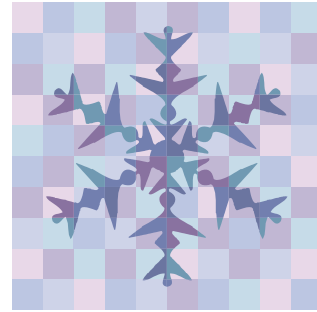

January In Touch with Grace



Dear family and friends of Grace,
As I write this, we are in the midst of a snowstorm leading into blizzard conditions. The birds at my feeders are taking turns at each perch to find nutrition for staying warm on these subzero days. The squirrels are enjoying the seeds that fall to the ground below. A flicker has made a few stops at the suet feeder along with nuthatches, downy woodpeckers, and the brave chickadee. I found some leftover dried mealworms and they are being enjoyed at a covered feeder. What joy it gives to look out the window and see the beauty of God's creation in all its brilliant, snow-covered glory and to hear the chirps and calls of the birds. An owl made a visit in the night sounding very close by in the oaks. What a wonderful world God has given us.

Many of us have participated in the Reverse Advent Calendar for Merrick Food Shelf as we think of those who need our help with nutrition during these cold days as well as throughout the year. We continue to shine the light of Christ into their lives with light as brilliant as the winter snow. Edward Caswall wrote a beautiful hymn called 'See Amid the Winter's Snow' which has been sung during the seasons of Christmas and Epiphany.

"See, amid the winter's snow, Born for us on Earth below, See, the tender Lamb appears, Promised from eternal years.

Hail, thou ever blessed morn, Hail redemption's happy dawn, Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem."

He who built the starry skies, who came to us

in human form, who has taught us how to live in love, peace, hope, and faith. Jesus is called the light of the world and calls us to be that light in every place and situation. Sometimes, it is not easy, but in this New Year, we take up the call to shine like Jesus. Jesus is known as Emmanuel which means 'God with us' and is still with us in the New Year.

To help us with focus and purpose, we are offering star words at church. This has become an annual tradition where we receive a word on a paper star to give us inspiration as we move through the months ahead. If you would like one, they are available at church or give the office a call and one could be shared with you over the phone.

This year ahead is one filled with promise and hope. This is the year that Grace will pay off its mortgage! How exciting that will be as we fulfill our obligation and free ourselves for renewed ministries. God is calling us to serve our neighbors in need, to follow the star as it leads us to Jesus and to see the beauty in all of creation - even amid the winter snows.

God's blessings to you this season! May the light of Christ shine brightly upon you and within you!

Pastor Karen



Announcements

- **Confirmation** classes will be held during Sunday School beginning January 8th. We will be studying the Small Catechism beginning with Baptism.
- **Pancakes and Puppets** will be presented by our youth on January 29th after worship. Join us for brunch and some fun!
- **Thursday** morning Bible study will begin on January 12th for the 6 weeks leading up to Lent. Join Pastor Karen via Zoom for a lively discussion! Here is the Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89506730550?pwd=VHcxTjJvdVh5ZjRyWlFxcHNnd3N4Zz09>

Annual Reports for the February Annual Meeting are due in the office by January 16, 2023. Thank you!!

From Per Halaas -

You may or may not have heard already, but I've got a new job! I've been called as the Pastor of Community Care at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Bloomington (ctkb.org). I started on December 11th, but I won't be ordained and installed officially until Bishop Svennungsen returns from her sabbatical. So, here's the skinny on that:

Per's Ordination and Installation

When: 11:00am, Saturday 1/28/23 (with food and fun to follow)

Where: Christ the King Lutheran Church, 8600 Fremont Ave S. Bloomington, MN 55420

I'd love to see some East Siders at this event and I know there are those who would love to come celebrate with me!

From the Intern's Desk -



January Newsletter 2023 Becky's Blurp

Happy New Year! Let us count our blessings as we welcome a new year with high hopes for a more prosperous, happier, and healthier year! Let us begin our year with a special New Year's Prayer.

