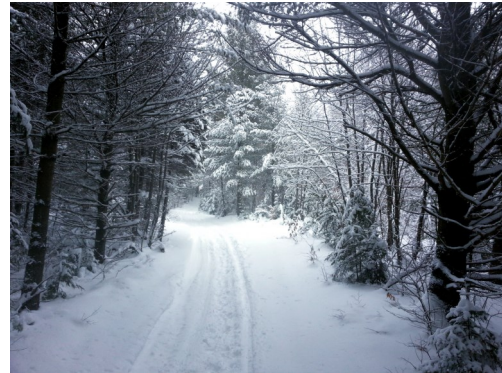

December In Touch with Grace



Dearly Beloved Family and friends of Grace,

As I write this, I am basking in the glow of Thanksgiving - so much to be thankful for. As we move into the seasons of Advent and Christmas, that glow will carry us through. We well anticipate the birth of Jesus who came into the world to bring us peace, hope, joy and love. We are to live those virtues in our lives and share them with others. Sometimes, it is not easy to experience this That is when prayer will help us through. Let's live as children of the light, the light that has come into the world to shine light into the darkest of places. Jesus is that light that shows us the way.

This month at Grace, we will have several extra special occasions to share. We will have a special start of Advent Event the first Sunday of Advent. Another Sunday, the children will present their Christmas program. Our choirs and musicians will offer their gifts of music through word and song. We will celebrate the Star of Wonder on Wednesdays with a meal and Holden Prayer Service plus the experience of creative art that will lead to the

Christmas star. Be sure to check the calendar. There may also be a photo opportunity for your family at the stable with the nativity.

Worship with us at each of these services. Christmas Eve will bring the story to us once again in beauty and carols. There may even be a visit of the holy family. We will gather at 4 p.m. & 9:30 p.m. and again on Christmas morning at our usual 9:30 am. The beauty, silence, and glory of Christmas bring thankfulness and joy.

We have so much to be thankful for. I am thankful for each of you and hope to see you this holy season.

With gratitude, peace, joy and love,
Pastor Karen



Announcements

- Security Alert: Do not leave valuables in your vehicles out in the parking lot here at church or anywhere. There are those who will prowl through and be tempted by what they see. Even the trunk may not be safe. Also, remember to empty your coat pockets at church. Keep your valuables with you or at home. Thank you for helping to create a safe environment.
- Photo Op! Take your picture with our Nativity Scene inside the building in later December. We will have props and costumes if you choose use them. Create this fun memory with your own camera or phone and be a part of the Christmas story. Share on our church Facebook page!
- Children and Youth! Stay tuned for a fun outing during Christmas break. We are going snow tubing. Date, time, and price to be shared soon! It will be SNOW FUN!!!! Friends are welcome, too.



Advent and Christmas Worship Schedule

December 4 - Advent II - Worship at 9:30 am with Fellowship following

December 7 - Supper at 5:45pm with worship at 6:30 pm

December 11 - Advent III - Worship at 9:30 am with the Children's Sunday School Program - 'Ingredients for a SWEET Christmas' followed by 'SWEET' treats at 10:30 in the Tower rooms

December 14 - Supper at 5:45 pm with worship at 6:30 pm

December 18 - Advent IV - Worship at 9:30 am - Choral service - with Fellowship following

December 21 - Supper at 5:45 pm with worship at 6:30 pm.

December 24 - Christmas Eve - 4 pm - Family Candlelight Worship
9:30 pm - Candlelight Worship

December 25 - Christmas Day - 9:30 am - Sunday Worship

January 1, 2023 - New Year's Day - 9:30 am - Sunday Worship

Sunday School!

The Sunday school and youth have been preparing for the Christmas program on December 11th. We are looking forward to showing you all how sweet Christmas can be. We have also looked how we can prepare our hearts for the Christmas season.

We read a book called "If Jesus lived inside my heart" by Jill Roman Lord

The last page says " I'll work through you and shine through you, just like the brightest light. I'll guide each precious step you take and help you do what's right. And though I live inside of you I'm here for all to see. When others see your acts of love. They're also seeing me."

