

THE GLEANINGS

of Grace Lutheran Church



736 CAYUGA DRIVE, NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14304-3498

(716) 283-1843

OFFICE@GRACENF.ORG

REV. BENJAMIN G. BAHR, PASTOR

December 2022-January 2023

OUR VISION

WELCOMING PEOPLE TO GROW IN HOPE, LOVE, AND CERTAINTY THROUGH GOD'S WORD OF GRACE.



A few weeks ago, I announced that the 107th Attack Wing had asked me to serve full-time, and that the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces had therefore issued a Divine Call to that service. After prayer and difficult deliberation, I concluded that the ministry to the Airmen of the 107th was where my service was needed the most at this time. I therefore accepted the Call and announced that I would need to leave full-time ministry at Grace. My final day as sole pastor of Grace was November 30.

However, due to the unique nature of this Call, my family and I are not leaving. While my role is different, for Lacey and the boys nothing changes. We continue to be members of Grace, and during the pastoral vacancy I will lead services as available, likely about twice a month. For other pastoral needs, please contact the church office and Erin will assist you with getting in touch with a pastor on call. For emergencies, the Board of Elders can help. They will also be able to provide further details of the vacancy and Call process.

In his second epistle, the Apostle Peter speaks of the end times and the fear and destruction accompanying it. "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be..." -2 Peter 3:10-11

One might expect a variety of answers, and certainly the world has its own opinions, most involving panic, conspiracy, or "doomsday" scenarios. But Peter's answer is quite straightforward. He recommends reading Paul's epistles and living by them. He tells his beloved people to be at peace and live lives of holiness. He reminds them that there are better things in store, even the "home of righteousness." And Peter concludes by saying: "There are some things in [Paul's letters] that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

A pastoral transition, though imparting some uncertainty, by no means rises to level of the end of days. Yet, Peter's words of peace may help the people of Grace as well. Make use of the gifts of God. Commit to weekly worship and Bible study. Generously support the work of the Lord at Grace, for He has many plans for you!

To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.

Pastor Bahr

DURING OUR VACANCY...

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

OFFICE HOURS:

Our Office Administrator, Erin Anthony, will be in the church office on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10 AM - 2 PM, and on the first Sunday of the month from 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM. She will be able to answer many of your questions about church activities. Erin can be reached by stopping in, calling 716-283-1843, or emailing her at office@gracenf.org. Email and voicemail messages will be returned on Erin's next scheduled work day. Articles for the bulletin should be submitted by Wednesday at 12 PM each week.

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Worship services will continue as usual at 10:30 AM each Sunday. Advent services are being held on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM. Christmas Eve services will be at 5 PM and 11 PM. Christmas Day worship will begin at 10:30 AM. Services will be conducted by our Board of Elders with Pastor Bahr volunteering his assistance at several of the upcoming services.

BIBLE CLASS & SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Bible Class and Sunday School will continue to be held on Sundays at 9 AM. Bible Class will be led by the Elders. Wednesday morning Bible Class is on a temporary pause as the Elders look for a volunteer (or volunteers) to lead the class. If you are interested in helping with this, please let Mark Andrews know.

There will **NOT** be Bible Class or Sunday School on Christmas morning.

CARE TEAMS:

The Board of Elders and Board of Social Ministries have teamed up to provide visits and communion to our homebound and ill members on a regular basis. Visits will begin in December. If you desire a home visit and have not been contacted by mid-December, please let the office know. If you become temporarily unable to attend church services due to an illness, injury, or any other situation, you are encouraged to contact the office so you can be placed on the prayer list and receive a home visit if desired. Please keep us informed of any needs that arise during our vacancy.

PLEASE NOTE:

Each Sunday bulletin contains an attendance sheet that allows us to care for our church family. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO FILL OUT THIS FORM EACH WEEK WITH THE DATE AND YOUR NAME AND PLACE IT IN THE OFFERING PLATE.** This will assist us in making sure that all of our members are being cared for as needed.