"As the dawn breaks on a new year, let us give thanks for all we hold dear: our health, our family and our friends. Let us release our grudges, our anger and our pains, for these are nothing but

binding chains. Let us live each day in the most loving ways, the God-conscious way. In your holy and precious name we pray, Amen"

In the new year, each church will be offering you a chance to join a special prayer ministry. This is a great way to continue to support church family, whether that is in-person or in your home! Each church will have

their own meeting time based on the participants schedules. I'm hopeful that you've had the chance to prayerfully discern joining the prayer team. This will be a nice small group opportunity to pray for the needs of the church, whether that be in-person or in your home! Note the details below.

Upcoming Events:

- *Prayer Team Meeting:*

Contact Becky by January 11th if you're interested in joining. The meeting time is driven by availability of members. Cell # 920-364-0410 beckybsliva@gmail.com

- *Eastside Collaborative Team Meeting:*

Jan 23, 2023 6:00 PM @ Our Redeemer OR

Join us by phone call: +1 (312) 626-6799 Or on zoom

<https://luthersem.zoom.us/j/94833728174?pwd=eDFTU0hUZUNCdWISZTZuL3o2cHVm>

UT09 We welcome new team members who are interested!

- *Ordination of Per Halaas*

Christ the King Lutheran Church in Bloomington on 1/28/2023 at 11:00am refreshments afterwards 8600 Fremont Ave. S. in Bloomington.

- *Celebration of the Epiphany on Jan. 6 at 7 p.m. at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700*

Snelling Ave. S., St. Paul with ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton

(I thought this was something fun to share for our ELCA! You are invited to join members of the ELCA Conference of Bishops and others for a ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will preach at this special service of candlelight and Holy Communion. A reception will follow the service.)

JANUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH

The Mission of the month at Grace Lutheran Church for January 2023 is The Dwelling Place. The Dwelling Place is a Christ-centered ministry providing healing and hope to victims of domestic abuse through supportive services and a safe, transitional place to call home.

Dwelling Place provides transitional housing, provision of basic daily needs, training, supportive services, education programs and mentoring. The Dwelling Place offers the precious gift of time needed for safety, healing, and personal development that equips women and children to live free of abuse.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to this ministry. 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. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.



Happy New Year!

One of the definitions for Epiphany is revelation, insight and manifestation of Christ.

This is my last President's Report after four years as President at Grace Lutheran Church. It has been an honor and privilege to serve the congregation. The executive teams and council over these past years have been great. We had a strong team working on Strategic Planning prior to Covid. The metrics and design are still important and relevant. Though we had strong team members who had done strategic planning in their professions, we continue to have difficulty executing actions and maintaining a momentum of change. The congregation continues to point out that we continue to do a lot of talking but not enough doing. Maybe it continues to reflect our inability to claim the change we need to be strong in the future. We've all worked hard to navigate through the challenges of Covid.

We had a great team that develop protocols for a safe and healthy return to worship in the sanctuary. We improved security, air quality, and safe social distancing. We were fortunate to have technology for the online and hybrid services. We are committed to continuing to improve the delivery and ministry.

Our key proposed metrics for 2020 included focusing on people and partnerships.

Increase average Sunday worship attendance through:

New members (community outreach)

More visitors (community outreach)

Revitalized worship to attract more worshipers (worship and music ministry).

Increase net membership.

Increase number of people serving in ministries.

Increase new partnerships.

A goal to increase participation will enliven the congregation and create stronger bonds within the congregation.

Then Covid hit and we put this planning on hold. It is important to return to these metrics for growth. I hope that the Council will focus on planning for the future with clear expected actions and measures.

One of our metrics for strategic planning was developing more partnerships. We worked for three years across Covid, on hosting a charter school. The school had difficulty launching and Grace decided that we couldn't continue to wait for this partner to use our space. Another opportunity has opened up with the Lutheran Social Services Families Together Trauma Day Care. We won't know the status of this until mid-2023. The Council used the book *The Post-Pandemic Church* to help guide our work during and after Covid. This book can still serve as a resource for the future. It is clear that we are in a different environment and continue to be challenged to sustain and thrive.

Currently, we are waiting to hear more from Met Council and Minnesota Department of Transportation regarding our second appraisal. They have received our proposal and we hope to hear from them soon. Property Management will be taking on the liaison responsibility with them.

Blessings during this Season of Epiphany and Best Wishes for a Very Happy New Year!