From the intern's Desk - Becky's Blurb

Eastside Siblings in Christ,

Every year an intern is part of your church, you have the opportunity to experience growth and formation for a future Christian Public Leader and Pastor! With this formation, Luther Seminary asks us to propose an internship project! This year, I'm inviting each church in the Eastside Collaborative to host a prayer team!

What's a prayer team?

The prayer team is a confidential team, dedicated to prayer life for the church through prayer requests and the greater community. Prayers might be received through prayer request cards, in person request, or via email to the prayer team. —But we have a prayer chain. This is different from a prayer chain, since these friends meet on a consistent basis for prayer. (Details to be worked out at each church in January.)

Do you think you're called to join the prayer team?

With the help of the Holy Spirit's prompting and discernment in you, please prayerfully consider joining the prayer team. A handful of dedicated prayer warriors are needed at each church. Even if you're unable to attend in person, please consider being part of the team, even if you can only provide prayer in the comfort of your home.

An interest meeting will be held in January to discuss specifics. Please note your interest in joining the team to Intern Pastor, Becky Sliva.

Contact: beckybsliva@gmail.com or 920-364-0410 (personal cell#)

Intern Pr. Becky will assist in the beginning processes as we get up and running! Each church prayer team will look a little different regarding how and when they meet based on the initial interest expressed. The prayer team will be able to run independently in the spring and future



Blessings,
Becky Sliva



Advent Wednesday Worship! We will gather at Grace in the Tower rooms for three Wednesdays in December for a time to reflect on the season - December 7, 14, and 21. The schedule is similar to Lent with a meal from 5:45 pm- 6:30 pm and then our beloved Holden Evening Prayer Service from 6:30 - 7 pm. Our youth will sponsor each meal with a grant from Thrivent. We will have a creative, interactive, artistic reflection time along with readings and songs. Join us and bring a friend.

The **Eastside Collaborative** welcomes you to join us in our worship services themed, "A Holy Darkness". They are hosting 2 Wednesday Advent Services each week of Advent beginning November 30th at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church. Each service includes a meal!

11am worship with a meal to follow

5pm meal with worship to follow

December Mission of the Month

The Mission of the Month for December at Grace is Houses for Haiti. H for H is a non-profit organization dedicated to building houses for homeless families living on the streets of Cite Soleil, the poorest slum in the Western Hemisphere. With no jobs, education or public assistance, many families have no hope for ever living in a concrete dwelling. H for H believes that every person deserves to live in a safe environment free from disease and filth that is ever present on the streets of Haiti.

Houses for Haiti's goal is to raise enough money each year to build one or two homes. With your help this is possible.

The organization was founded in April 2008 by 2 sisters from Arlington Hills Presbyterian Church in St. Paul. With the assistance of Pastor Leone Dorlean in Cite Soleil who will select one of two deserving families each year who have been living on the streets. Pastor Leone contracts with local builders (putting money back into the local economy) and mission teams will paint the homes. Only 2% of funds raised goes to administrative fees. All staff are volunteers.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to this incredible organization who reaches out in Christian love to provide safe and permanent housing to God's people in need. Please use your blue multi-purpose envelope, mark mission of the month and place in the offering plate on Sunday morning or mail to the church office. Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.

Music Notes from our Organist -

There are lots of ways being heralded as able to relieve stress. One way for a musician is to improvise. Bruce Neswick, a wonderful organist and improviser, recently said, "Improvising is never having to say you're sorry." It's a lot of fun and much easier than all the decision making when writing down the music.

One composer that we just celebrated was J. S. Bach who was known in his time more for his improvising than his compositions. It took approximately 100 years for his music to be recognized as outstanding. Another composer known for his improvising was Cesar Franck, whose 200th birthday will be marked on December 10th. He did the same thing as Bach, travelling around the country improvising and showing what sounds organs could create. At that time, the organ was going through a transformation, becoming closer to the type of organ we have today i.e. the pedalboard expanded to 30 notes and different sounds (stops) were being created. Interestingly, he had to become a French citizen before he could be appointed to teach at the famous Paris Conservatory. He thought he was French already, because his father had gotten his citizenship years earlier when Cesar was young, but because he was born in what is now Belgium, he needed to go through the process also.