EMERGENCIES:

If a need for immediate or urgent pastoral care should arise, please contact our congregation's President, Dick Crawford (716-818-6992), or Chair of the Board of Elders, Mark Andrews (716-807-1758). They will arrange care for you.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH - 2023 BUDGET

Church Council

Employment Screening	500
Church Office	
Copier Lease	3,501
Copier Usage	100
Software	1,200
General Office Supplies	1,100
Postage	625
Secretary	14,726
Total Church Office	21,252
Missions	
Social Ministries	5,200
District & Synod	4,289
Total Missions	9,489
Other	
LCMS Convention Assessment	650
Social security taxes	3,305
Bank Service Charges	900
Total Other	4,855
Total Church Council	36,096

Trustees

Custodian	15,276
Insurance & Security	
Liability and Property	6,300
Workers Comp & DBL Insurance	1,351
Total Insurance & Security	7,651
Maintenance	
Organ & Piano	200
Property & Building:	
City Refuse Fee	450
Snow Plowing	750
Equipment	2,984
Building	6,200
Grounds	8,800
Heating System	2,900
Total Property & Building	22,084
Total Maintenance	22,284
Utilities	
Electric	5,059
Gas	8,898
Telephone	1,812
Water & Sewer	640
Total Utilities	16,409
Total Trustees	61,619

Elders

Evangelism	
Evangelism Materials	700
Total Evangelism	700
Family Ministries	
Confirmation	450
Adult Bible Class & Other	300
Multi-generational Education	500
Sunday School Curriculum	1,200
Family Activities Committee	1,000
Ark Encounter Trip (Kentucky)	1,000
Vacation Bible School	1,000
Youth	800
Total Family Ministries	6,250
Pastoral Office	
Conferences	200
Concordia Benefit Plan	7,308
Social Security Taxes	5,403
Health Care & Med Reimbursement	18,000
Housing Allowance	12,000
Mileage Reimbursement	1,500
Pastoral materials	500
Salary	52,200
Substitute Pastors	600
Total Pastoral Office	97,711
Stewardship	
Contribution Envelopes	400
Total Stewardship	400
Worship & Spiritual Growth	
Music Materials	500
Organist & Choir Director	13,205
Substitute Organist	450
Worship Materials	1,800
Total Worship & Spiritual Growth	15,955
Total Elders	121,016
Total proposed budget	218,732





UPDATES

THANK YOU to all who volunteered at this year's Trunk or Treat, sponsored jointly by the Board of Education and Board of Social Ministries. It was the most successful we've had so far! We had 17 cars and a NFFD truck in our parking lot, along with games, free Bibles, free gifts, free T-shirts, drinks, and snacks. Over 170 member and neighborhood children visited along with their parents and grandparents, and there was an abundance of smiles and "thank you's". We gave away 10 Bibles this year. One family shared how much they appreciate the Bible we gave them last year and said it is used in their home on a daily basis. Praise the Lord! No matter how you helped...praying for our event, planning, advertising, donating snacks, bringing your car, helping with games and prizes, serving food, set up, clean up...it wouldn't have happened without your help! Thank you for helping to provide a safe, family-friendly event at our church!

AUGUST MONTHLY MISSION was designated for Lighthouse Women & Children's Center in Niagara Falls. We were able to send a check in the amount of \$900 to assist director Joanne Lorenzo as she works with the at-risk children and struggling, often homeless, women of Niagara Falls. Thank you for your generous donations.

DOOR OFFERING donations for Hurricane Ian disaster relief was matched at \$1 for every \$2 donated by Thrivent. Your generosity resulted in Lutheran Disaster Relief receiving a total of \$1080 for their work helping our neighbors in Christ as they recover from the devastation of the October storm.

UPCOMING MISSION ENVELOPES—donations to the following can be placed in the offering plate during the designated month or given online under "monthly mission" at www.gracenf.org.

DECEMBER MISSION ENVELOPES are designated for Help & Hope for the Homeless, Inc. This local charity was founded by Grace member John Loss, and has the purpose of helping a homeless individual or family receive the training and skills they require to put their lives on a path to success. If you have questions regarding their work, feel free to talk to John or Sue Loss or Robin Stephenson who is a board member.



JANUARY MISSION ENVELOPES are designated for Orphan Grain Train, which is a recognized service organization of LCMS. Their work helps those in need in the United States and throughout the world. As they share the love of Christ, they provide whatever is needed when disaster strikes, including clothing, hygiene supplies, food, construction materials, medical supplies, generators, water, household items, temporary shelter, and more.