Linda Baer



GRACE SHARES AT CHRISTMAS!

Thank you to every member of Grace who participated in The Giving Tree this year. People were very generous and we collected over 100 pairs of gloves and mittens, over 160 pairs of socks along with jackets, hats, scarves etc. that were donated to Dayton's Bluff Elementary School to be distributed to students in need of these items. It is so hard to think of young children so close to our church who are cold and do not have articles of clothing to keep them warm. Special thanks to Alicia Rundquist for connecting us with this potential ministry as well as delivering the items.

In addition a few toys were collected and delivered to Arlington Hills Lutheran Church's toy drive. Cub gift cards were received and will be donated to Merrick Food shelf to purchase necessary items needed. We also received some personal items that Pastor Karen will bring to Summit Hill Nursing Home for distribution.

In all, items donated were estimated at a value of \$1,750.00.

Thank you again for spreading joy and love at Christmas to our neighbors in need.

The Mission Committee



Music Notes -

During our long stint of hibernation when Covid-19 was at full force and while we all took shelter from the devastating virus, there strangely emerged a plus side to our “hunkering down”—time to read (along with more practicing). In some cases, rereading articles and books. One of the magazines that was reread was *The American Organist* which included a letter from a very active substitute organist. He gave several examples of why the prelude organists play at the beginning of a service should be discontinued. His main reason was based on the noise level created right before the service begins i.e. loud talking which in some cases included guffaws. He gave examples from all different denominations including synagogues. In fact, a prominent synagogue in New York City eliminated preludes because of the noise level.

The subject of greeting friends, especially valuing them even more after the length of time not being able to be in their presence and possibly even losing them from such an illness, is tricky. Some say the greetings should be done after the service, at coffee hour. But what if they don't stay for that time together? It's a conundrum.

So the question must be asked—What is the role of the prelude? Is it a 5 minute warning signal that the service is about to begin i.e. take your seats, please. Is the prelude technically a part of the service?

In a sense it is, because usually the music chosen is a reflection on one of the hymns that will later be sung. Does it benefit the congregant in any way? Yes, because it tunes in on that particular hymn, offering another perspective, deepening the meaning of the text, which in itself, is a commentary on the theme of the day. A comment that is frequently heard: “Those hymns really paired up with the sermon and scripture reading”. That was not a fluke. The hymns sung that day were thoughtfully chosen by a team, honing in, supporting the text being read that day. Sometimes it's hard to do that, but 90% of the time it works, which means the prelude and oft times, the postlude, are extensions of that theme. Therefore, the prelude and postlude are approximately 5 minute extensions of the service.

We just travelled through the season of Advent, followed by too short of a Christmas season. Advent's theme was to *Prepare* for baby Jesus' coming; in other words, a *Prelude* to his birth. Preludes help you to prepare for what's being offered to you that day—scriptures that, even though thousands of years old, continue to have deep meaning, paired by sermons and hymns that help us find deeper meaning from those scriptures. These are gifts given to you, passed on by the recipients of talents first given from the original Giver. Enjoy!



FROM THE LIBRARY:

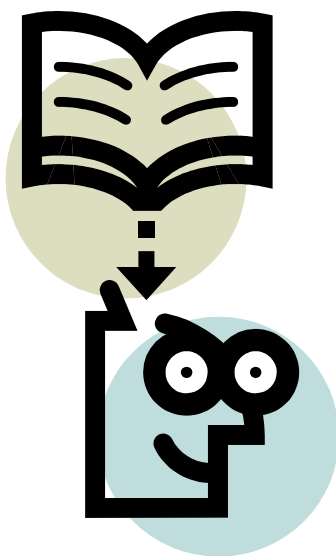
Readers, there is improved lighting in the Library. You can read book titles on upper and lower shelves while facing the books. It is exciting to have this visage. Credit for this improvement goes to the Property Management Committee in the person of Jim Dike.