Even though Franck wrote music in every genre, his organ music in particular set a new standard. Rollin Smith, a Franck authority, says his organ music was "the most important organ music written since Mendelssohn's."

At the choral service on December 18th, we will be singing two of his choral works—the famous "Panis Angelicus" and his setting of "Psalm 150". In addition "Noel Breton", one of his short organ pieces, will be played. Trivia: Franck's hands were so big that they spanned an octave and a half, 12 white notes!

The Giving Tree (a Grace tradition) will be going up in the Good Shepherd Lounge on Sunday, November 27th. We are doing things a little differently this year. We will be collecting cold weather clothing items for the students at Dayton's Bluff Elementary school. It is hard to believe that in Minnesota many students arrive at school with no hat, socks, mittens or even sweater or jacket. On the tree you will find paper ornaments (special thanks to Linda Denson) with items needed for the children, please take 1, 2 or as many as you would like, purchase the item and place unwrapped under the tree. We will see that they are delivered to the school. These items will be disbursed as needed prior to Christmas vacation as well as all season as long as they last. Gifts need to be under the tree by December 11 to allow delivery time.

What a great way to celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ! Spreading the love of God to our local neighbors and helping them to ward off the cold this winter!!

FROM THE LIBRARY -

This is an interesting variety of new books on the library shelves. Look for them on their designated subject shelf. **Thanks for contributions, donations and comments!**

ANTI-BIAS	<u>Immigrant Kids</u>	Russell Freedman
BOOK CLUB READS	<u>The Book of Lost Names</u>	Kristin Hannah
FICTION	<u>The Fall of Saints</u>	Wa Ngui Wanijilu
	<u>A House Divided</u>	Kimerla Roby
	<u>Hannah’s War</u>	Jan Eliasberg
	<u>The Twin</u>	Natasha Preston
REFERENCE	<u>Thank You For Being Late</u>	The Quotable Woman Running Press
	<u>Eyewitness Travel of Norway</u>	
	<u>Heroes of My Time</u>	Harrison Salisbury
	<u>Zealot, the Life and Times of Jesus</u>	Reza Davis
YOUTH	<u>History of a Farm Through Time</u>	Angela Wilke
	<u>The Unofficial Harry Potter Bestiary</u>	Media Lab Books
	<u>Being Henry David</u>	Carl Armistead

These youth boos are on the rack near the entrance to the Sanctuary. There are other youth books in the larger book collection, lower left shelves facing forward.

SPIRITUAL	<u>Holy Bible</u>	RSV
	<u>Jesus Calling, 365 Daily Devotions</u>	Sarah Young
	<u>The Pocket Book of Blessings</u>	Arcturus Holding, Ltd.
	<u>The Epistles, Timothy, Titus</u>	

Grace Book Club Meeting - Thursday, December 1 at 7 pm



From the President -

We are in the Season of Waiting. Advent brings the invitation to ponder and pray about the incredible gift of Christ. During the four Sundays of Advent, we consider hope, peace, love and joy. At a time when humanity is still trying to cope with pandemics, wars, famine, mental and physical health issues, and natural disasters, these positive themes bring us back to God’s message, “Lo, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:20

Report from the Annual Meeting

Update on Land Appraisal. Grace has received an appraisal from Shenehon for the Gold Line Land Acquisition. The appraisal was for twice the amount that Met Council was offering. The GLC Appraisal has been sent to the Met Council. This could probably go three different ways: Met Council accepts the GLC Appraisal, they counter with a lower amount, or we go to court to negotiate an amount. Met Council will pay \$5000 towards the second opinion.

Update on LSS Families Together Plans. Grace met with representatives from LSS Families Together to discuss next steps on the proposed Trauma Day Care. Fund raising at the St. Paul Synod will continue to May 2023. LSS is depended on the amount raised in the capital campaign to support the Day Care. We discussed the issues related to having the church be zoned for a school. We will go back to the congregation when a final decision to locate is made. Meanwhile, lease agreements will be under reviewed.

