

Grace's Mountain View

THE MOUNTAIN VIEW is published monthly. The purpose of the NEWSLETTER is to inform the congregation about upcoming events and activities in the life of the Church. Articles for the Newsletter should be submitted by the 20th of the month.

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Mission Statement---Grace by Grace, Seeking to be God's Faithful

December 2020

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Grace Lutheran Church

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ADVENT WORSHIP SERVICES will be on-line this year. Due to the pandemic we are following Northwest Synod guidelines and suspending in person worship services until further notice. Please be watching your email, Facebook, or contact the office if you have any questions.

We regret that there will be no Sunday School Christmas Program this year due to the pandemic. The Christian Education Committee felt it would be too difficult to prepare the program due to the pandemic guidelines.

The Northwest MN Synod will be providing online the December 27th worship service.



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Pastor Ann Newgard-Larson



Dear Members of Christ,

Thank you for your support of God's mission through our congregation. This has been a difficult time because of COVID-19, but we have tried to function as safely as possible. As you know, we are now on-line only until further notice.

In the interest of transparency, we want to keep you current with the financial situation of Grace. During the summer, income and expenses were fairly similar. In October we received an offering of \$3,767.00 that was not designated and in November (the first 3 Sunday's) we have taken in \$2,460.00 that was not designated. This is where we currently stand....as you can see, there is a deficit: (month of October)

Salaries and taxes:	\$5,224.00
Mortgage:	\$1,577.00
Maintenance/Utilities	\$2,006.00 (This will go up as we need more heat)
Office Expenses	\$212.00
Worship Expenses	\$1,229.00

We have been carefully cutting costs where possible:

- * updating the church insurance
- *in-house maintenance of our geo-thermal system
- *provide space for the DL school and other organizations
- *heat is turned down in unused spaces
- *will restructure our mortgage now to take advantage of low rates. Our adjustable rate mortgage is due to increase in October of 2021
- *if you have cost savings ideas, please let us know.

You are always welcome to look over the financial records and each month a short synopsis is included in the monthly newsletter.

God's peace be with you. We have much for which to be thankful!

Blace Schmidt, Michelle Peterson, Becky Esser, Pastor Ann Newgard-Larson, Glennis Olson
Grace Lutheran Finance Committee





December 2020

“Almighty God our Father, your generous goodness comes to us new every day. By the work of your Spirit, lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Day of Thanksgiving prayer from LBW*

So, Blessed Thanksgiving and Blessed Advent! Neither will feel “normal” this year, but both can be meaningful. It may be more difficult to recognize what we have to be thankful for this year since so much has changed, but perhaps it is more necessary that we open our eyes and hearts to see where God is at work in our lives....”paying attention” is the theme of Advent in Mark’s gospel.....watch to see where God is at work...stay awake and ready! How we wait makes a difference!

One of the images used in the lesson from Isaiah 64 is that we are the clay and God is the potter...the main actor in the story of our lives....God daily forms us in the grace given by Jesus Christ....if you have ever watched a potter at work, you have seen how important it is that the clay be centered when the wheel begins to turn....if the clay is off center, the pot begins to be misshapen and will wobble off kilter and must be reformed into something useful.

The season of Advent helps us to center our lives by waiting, watching and slowing us down....so many of us are tired of changes that the pandemic has brought to our lives that it is hard to wait in hope.

Create reminders to yourself that God has torn open the heavens and come to be with us as an answer to the plea in Isaiah to come and be with your people who are in a time of suffering.

At Jesus’ baptism, the heavens were torn open and again at the crucifixion, the curtain in the temple which separated God from the people was torn from top to bottom.....nothing does separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Create an Advent wreath and light the candles each week as a reminder to yourself that Christ is the light coming into the world, keep a piece of clay which you can mold and shape into a reminder that God can use each one of us to God’s purpose. Sing “O come; O come Emmanuel” throughout the season. Put out a clock to remind yourself to wait and a pair of glasses to remember to watch! Above all, remember to hope in the coming of the Lord....it is not just good news, but great news!

Blessings,

Pastor Ann

Dear Members of Grace Lutheran,

As I write this, things keep changing, so it is hard to keep things straight! As of now, we will be worshiping online only. It is a difficult decision to make, but we must follow the CDC and Synod guidelines.

I would like to take this time to wish everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. It is disheartening that we cannot spend time together as families, but our health and safety need to be considered. Stay safe and “count your blessings” even during these difficult times!