TURKEYS & HAMS

HAMS & FROZEN TURKEYS are still being collected through December 11th. They are needed to provide holiday meals for families that are experiencing difficult times. Your donations are being delivered to local Niagara Falls agencies working with our poor and homeless, including the Lord's Day Dinner, Community Mission, Salvation Army, and Lighthouse Women & Children. If you need help carrying your donation down to the freezer, please ask an usher for assistance.



ADVENT GIVING TREE



Our Giving Trees will be available in the chapel and narthex continuing until the New Year. The trees are decorated with tags listing items needed by three local agencies that will help our neighbors in need, including Heart, Love, & Soul, Lighthouse Women & Children Center, and the Niagara Gospel Mission. If you would like to participate in this project, please take a tag from the tree, purchase the item listed, and return it unwrapped to the tree table. All donations will be delivered in January to the appropriate agency.

ONGOING PROJECTS

CARD MINISTRY: If you are aware of someone who could be cheered with a greeting card for a special need or a special occasion, please let Trish Andrews know by speaking with her or dropping a note in her mailbox. We are glad to send a card to anyone who could benefit from this ministry.



OLD EYEGLASSES AND HEARING AIDS can be donated to the collection box located in the coat room by the parking lot door. These are given to the Lion's Club, which distributes them in the United States and around the world to individuals that would not otherwise be able to see or hear.

TOILETRY SAMPLES that you may receive in the mail or from hotel visits can be placed in the collection box in the coat room by the parking lot door. These are distributed by the Lighthouse Women & Children Center in Niagara Falls as they work with women in our city who are living on the streets and often resort to prostitution as a means of support. The Magdalene Project works to reassure them of the love Jesus has for them, and helps them to rebuild their self-esteem as they plan new paths for their lives.



PLEASE JOIN US!

As budgets become tighter, prices continue to rise, and natural disasters seem to occur with increasing frequency, we are seeing an ever growing need to help our neighbors in Christ. Help us make the difficult decisions on how to be good stewards of the gifts God gives us. Our next Social Ministries committee meeting is scheduled for after worship on **January 8**. We meet for about an hour (and a free lunch of chili is on the menu). Your opinion matters—hope to see you there!

Grace Ladies

* Thank you Katelyn Pantano for leading us in craft night in October. Pictures are posted on the Grace Lutheran Facebook page.

* Thank you to all who participated in our November Wine & Cheese / Show & Tell night. Those who brought something to share were: Erika Tuscher, Gerry Miller, Dorothy Kew, Joyce Learned, Sue Loss, Wendy Coleman, and Jane Schulz. Pictures of this event are also posted on the Grace Lutheran Facebook page.

Upcoming Events



* Grace Ladies Christmas Party is Tuesday, December 6th at 6pm. Sign-up sheet is on the glass case in the chapel. It will be catered by ALPS Catering and includes 2 meats, 2 sides, salad with dressing, rolls and butter. We will also provide our punch and cookies. The cost is \$15.00 per person. We will also play games, sing Christmas carols, and have a \$5.00 gift exchange. All ladies are welcome – Come and join us for some Christmas food, fun and fellowship.

* Sunday School Event – On Sunday, December 18th at the 10:30 am worship, come join our Sunday School students as they help to lead worship in preparation for the birth of the Christ Child. The students will all be singing “The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy” and some will be in costume and others playing instruments. Students will also participate as greeters, acolytes, ushers and readers. After worship there will be a reception in the chapel for all participants and church members.



Current News and Announcements

****CHOIR PRACTICES** in December will be held on Wednesday, 12/14, at 7 PM and Sunday, 12/18, after worship. The choir will be singing on Christmas Eve at the 5 PM service. Watch the bulletin for rehearsal schedules.

****SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4th** is the last day to order Christmas Poinsettia sale is currently going on until Sunday, December 4th. Order forms are at both sanctuary entrances

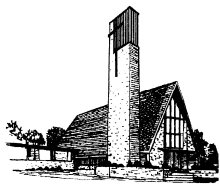
****THE ALTAR GUILD** is currently looking for members to join. The guild is run on a monthly commitment and you will be matched with a current guild member and/or trained on the weekly guild duties. Please contact either the church office or Erika Tuscher if you are interested.