The Council Stewardship Subcommittee. Peter Hultgren, Adeline Marquart, Monique McClure Hegge, and I, presented during the four Sundays of the Stewardship Campaign. Each presented a Temple Talk about their topic of Stewardship; Gifts of Abundance, Change and Taking Risks, God's Boundless Love, and Called to be Earthkeepers. Kate Pray helped edit the Time & Talent form. Thanks to all who helped with these efforts. Thanks to those who helped with food and serving at the Annual Meeting. Thanks to the congregation for your response to Commitment Sunday Time & Talent and Financial Giving.

The Congregation voted to accept the 2023 Budget. They elected new council members: Linda Sackreiter for President and Amanda Christie and Jeff Gorton for Council members at large. Audit, Endowment and Nominating Committees all have new members elected by the Congregation. We thanked the outgoing council members, Kate Pray, Peter Hultgren, and Linda Baer. We will invite the new Council members to the December Council meeting. We provided updates on the Land Appraisal Review and the LSS Project, Families Together.

Report from Council - Council approved the repair bills for the heating system issues, air handling and exhaust. We discussed the recent security issues in the parking lot and in the building. We will add more security cameras and request that the police patrol the area on Sundays. We will update information on this.

It is with great gratitude that I thank the congregation for supporting the leadership of Grace during these past four years. It has been a tumultuous time where the leadership team had to deal with much uncertainty due to the pandemic and civil unrest while navigating to support the worship, mission, and service of the congregation. We were flexible, adaptable, and resilient during these tough times; adding a security system, a health and safety protocol, improved air quality, online and parking lot services. We persevered. We need to commit to continued perseverance as we move forward. We are called to love God and our neighbors. Blessings for 2023. Linda Baer, Congregation President

Community Connections - ongoing projects!!

Internal, Local and Global

The Community Connections Committee is currently collecting items for the baby kits for Lutheran World Relief and 2 other ongoing projects. The lists are in the library.

Also, please be aware that Sandy Abernathy will take old flags and make sure they are disposed of properly. These can also be left in the library. Thank you!

Thanks for all who donate to the many collections that are offered to you! Our committee will be supporting the Giving Tree collection this month that the Missions Committee is offering as a way to gift the community at this special time of the year.

What a wonderful way to celebrate the birth of Christ by gifting our neighbors with what they need!!

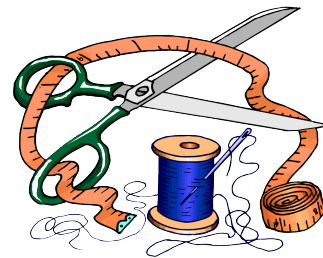
Mission 2022 Lutheran World Relief Collections:

Quilts, baby care kits (Note: soap size accepted for baby care kits is 3.5 and 4 oz gentle soap; soap in each kit has to total 8 or 9 oz). Other on-going collections at Grace - used eye glasses and cancelled stamps. Please find the small collection baskets on the bottom library shelf. Thank you!



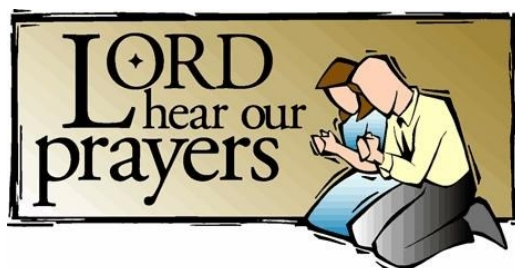
Quilt Days- We meet twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month. This month because of Christmas we will only meet on December 11 at 10 am in the Tower rooms. New helpers are always welcome!

Plan to join us this month and use your hands and time for a good cause!



Miles of Pennies The large collection jar in the library is always accepting donations toward helping the LSS fund for helping homeless Youth in St. Paul. Our goal is \$250.00 for 2022. So far we have collected \$200. Thank you to everyone who participates in this important mission. Your generous donations of pennies and coins are appreciated. *Let's exceed our goal in 2022!*

Sunday Coffee Hour Pick a Sunday to serve coffee and treats following worship. Open to all committees, individuals, groups. Sign-up clipboard is on the table inside the South Tower Room. Any questions, call Linda in the church office. Thanks for your help.