Michelle Peterson, Church Council President

Christmas Blessings Mix



Bugles: Bring us the joyful message of the Heavenly Host, announcing peace on earth, good will to men.

Pretzels: Symbol of a mother's loving arms; as Mary wrapped her Son in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger.

Red Hots: Red berries that decorate the holly plant, a reminder of eternal life and Christ's redemption.

Nuts or seeds: Promise of a future harvest, one we will reap only if seeds are planted and tended with diligence.

Dried fruits: Remind us of the rich gifts brought by the Wise Men.

M&Ms: Memories of those who came before us to guide us to a blessed future.

Hershey's Kiss: The love of family and friends that sweetens our lives.

Candy Canes: Represents the shape of the shepherd's crook, used to bring lost lambs back to the fold.

(UNAPPROVED) COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS November 17, 2020)

- † Meeting was called to order.
- † A representative from the American Group of MN was here to discuss the church's insurance premium. After some changes in the proposal, the Council decided to go with American Church Group of MN instead of renewing with Church Mutual. Premium will be approximately \$100 less each month. We will begin on December 1, 2020.
- † Correspondence asking for donations was read. All are tabled for now.
- † Secretary minutes were amended and accepted.
- † Financial report was given by Glennis:

October Total Income	\$6,405.65
October Total Expenses	\$11,662.13
Savings Balance	\$9,076.92
Rainy Day Fund	\$21,412.25
Mission Investment Fund	\$1,021.63
Mission Investment Savings	\$1,147.63
Checkbook Balance 10/31/2020	\$128.51
Mortgage Balance	\$166,467.78

A few more expenses this month due to the withholding tax, and dinner fundraiser expenses. Income was low for the month.

† PROPERTY---Leak in fire protection system is fixed. Geo-Thermal is still not working properly. Considering putting additional gas thermostat in to trigger furnaces when geothermal fails. Rekeying of church is complete. Issues with mice and bats. Jim will contact Alliance pest control and get a bid for setting/checking traps and other services they could provide. Windows are on order and waiting for delivery. Building permit has been obtained.

† EDUCATION---22 kids attended the Halloween party. All had fun. Thank you to the Confirmation students who helped. No Advent Store this year due to COVID-19. Christmas program is being worked on. No Confirmation class on Wed. Nov. 25 due to Thanksgiving. First Communion is on hold until extended family can attend the celebration in person. Sunday School will be held according to how the DL School District is handling school. Next Christian Ed meeting is on Sunday, December 6th following Sunday School.

† STEWARDSHIP---Offerings are down. A stewardship letter will be devised and sent out in the December Newsletter and by mail. Angel Tree is up with 20 names to be taken by members and buy gifts for the children. New focus on the homeless of DL spearheaded by First Lutheran Church. Members will be able to contribute in various ways.

† OUTREACH---Facebook live continues. Thanks to Jim for recording the Services each week. Salvation Army Bell Ringing is on December 12th at L&M Fleet from 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Thanks to all who helped with the Spuds and Pork Dive Thru Dinner. Polar Fest Hotdish dinner will be changed to a "Drive Thru Dinner" on Saturday, February 6th after the Fishing Derby. 1 kind of hotdish, roll, and bar will be served. Free will donation. Should more Grace cards be gotten? →



† WORSHIP---Thanksgiving Worship Service will be on Nov. 22nd. Thankoffering will be taken for the Becker County Food Pantry. Christmas Eve worship services was discussed. It was decided that there would be 2 worship services: one at 3:00 P.M. in the sanctuary and the other one will be held at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall that will conclude sing singing Silent Night when in the parking lot to leave. Sign-up to attend Worship on Christmas Eve is mandatory in order to stay within MDH guidelines. Communion will be served on the 2nd Sunday of each month. A motion was made and carried to purchase 2 digital radio/cd players for \$100. Worship will move to the Sanctuary beginning December 6th.

OLD BUSINESS---Reports given on Spuds and Pork Dinner and the school usage of Fellowship Hall.

NEW BUSINESS---Disbursement of the donation given by the Danielson family for Good Samaritan use will be decided on by the Executive Committee. No ad for Christmas Eve Worship this year. Letter from Bishop Tesch was discussed. Blace will check into refinancing of mortgage. Decorating for Advent/Christmas will be done on Sunday, December 6th. No Christmas Caroling this year due to Covid 19. Office will be closed on Thanksgiving, November 26th and Friday November 27th. If council members are absent for a meeting, they are to contact, Becky, Glennis, or Pastor for updated information. Annual meeting will be held on January 26th. Ways to hold the meeting were discussed. Executive Committee will discuss options. Nominations are needed for 6 positions on the Council. All positions could be reelected for another 2-year term.