****THE 2023 FLOWER CHART** is now hanging in the narthex. Cost for a centerpiece is \$47, or you can choose two vases at a cost of \$60. When you sign up for a date, please find the altar flower order form outside either sanctuary entrance. Please complete the form and return to the church office no later than the Sunday week before your date.

****Are you a reader or looking for a gift?** The Book ... “Not Always Homeless”, written by Grace member John Loss, is available for purchase for you to read or to give as a gift to someone for the upcoming holiday season. The book portrays the personal stories of thirteen people who survived and escaped a life on the streets. All were, or are, residents currently living in Niagara Falls. One is a member of our church. The book can be purchased for \$12.95 from John in church or by calling him at (716) 773-9781 to bring it to church for you. All proceeds go to Help and Hope for Homeless, Inc. The book can also be purchased through Amazon.

****NEXT AMERICAN RED CROSS** blood drive will be held here at Grace on Saturday, December 17th from 8:00am – 1:00pm.





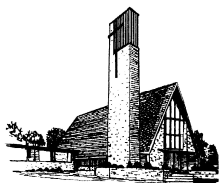
Grace Lutheran Church

December 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Head Ushers: Gary Krull Mark Binkley	Altar Care: Ursula Zimmerman			1	2	3
4 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship (HC) 11:30A ELF Class 11:30A Christmas Decorating	5 6:30P Survivors' Group	6 6:00P Grace Ladies Christmas Party	7 6:30P Advent Service	8	9	10 12:00P Piano Recital
11 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship (HC) 11:30A ELF Class	12 6:30P Survivors' Group	13	14 6:30P Advent Service 7:00P Choir Rehearsal	15	16	17 8:00A Red Cross Blood Drive (until 1pm)
18 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship 11:30A ELF Class 11:30A Choir Rehearsal 11:30A Cake Fellowship	19 6:30P Survivors' Group	20	21 	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 5:00P Christmas Eve 11:00P Christmas Candlelight
25 Christmas Day 10:30A Worship (HC) 	26 OFFICE CLOSED 6:30P Survivors' Group	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

CE: Christian Education
 ELF: "Exploring the Lutheran Faith" Class
 HC: Holy Communion

Office Phone: 716-283-1843
 Office Administrator: Erin Anthony – office@gracenf.org
 Church Office Hours: 1st Sunday 8:30 AM-12:30 PM; M/TH/F 10 AM-2 PM



Grace Lutheran Church

January 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 New Year's Day 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship (HC)	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship (HC) 11:30 Social Minis. Mtg.	9 6:30P Survivors' Group	10	11	12	13	14
15 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship	16 GLEANINGS DEADLINE 6:30P Survivors' Group	17	18	19	20	21 
22 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship (HC)	23 6:30P Survivors' Group	24	25	26	27	28
29 9:00A CE: Acts 10:30A Worship	30 6:30P Survivors' Group	31			Head Ushers: Mark Andrews Jim Wolf	Altar Care: Sherry Cassatt Virginia Markel

CE: Christian Education
 HC: *Holy Communion*

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Advent Schedule

Wednesdays, November 30th, December 7th and 14th

6:30P Advent Worship Service

Saturday, December 24th

5:00P Service of Lessons & Carols

11:00P Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 25th

10:30A Christmas Day Service

Official Acts (as of 11/23/2022)

In Memoriam:

†John Koppenhaver	10/06/22	Service: 10/22/22 at Grace Lutheran
†Jane Schultz	10/09/22	Service: 10/14/22 at Grace Lutheran

† Denotes GLC Member

GRACE will continue to offer Sunday's weekly service online through our YouTube channel. Using this link or QR code, you may view the service live on Sundays starting at 10:20 AM or participate in any previous service anytime.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG2QrtXHQGArfdr6KTOOrQvg>



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736 Cayuga Drive
Niagara Falls, NY 14304-3498

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WORSHIP SERVICES

Divine Service:
Sundays @ 10:30A

*Holy Communion on the
first, third and fifth Sundays

EDUCATION

ACTS:
Sundays @ 9:00A

GRACE LADIES

Next Meeting:
Christmas Party:
December 6th @ 6:30P

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Next Meeting:
January 8th
*New members are always
welcome. We meet five
times each year for about
an hour.

**Issue
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