

DECEMBER 2024



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Monroe, Wisconsin

Grace Ev. Lutheran Church
1025—15th Avenue
Monroe, WI 53566

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Return Service Requested

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

We will soon be in the season of Advent. Advent consists of the four Sundays before the Nativity of Jesus. This is a time of preparation and hopefulness. In worship, the readings will focus on the coming of the messiah through prophetic voices of the Old Testament. John's proclamation and Mary's song will point to Jesus as the fulfillment of those prophecies.

In the weeks ahead, we wait for the Christmas celebration of "Immanuel, God with us". We will look back and hear again the story of that night in Bethlehem where shepherds visit a newborn in a stable. We recognize the gift of God's own self that God shares with the world.

Christmas is not just about the past, but the future as well. We wait for the return of Christ and the fulfillment of creation as God intended. The watchword of Advent is "be prepared!" and "stay awake!" So, we wait.

In the 1960's, the first American astronauts endured rigorous physical, emotional and psychological testing, in addition to the schoolwork involved in preparing for space flight. On the way to a scheduled test, a group of astronaut trainees were placed in a room and told to wait there until the instructors were ready with the next test. In this waiting area there were some comfortable couches, checkers, cards and other games. There were magazines and paper and pens. There may have even been a TV.

What they did not know was that was the test. Those in charge wanted to see how each person spent that time waiting. Who would gather and who would stay by himself? Which activities would each one gravitate towards? Who appeared anxious as the waiting time stretched out? There were certainly other criteria being tested in this experiment. I am never going to be an astronaut, but I still find myself waiting. Not as an experiment to look into my psyche, but as one of many in a checkout line waiting for my turn. Some stand quietly, perhaps having a moment of introspection or planning the next part of the day. Some re-check their list to be assured they have everything in their cart. Some check out the magazines and the latest celebrity gossip. Some scroll through their phones. Some engage in a conversation with those around them. Some watch other people in line and observe what they are doing.

I do not know if there is a "right" thing to do while waiting, but I am sure we could compile a list of what not to do. We do not wait for waiting's sake. We wait to be checked out and go to the next part of the day.

Advent reminds us that we are waiting, and not just for the next thing on the list, but the coming of Jesus in the fullest way imaginable and beyond.

Pastor John

DECEMBER BAPTISMS

Michael Bittner
Verna Smith
Joel Dieckhoff
Jeanette Carpenter
Roger Alston
Gloria Scherer
Rebekah Rath
Dan Verschage
James Smith
Sam Larson
Janet Ableman

Wanda Grossen
Jeremiah Stiner
Maximus Elliott
Patricia Johnson
Connor Thompson
Eric Kielty
Penelope Gintz
Jennifer Bahler
Brittany Graber
Grace Joyce
Abigail Rielly'

Corrine Jacobson
Carissa Scheider
Ellie Scherer
Kade Ellefson-Jones
Lori Wehinger
Helen Kneubuhler
Paul Moser
Debbie Heitkamp
Brooke Kamholz
Helen Joyce
Emiliee Olson

We're sorry if we missed your December baptism. If you don't see your baptism here please call to let us know of your baptismal date so that we may include your name next time!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS will once again be adorning our altar area for Christmas Eve services with a limited number of poinsettias from our provider. You are invited to make a monetary donation, and we will pay tribute to your loved ones as always in Christmas Eve bulletins and January newsletter. Donations will be given to the *Hands of Grace Fund* which is used to assist folks in need in our church and community. Money is used for gas vouchers, personal care items, medicine and medical supplies, cab vouchers, etc. This was supported quite nicely last holiday season, and we hope to have the same support again this holiday season as well. *Love your Neighbor as Yourself!* Thank you!



DECEMBER WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES



Phil & Greta Rath
Bill & Karen Helton
Gerald & Patti Casselberry
Richard & Judith Nelson
Myron & Geraldine Olson



We're sorry if we missed your December anniversary. Please call the office to let us know of your anniversary date so that we may include your name next year!

