sister of Kelly Borchert       |
| Dave Bankert, father of Carl Bankert                                | Norma Flanagan, mother of Jim Flanagan      | Amy Neveling                                 |
| Joe Belanger  | Cay Griel                                   | Ronald Odland                                |
| Mary Breon  | Posey Haney                                 | Sharon Rivell                                |
| Tisana Breon, sister of Mary Breon                                  | Sherry Harrington                           | Denise Rohrbach, godmother to Aaron Rohrbach |
| Jim Campbell  | The family of Lenore Horner, upon her death | Terry Roof                                   |
| Andrew Cutter   | Marcia Kell                                 | Archie Sutherland                            |
| William Davies  | Jim Kratz, father of Pastor Hetrick         | Claire Swarr, friend of Leslie Wagner        |
| Annika Dellert  | Lisa & Ruthie, friends of the Roger's       | Val Updegrove                                |
| Chase Ebeling   | Shirley Lucas                               | Besty Will                                   |
| Kevin Eby and family, friends of the Koths                          |   | And please pray for Members in the hospital  |



# Grace Notes

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
205 South Garner Street  
State College, PA 16801  
(814) 238-2478  
[www.glcpa.org](http://www.glcpa.org)

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit 111  
State College, PA

**Current Resident or:**

## SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- 8:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary  
9:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary  
10:30 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary and on the  
Radio (103.7 FM, 104.3 FM, 1450 AM, 1260 AM)

Live-streamed video of this service at [www.glcpa.org](http://www.glcpa.org)

Enjoy pre-recorded Sunday Video Worship from our  
website: [glcpa.org](http://glcpa.org) anytime



Help us to better serve our local and global communities.  
Scan here to make a contribution to Grace.



The Rev. Scott E. Schul, Senior Pastor  
The Rev. Carolyn K. Hetrick, Pastor

- Grace Lutheran Church 814-238-2478  
[churchoffice@glcpa.org](mailto:churchoffice@glcpa.org)
- GLC Preschool 814-238-8110  
[glpk@glcpa.org](mailto:glpk@glcpa.org)
- Faith Formation Ministry  
[faithformation@glcpa.org](mailto:faithformation@glcpa.org)

**Gather • Feed • Send**

Grace Lutheran Church is energized by the Holy Spirit and nurtured through God's Word and Sacrament to gather, feed, and send people in the name of Jesus Christ.