*Meeting adjourned with Lord's Prayer.

* Next meeting is on Tuesday, December 15th with Glennis giving devotions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS DUE JAN. 10th!

CHURCH MEETINGS

CHRISTIAN ED. COMMITTEE

The Christian Education Committee will meet Sunday, December 6th at 11:00 A.M.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 15th at 6:30 P.M.

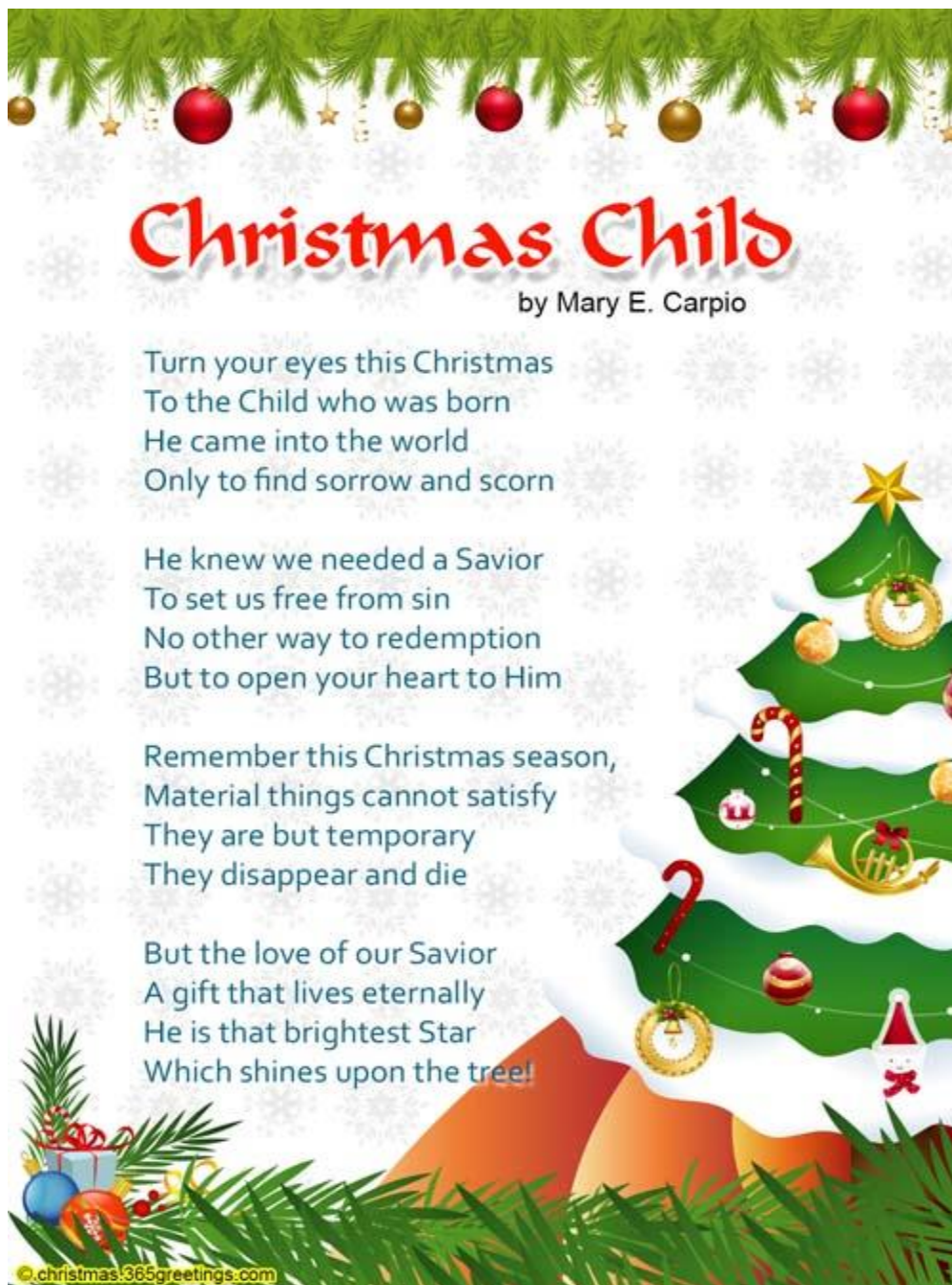
GRACE LUTHERAN ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 31, 2021

Following the worship service

All members are encouraged to attend!