Recent donations:

FICTION	<u>The Kalahari Typing School for Men</u> <u>Sparring Partners</u> <u>Hollywood Park</u>	Alexander McCall Smith John Grisham Mikel Jolliet
CHILDREN	<u>Tales from Shakespeare</u> <u>A Pocketful of Cricket</u>	Tina Packer Rebecca Caudill
SCRIPTURE	<u>New Testament</u> - American version of King James Bible 2 <u>Holy Bible with Helps</u> - American standard version 1 <u>Holy Bible</u> , RSV	

Grace Book Club -

For January 5th: What You Wish For Katherine Center
February 2nd and March 2nd: To be decided.



Sunday School Christmas Program!

The Grace Youth shared with us a sweet story of Jesus being the sweetest gift we receive in our lives for this year's Christmas Program. We are so proud of all of our youth. What a joy it was to see and hear them sing in church after two years away.

This quote from the program sums it all up perfectly:

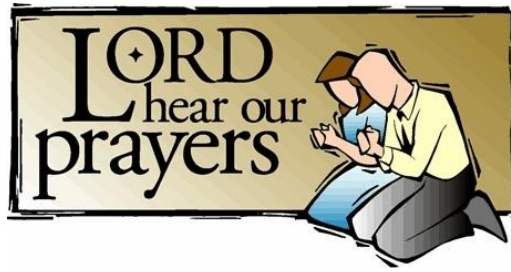
"Some cookies don't need the icing, but for others, it's the crowning touch on a sweet treat. If we believe in Jesus, we have all we need to insure we will live forever. We just need Jesus. Jesus fulfilled every prophecy of the Old Testament about the Messiah. Jesus was the perfect man who made the perfect sacrifice to save us imperfect sinners. He's done it all for us, and there's nothing we can do to earn the sweet gift He offers us. The only thing for us to do is to accept the gift He's given. Would you turn down a sweet treat like a lovely, iced cookie? Not likely, right? Will you accept the sweet gift of eternal life Jesus offers you? It's our prayer you will so that you can live life in all its sweetness!"

Sunday School starts up again on January 8th, and we will be moving to weekly classes again.



Our 'Miles of Pennies' Jar has been emptied for the year and thanks to the generosity of many members we will be sending a check for \$ 253.60 to Lutheran Social Services for their Homeless Youth program. Thank you for your kindness and commitment to funding this program. The jar will be out in 2023 as well so keep emptying that change from your pocket or coin purse to help out our less advantaged youth!





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 Butch Nelson, Jake Kemen, Pastor Paul Hesterberg and those we name in our hearts.

How to donate without an offering plate:

There is always snail mail. The office is open to receive the mail and our bookkeeper will count what comes in each week and deposit it in the bank. 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>November Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund	\$20,071.70	\$242,240.47	\$266,108.26
Expenses	\$27,899.02	\$302,041.55	\$332,728.99
Deficit/Overage	- \$7,827.32	-\$59,801.08	-\$66,620.73



- 1 Kaliska Reed
- 5 Susan Lindquist
- 8 Jake Kemen
- 9 Carl Alleman
- 10 Raymond Voss
- 11 Thomas Mohwinkel
Peter Zitzewitz
- 14 David Hunter
- 20 Peyton Olson
- 21 Edward Sonksen
- 27 Brian Jackson
Abby Westling
- 28 Christian Humphrey
Patty Young
- 30 Alicia Runquist



Worship Leaders for January 2023 -

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>
1	Monique McClure-Hegge
8	To be decided
15	To be decided
22	To be decided
29	To be decided

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
1	Team A - Norm Walby, Ron House, Roger McClure, Chris Williams
8	Team B - Rick Major, Julie Major
15	Team C - Brian Jackson, Jonathan Rose, Lydia Rose, Violet Rose
22	Team D - Norm Walby, Randy Nikula, Jonathan Williams, Josh Williams
29	Team E - Jeff Oberlander, Anne Oberlander, Dave Oberlander

<u>Date</u>	<u>Money Counters</u> - (we could use some additional volunteers on our counting teams)
1	Amanda Christie team
9	Monique McClure-Hegge team
15	Kate Pray team
22	Amanda Christie team
29	Monique McClure-Hegge team



Grace Lutheran Church
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Saint Paul, MN 55106



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FAX: 651-774-0006

www.gracelutheranstpaul.org
gracelutheranstpaul@gmail.com

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

Russ Carlson—Bells of Grace

Connie Smeby—Joyous Juniors



**WINTER
FUN!**