GO CHRISTMAS CAROLLING WITH US on Sunday, **December 15th at about 10:15 AM!** We will carpool and head out to two or three nursing homes to brighten their day with some holiday cheer!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ronald Camron	12/1	Reid Boyd	12/18
Keri Ellefson	12/1	Emily Wardlow	12/18
Kurt Mueller	12/2	Samantha Becherer	12/19
Addison Kubly	12/3	Courtney Jackson	12/19
Jaden Leistiko	12/3	Debra Kleppe	12/19
Sheri Novak	12/3	Darlene Nuckles	12/19
Dan Verschage	12/3	Timothy Olson	12/19
Ed Kallas	12/4	Jeanette Ackerman	12/20
Jennifer Spielman	12/4	Maggie Gurski	12/20
William Wunschel	12/5	Jacob Scherer	12/20
Shirley Gobeli	12/6	Danielle Sofran	12/21
Kaden Kuester	12/6	Bill Helton	12/22
Carol Mohns	12/6	Carol Ruch	12/22
Vicki Wiegel	12/6	Darci Boll	12/22
Kristine Parr	12/7	Nathan Drewes	12/23
Maverick Rath	12/7	Ann Hunter	12/23
Bruce Stiner	12/7	Tim Schultz	12/23
Heather Huffman	12/9	Patti Kint	12/24
Laurie Holthaus	12/10	Becky Kamholz	12/26
Sean Jorgenson	12/10	Harold Kubly	12/27
Marcia Blumer	1/12	Luke Patterson	12/27
Allyce Fahrney	12/12	Joe Brown	12/28
Bill Fahrney	12/13	Finn Reichling	12/28
Mike Gray	12/13	Wren Rupnow-Hartley	12/28
Gerald Gelbach	12/14	Melody Whipple	12/28
Helen Stauffer	12/15	Steve Trost	12/29
Jeri Johnson	12/16	Jennifer Chapman	12/30
Daniel Bestul	12/18	Azaria Hartwig	12/30
Luke Johanson	12/18	Maeson Zettle	12/31



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We are sorry if we missed your December birthday. Please call the office to let us know of your birthdate so that we may include your name next year!

Sewing in December 2024

LITURGISTS

Sun., December 1.....	Bill Helton
Sat., December 7.....	Beth Faith
Sun., December 8.....	Nikki Austin
Sat., December 14.....	Open
Sun., December 15.....	Bill Helton
Sat., December 21.....	Open
Sun., December 22.....	Open
Tue., December 24, 5PM.....	Bill Helton
Tue., December 24, 9PM.....	Open
Sat., December 28.....	Open
Sun., December 29.....	Open

Please consider serving as a Liturgist on a Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning. See the sign up on the office door.

ADVENT IS COMING! WE ARE SEEKING CANDLE LIGHTERS & READERS! *Please consider this opportunity. No experience necessary! We will have short readings at the altar. Bring the whole family! Sign up on the office door or call us!*

Sat., December 7.....	Open
Sun., December 8....	The Chapman Family
Sat., December 14.....	Open
Sun., December 15.....	Open
Sat., December 21.....	Open
Sun., December 22...	The Johanson Family

MISSIONARY SPONSORS

December 1.....	Women of Grace
Dec 7 & 8.....	Open
Dec. 14 & 15.....	Robert Ellefson
Dec. 21 & 22.....	Open
Dec. 28 & 29.....	Women of Grace

You can sponsor our missionary family for \$35/week. There is a sign up calendar near the entry way. If you would like to sponsor our missionaries in honor or memory of a special person or event, just call the office to let us know!

SATURDAY EVENING MUSICIANS

Sat., December 7.....	Sarah Johanson
Sat., December 14.....	Sarah Johanson
Sat., December 21.....	Sheri Novak
Sat., December 28.....	Lance Sathoff

ALTAR GUILD

Stitchery Committee

CHURCH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Scott Christiansen (*Vice-President*) (scott.christiansen@sccompanies.com)....608-558-6161
Katy Dickson (christensenfarms@gmail.com).....608-214-3525
Jeri Johnson (*Secretary*) (jerijohnson1216@gmail.com).....608-214-5386
Sam Mathiason (sammathiason@gmail.com).....608-698-6612
John Patterson(jskpat@tds.net)
Larry Rood (larood@hotmail.com).....608-328-4867
Lance Sathoff (*Treasurer*) (lsathoff@yahoo.com).....608-558-1038
Gloria Scherer (moveme@tds.net).....608-214-6646
Cathy Smith (clynrd@yahoo.com).....608-325-2697
Ariel Thomas (*President*) (arielbobbie00@gmail.com).....608-558-4840

GRACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
Phone: 608-325-9172

WEBSITE: www.gracelcmonroe.org

Worship Schedule
Saturday, 5:00 PM & Sunday, 9:00 AM

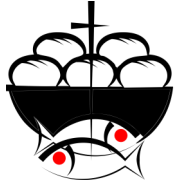
Winter Office Hours
Monday-Friday, 8:30—12:00/1:00– 4:30 PM

Pastor: Pastor John J. Tabaka E-mail: pastortabaka@tds.net
Visitation Pastor: Rev. Richard Thickpenny
Custodian: Terry Kolanda
Director of Music/Church Musician: Ann Uresk
Financial Secretary: Laurie Kruse
Secretarial Staff: Deacon Beth Faith (gracelc@tds.net)



“For it is by God’s Grace that you have been saved by Faith”

LOAVES & FISHES IS BACK The entire community is invited to attend a meal together the 4th Sunday of each month at Grace Lutheran Church from 4-6 PM. This meal is open to anyone, and is free. Please consider dropping by! Volunteers are always sought as well!



COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES We include monthly Council Meeting minutes in our monthly newsletter. If you are ever interested in additional detail, or wish to see the actual meeting minutes from a particular meeting, these are available by calling or stopping by the office!

IF YOU ARE HOSPITALIZED and would like a visit please ask family or friends to let the church office know! The hospital no longer provides that information. Thank you!

NEW MEMBER CLASS will be held on **Saturday, December 7th at 5:45 PM** as well as on **Sunday, December 8th at 10:15 AM**. Call the office with any questions or concerns.

HAND CHIMES PLAYERS TAKE TO THE ROAD! On Sunday, December 8th, at 6 pm, our chimes will be ringing at Clarno Zion, UMC for their Advent Christmas service. Come and listen, and enjoy lots of cookies, special music and readings/lessons.



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THANKS FOR YOUR HELP! Special thanks to all who made our Celtic service possible on November 17th. Especially:

- Staff Support for double duty with our treats and beverages for the day.
- Errin Olsen for our Communion Oat bread
- Cathy Smith and Lisa Christiansen for special "Celtic" cookies
- And of course, our musicians

LOOKING FOR SPECIAL MUSIC FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVE If you have a song to sing or play, please contact me - (Ann Uresk) or the office and I will schedule you in!



FESTIVE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES will be held on **Tuesday, December 24th at 5:00 PM & 9:00 PM**. We hope you will join us for special music, sharing the Light and recalling the magic of the Christmas Story.

DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 First Sunday in Advent 9:00 AM, Worship 10:15 AM, Sunday School	2	3 2:00 PM, Women of Grace Steering Committee 6:00 PM, Property Committee	4 9:15 AM, Bible Study 5:30 PM, Praise Singers 6:00 PM, Choir 6:00 PM, Confirmation & Bible Study 7:00 PM, Hand Chimes	5 8:30 AM, Quilters Group	6	7 5:00 PM, Worship 5:45 PM, New Member Class
8 Second Sunday in Advent 9:00 AM, Worship 10:15 AM, Sunday School 10:15 AM, New Member Class	9	10 4:00 PM, Memorial NO Worship & Music NO Staff Support	11 9:15 AM, Bible Study 5:30 PM, Praise Singers 6:00 PM, Choir 6:00 PM, Confirmation & Bible Study 6:00 PM, Finance Committee 7:00 PM, Hand Chimes	12	13	14 5:00 PM, Worship & Sunday School Christmas Program
15 Third Sunday in Advent 9:00 AM, Worship & Sunday School Christmas Program 10:15 AM, Carolling: Meet Here: Everyone Invited!	16 12:30 PM, Lydia Circle Meets 7:00 PM, Church Council	17 6:00 PM, Christian Life	18 9:15 AM, Bible Study 5:30 PM, Praise Singers 6:00 PM, Choir 6:00 PM, Confirmation & Bible Study 7:00 PM, Hand Chimes	19 8:30 AM, Quilters Group	20	21 5:00 PM, Worship
22 Fourth Sunday in Advent 9:00 AM, Worship 4:00 PM, Loaves & Fishes Free Community Meal	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Church Office Closes at Noon 5:00 & 9:00 PM, Worship	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27	28 5:00 PM, Worship
29 1st Sunday after Christmas 9:00 AM, Worship	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE Church Office Closes at Noon				

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting

October 28, 2024

Called to order 7:00 by Ariel Thomas

Members Present: Larry Rood, Ariel Thomas, Scott Christiansen, Jeri Johnson, Cathy Smith, Gloria Scherer, Katy Dickson, John Patterson, Lance Sathoff, Sam Mathiason, and Pastor John Tabaka

Devotions- Jeri

Secretarial Report- Written report by Jeri. Motion to approve minutes of the 9-23-2024 Council Meeting by Lance, second by Cathy. Motion carried.