Child Care will be provided.



SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NOVEMBER

DATE	PSALM	LESSONS	GOSPEL
December 6, 2020	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	Isaiah 40:1-11 2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8
December 13, 2020	Psalm 126	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
December 20, 2020	Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Romans 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38
December 24, 2020	Psalm 96	Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-20
December 27, 2020	Psalm 148	Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

NURSING HOME MINISTRY:

Don't forget our members in Nursing Homes and Care Facilities.

Emmanuel Nursing Home-1415 Madison Ave.

Red Sloane, Phyliss McLeod

Frazee Assisted Living

Wilma Leitheiser

(219 West Maple Ave. #20, Frazee, MN 56544)

FALL BAZAAR ITEMS FOR SALE

Even though we cannot hold the Fall Bazaar as we usually have done in the past, some of our parishioners have still been busy making items to sell. A table in the Fellowship Hall is set up for you to check the items out.

Myrna Schmidt has made Barbie clothes and American Doll clothes. They are priced and ready to be make some girls happy this Christmas season!

Cathy Schwoboda has been making kitchen hanging towels. They are \$3.50 a piece or 2 for \$6.00. These make GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

Stop into the church Monday through Friday between 9:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M. to purchase your items.

Pass the word out to your friends and family members!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



December 4
Brent Bristlin

December 6
Irene Carnegie

December 7
Nathan Flaa
Aaron Nelson

December 9
Kari Lane
Lynn Ohman

December 10
Carter Krenzel

December 13
Jennifer Bristlin

December 14
Maren Westrum

December 15
Glenn Anderson

December 22
Sarah Ritchie

December 27
Robb Larson
Ashley McDermond
Cathy Schwoboda

December 28
Blair Westrum

December 29
Dan Ladwig
Sheila Longfors
Sydney Mace

December 30
Marlys Brasel

December 31
David Rasmussen

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

God Bless You
On your
Anniversary

December 5
Dennis & Traci Mace

December 17
Lloyd & Ruby Kiihn



If your birthday or anniversary is not listed here, PLEASE let us know so that we can add your birthdays and/or anniversaries into our computer. Thank you.

December 23
Blace & Myrna Schmidt

December 29
Dave & Judy Stowman

IT'S A GRACE THING!

MEMORIAL GIFTS



<i>IN MEMORY OF</i>	<i>FUND</i>	<i>GIVEN BY</i>	<i>DATE</i>
Marion Dwyer	Undesignated	Shirley Gulden	Nov. 29, 2020

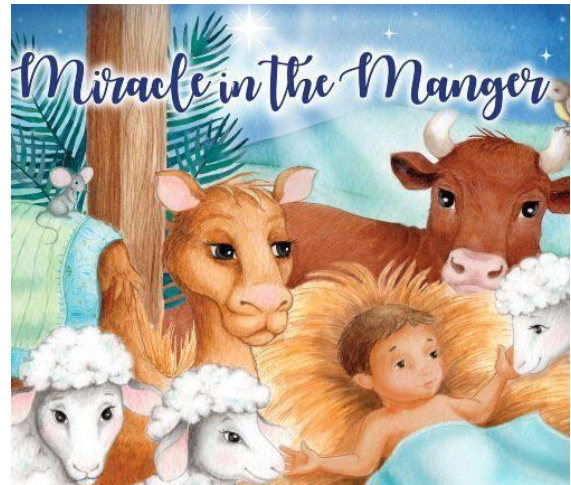
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

SUNDAY SCHOOL

***DUE TO THE PANDEMIC**, we regret to have to cancel the Sunday School Christmas Program. For the safety of the children, teachers, and parents we feel we cannot safely follow the current social distancing guidelines. We will resume having a Christmas Program in 2021. Have a safe and blessed Christmas this year!

CONFIRMATION

* **Because DLHS/DLMS** are distance learning, Confirmation is suspended.



Jesus is the greatest Christmas Miracle of all. Only God could love us enough to want to save us from our sins and death by sending Jesus to be born in a lowly stable. The miracle of God's love caused him to promise the Savior long, long, long ago, when Adam and Eve first disobeyed in the Garden of Eden. God's love for sinners was indeed a miracle—something only God could do!





IMPORTANT TAX INFORMATION

Since the 2017 tax overhaul doubled the standard deduction, the vast majority of taxpayers no longer get a tax break for charitable contributions. But if you make a contribution before December 31, you may be eligible for a modest deduction, even if you don't itemize.