We lift our prayers to God in times of thanksgiving and times of need, in times of joy and times of sorrow. Today, we especially pray for Pastor Paul Hesterberg, Larry Carlson, Sandy Jackson, Butch Nelson, Jake Kemen, the family and friends of Charles Henderson, and all those we name in our hearts.

(Many of these people have long term situations so if we discontinue listing them specifically please continue to pray for their healing.)

How to donate :

There is always the offering plate on Sundays or snail mail. Our address: 1730 Old Hudson Road, St. Paul, 55106.

To donate electronically: You can schedule a transfer of funds with your own bank if they have bill pay available and it will come automatically on the date you choose.

Otherwise, you can go to our website (www.gracelutheranstpaul.org) and click on the GIVE page. This site is secure for financial transactions through Vanco which is the Simply Giving program. At the GIVE page you can go through the steps as directed and give whatever amount you wish to several different categories (general, mortgage, etc.) This works best on the Firefox or Edge browsers. This does get to us electronically in a very timely manner. If you are comfortable using the QR, it will take you directly to the GIVE page on the website.

Please call the office if you have any questions. Thank you.

GIVE QR



Financial Snapshot for GLC-2022

	<u>October Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund	\$19,148.40	\$222,168.77	\$241,916.60
Expenses	\$25,515.21	\$274,142.53	\$302,480.90
Deficit/Overage	- \$ 6,366.81	-\$51,973.76	-\$60,564.30



- 2 Foday Kargbo
- 7 Jim Baumer
Coley Gillis
- 12 John Luckfield
- 14 Rick Major
Glenn Schoonover
- 16 Rich Castle
Kim Killeen
- 18 Julie Major
- 23 Gina Gilgenbach
- 28 Carol Goebel
- 29 Alraina Ray-Taylor



Worship Leaders for December 2022 -

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Acolytes</u>
4	Jeff Oberlander	Lauren Alleman
11	Barb Holtan	Alexis Petersen
18	Patty Young	Olivia Childs
24 Christmas Eve	4p,m Becky Sliva - 9:30 pm Becky Sliva	Olivia Childs Alexis Petersen
25	Becky Sliva	Alexis Petersen

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
4	Team E - Jeff Oberlander, Anne Oberlander, Dave Oberlander
11	Team F- Peter Hultgren, Linda Denson, Larry, Denson
18	Team G - Brian Jackson, Patty Young, Chris Winthieiser, Kristen Wintheiser
24 Christmas Eve -	
25	Team H- Karin Nikula, Youth, Bob Golder

<u>Date</u>	<u>Money Counters</u> - (we could use some additional volunteers on our counting teams)
4	Monique McClure-Hegge team
11	Kate Pray team
18	Amanda Christie team
25	Monique McClure-Hegge team

The XYZ's will resume their monthly schedule beginning in December with the annual Holiday Lunch at Lake Elmo Inn. It is scheduled for **Thursday, December 8th**, at 11am Please see Linda Sackreiter so that we can get our order in ASAP!

We are back up and running for 2023! Join us on **Thursday, January 19**, at 1:30 pm in the Tower rooms. David Jones of Historical Presentations will speak on "The United States Flag: Origins, Evolution and Symbolism". What do you know about our flag and is it correct? Did Betsy Ross really make the first flag? What is the meaning behind the stars, stripes, and color?

David gave a presentation to the group right before the Covid lockdown. He is a Minneapolis resident, graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College and since 1996 has made over 1,500 presentations to more than 40,000 people. **And of course, there will be treats!**

In February we will be planning a movie day! Join us on **February 9th** at 1:30 pm. More later!

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Pastor:

Rev. Karen Williams

Custodial Staff:

Larry and Linda Denson

Office Staff:

Linda Sackreiter

Music Staff:

Russ Carlson—Director of Music Ministries

Kathleen Hollar—Organist

Jan Steingas—Triple G's

Connie Smeby—Joyous Juniors



DECEMBER