Treasurer's and Finance Committee Report- Report by Lance. The Finance Committee will get a recommendation from Thrivent for how we can invest our money to earn some interest, and then to bring ideas back to a Council meeting to decide how to invest. They also decided to continue with giving 3% to Benevolence. Motion to approve report by John. Sam seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Christian Life- Katy reported the first Soup and Stories will be November 9th, and maybe start having a men's breakfast.

Memorial- Written report. John reported money was donated for the roof fund and also possibly to Altar Guild.

Mutual Ministry- Ariel reported that they discussed the number of confirmation students that there will be in the next few years.

Parish Education- Gloria reported the Sunday School Christmas program will be December 14 - 15. There are 12 kids in Sunday school at this time. Decorated bags for shut-ins.

Property Committee- Written report. Larry contacted Herock about repairing the planter and found the problem is water getting down into it and then freezing. So it should be covered for winter. We can wait till spring to get it fixed. Larry will start calling roofers for estimates now because we want them by February.

Staff Support- Sam reported the staff liked the new performance evaluation forms used this year. The Employee Handbook was updated as well as the online Application for Employment. Wage increases were discussed and wages for the pianist as well.

Women of Grace- Written report by Cathy. Chili sale earned around \$1200 for the roof fund. Gift bags are being put together for shut-ins at Thanksgiving and care packages for college kids.

Worship and Music - No meeting. Altar Guild meets November 21st.

Pastor's Thoughts: The year is going well. Next weekend is All Saints weekend.

New Business - Members whose terms are done in January need to be deciding if they want to run for another term on Church Council and eventually let Pastor John know what they decide.

Motion to adjourn by Scott. Second by John. Meeting ended with The Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting will be November 25, 2024

— Jeri Johnson, Secretary

NOVEMBER PARISH ACTIONS

FUNERALS



Donna Ruch, Mother of Melinda, Rhonda & Lori
November 6, 2024

Paul Sandstedt
November 21, 2024 Service of Committal

DEAR GRACE LUTHERAN CONGREGATION, THANK YOU for your kind, thoughtful and sincere words and gifts of appreciation for my 20th year anniversary as Music Director at Grace. I hope you enjoyed the extra "sugar" - pumpkin bars, cookies and time of fellowship together too. I know that I did. It is an honor to serve the congregation through music and to have the support of other fine musicians. Just to let you know, I think the Staff Support team is fabulous! In Christ, Ann Uresk

ROOF COMMITTEE UPDATE

Raise the Roof: Please watch your mailbox for a letter outlining how YOU can help raise the roof at Grace. *Thanks to a generous donor, during the months of January and February gifts to the Roof Fund will be matched up to a total of \$20,000.* We hope that you'll be as generous as you can so that we can fully realize our matching gift opportunity and bring us closer to putting a new roof on our building.

While our church is more than just a structure, this gathering space has housed our faith community for 135 years. With your support, we can ensure that it remains standing for generations to come - bringing people together to hear God's word and sending them out to do God's work in our community. Thanks in advance for carefully considering the letter you'll receive, and for ensuring that our church *always* remains a place of worship, community, and hope for all.

Larry Rood – Chairman, Ariel Thomas, Chris Alston, Ken Chapin, Scott Christiansen, Jerry Gelbach, Bill Holland, Jeri Johnson, Laurie Kruse, Bob Leistikow. Dick Nelson, Shane Olson & Louis Scherer

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU The Women of Grace would like to thank all who took part in their recent Chili Fundraiser! Their efforts resulted in a gift to the Roof Fund of \$1139.37! To-date we have a balance of **\$122,276** in our Roof Fund! Thank you for your support!! Please see the board in the narthex for ways to provide support.