The CARES Act stimulus bill enacted earlier this year included a one-time, \$300 “above the line” deduction for cash contributions to charity. The provision was designed to encourage taxpayers to help charities, many of which are struggling to fulfill their mission during the coronavirus pandemic. The deduction is tied to tax returns, not individuals, so the maximum a married couple who files jointly can deduct is \$300, says Lisa Greene-Lewis, tax expert for [TurboTax](#).

The deduction is limited to cash contributions—contributions of clothing and household goods to your local Goodwill aren't eligible. Donations to donor-advised funds aren't eligible, either. Keep a record of your contribution with your tax documents. For donations less than \$250, you need a bank record, such as a canceled check or credit card statement. For donations that exceed \$250, you should obtain a written acknowledgement from the charity that shows the date of the contribution and the amount and states whether you received any goods or services in exchange for your donation.

If you still itemize, you can deduct charitable contributions made before year-end on Schedule A of your 2020 tax return. You can also deduct contributions to donor-advised funds made before New Year's Eve. If you plan to make a major contribution, perhaps as part of your estate plan, note that a separate provision in the CARES Act permits taxpayers to deduct donations of up to 100% of their adjusted gross income. Ordinarily, the cut-off is 60% of AGI. As is the case with the above-the-line deduction, donations to donor-advised funds aren't eligible for the higher limits.



THANK YOU to the following people who helped decorate our church with poinsettias during the Christmas Season. The poinsettias may be picked up after our Christmas Eve Worship Services.

*In memory of Kimberly McArthur and Dick & Marion Crane..Given by: Dan & Kari Lane

*In memory of Arvid Anderson.....Given by Clarice Anderson,
Everett & Pam Anderson,
Ernie & Lindsey Anderson,
Curt & Jane Anderson &
family

*In honor of our mother & children.....Given by Dan & Machele Krengel

*In memory of Jamie Olson, Clifford & Gerdes Hovelson.....Given by Glennis Olson
In honor of grandchildren & children

*In memory of Annette Pawlak.....Given by Gerry & Lil Nybo

*In memory of Benny Carnegie.....Given by Irene Carnegie & family

*In memory of Verne & Inez Van Ornum.....Given by Lora Lee Senske

The Poinsettia gained its popularity with [the legend of Pepita](#), a young girl with a gift for the Christ Child.

A charming story is told of Pepita, a poor Mexican girl who had no gift to present the Christ Child at Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked slowly to the chapel with her cousin Pedro, her heart was filled with sadness rather than joy. I am sure, Pepita, that even the humblest gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes," said Pedro consolingly.

Not knowing what else to do, Pepita knelt by the roadside and gathered a handful of common weeds, fashioning them into a small bouquet. Looking at the scraggly bunch of weeds, she felt more saddened and embarrassed than ever by the humbleness of her offering. She fought back a tear as she entered the small village chapel.

As she approached the altar, she remembered Pedro's kind words: "Even the humblest gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes." She felt her spirit lift as she knelt to lay the bouquet at the foot of the nativity scene. Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into blooms of brilliant red, and all who saw them were certain that they had witnessed a Christmas miracle right before their eyes.

From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the Flores de Noche Buena, or Flowers of the Holy Night, for they bloomed each year during the Christmas season and thus, the legend of the poinsettia was born.



Grace Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America

213 Roosevelt Avenue

Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

Church Worship Service 9:30 A.M.

Sunday School Sept - May 10:00 A.M.

Adult Ed. Opportunities Year-round

Office Hours. 8:00 till Noon M – F

*“Come and join us in growing into God’s
amazing Grace.”*

EXPERIENCE GRACE AT GRACE

Grace Lutheran Church...a place to belong

Grace’s MOUNTAIN VIEW

December 2020

Vision Statement---Grace Lutheran Church seeks to be a serving and witnessing people of God, united to share the Gospel with all. Through the Holy Spirit, we respond by reaching out with concern and support to the varied needs of a diverse people.

Address Service Requested



We hope to have 2 Christmas Eve Worship Services at Grace. The 3:00 P.M. service will be held in the Sanctuary. The 5:00 P.M. will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Singing of Silent Night with candles will take place in the parking lot.

YOU MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND THESE WORSHIP SERVICES! Please call the office to register how many family members will be attending.

HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS!

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE AT 9:30 A.M....COME JOIN US...YOU ARE INVITED