



Pastor
Doug Widger
Lead Shepherd

Pastor Steve Roth
Community Care

Dr. Serena Pace
DCE - Director of
Ministries

Jennifer Chavez
Director of
Early Education

Rev. Dr. Russell
Hildebrandt
Pastor Emeritus

Advent

Our Advent Services this year will take place weekly on Wednesdays from November 30th - December 21st at 6:30 pm. We will celebrate Christmas Eve with one service also at 6:30 pm, and Christmas Day at 9:30 am.

Our Community Care Pastor, Steve Roth, has prepared a daily devotion for this season to go with our services and prepare our hearts for Christmas. This devotion can be accessed online by [clicking here \(go.grace.lc/advent\)](#) or navigating through our website [grace.lc](#). Limited copies will also be available in the Narthex. Read the introduction below!



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The season of Advent is observed during the four Sundays before Christmas. The word Advent comes from the Latin Ad venire, which means "to come to." Although this season is not found in the Bible, its meaning is found throughout Scripture. Prepare the way for the Lord – He is coming!

COME is used as an action verb in a variety of ways in Scripture. It is used to show us how God comes to us, and how we come to God. It is used to encourage someone to move toward something or someone; other times it is used as a charge or invitation that requires an active and sometimes immediate response. In and of ourselves we have no power to even come to God – or even believe in Him. But because of God's grace, He offers us invitations to respond to His grace by faith.

During this Advent Season, we want to remind ourselves of what it means "to come to." The devotions found during the first and third week all correspond with Scriptures that tell us how God has come to us. The devotions found in weeks two and four tells us how we are to come to Him. Someone once said, "When grace knocks on your door, let faith answer."

At the start of each week I have included a Hymn of the Week (that corresponds to the theme). Following the hymn you will find information on the Advent Candle, Advent thoughts, and an Advent Activity. All of this can assist the reader in preparing for Christmas.

Christ has come! Christ is here! Christ is coming again!
May the Lord bless your Christmas.

Steve Roth

FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS

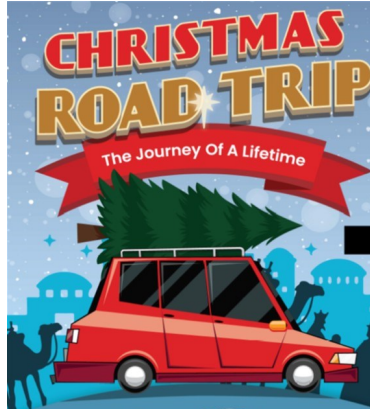
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM December 18, 9:30 AM

Followed by a Happy Birthday Jesus Party for kids in the GLEE wing with crafts & snowballs!!!
Youth help wanted!

Dress Rehearsals are: Dec. 4 and 11 from 10:45 am—12 pm. Please plan to attend!

Arrive on the 18th by 9:00 to receive your costume.

Invite your friends to come and enjoy this creative telling of the birth of Jesus.



SUNDAY MORNINGS - All Bible classes meet from 10:45-11:45 AM
No classes on 12/25 or 1/1

Babies/Toddlers: Nursery

Preschool/Kinder & Grades 1-6 Bible Studies: Preschool wing/GLEE hallway

Grades 7-12 Bible Study: Youth Shed

Biblical Parenting Sunday School: Library

**I am what I am
by the GRACE of God**



**RESET HIGH SCHOOL RETREAT
JAN. 14-15, \$65
12/12 HARD DEADLINE**

SABINE CREEK RANCH, ROYSE CITY
"But by the grace of God I am what I am"
1 Corinthians 15:10a

Worship, Speaker: Pastor Travis Hartjen, Small Group Time, Games, Gaga Ball, Campfires, Archery, 2 service project options serving local & global community. Scholarships available.

TEEN GIRLS—FEBRUARY 24-25, 2023, \$35

THERE{4} is a 2-day conference designed to inspire the next generation of high school girls to boldly live out their identity in Jesus Christ. Get ready for a weekend of incredible worship, amazing speakers and creative interactions designed just for you!



"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

—1 Peter 2:9



Bayou La Batre, AL YOUTH MISSION
July 8-16, 2023, \$450
\$150 TOTAL DUE NOW
to reserve your spot!
For current Grades 6—12.

Encounter the resilient spirit of Bayou La Batre as we serve through home improvement projects, elder care and children's ministries. In the evenings, we'll experience Dauphin Island, a worship service, and a tour of Bayou La Batre. We'll also encounter many community friends who have shared their community with YouthWorks staff, students and adult leaders since 1998. [Contact Serena](#) with questions.



December 16, 6-10 pm



**DECEMBER 16, 6-10 PM
UGLY SWEATER REQUESTED**

Serve Mission Arlington & Progressive Christmas Party!
Locations (TBD)

6PM Mission Arlington
7PM Appetizers & Gingerbread Houses
8PM Pizza & Games
9PM Dessert & \$5—\$10 White Elephant
10PM Pick Up

PARENTS NEEDED TO DRIVE/HOST

Ongoing Groups Updates

Information on all of our groups can be found anytime at grace.lc/get-connected

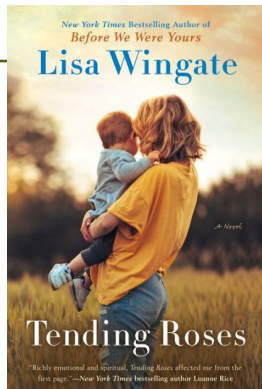
Braille



Our Braille groups will be taking a break for the month of December! Enjoy your holidays, and we will resume meeting with all groups in January. For more information on getting involved in making Braille Bibles, [contact the Church Office](#) or Uvonne D.

Book Club

We are reading "Tending Roses" by Lisa Wingate this month. Come join us to discuss together on the 3rd Wednesday of December at 2 pm - in the Church Library! Call Ruth Brown or [the Church Office](#) for more information.



graceSeniors

Save the date for Dec. 8th, 12 PM



Main Dish: Delores' Homemade Veggie Soup



Bring: Christmas Sides and Desserts



Join us for caroling and good cheer!

Hostess': Ruth B. and Lou Ann K.

Devotion: Sandra

NOTE: SPECIAL DATE CHANGE

for January! Mayor Jim Ross will join us. Mark your calendars for January 19th, 12 PM.

Sunday AM Bible Class

Did you know that the return of Christ is referenced more times (318) in the New Testament than any other doctrine? This is the major teaching of 2 Thessalonians which will be the subject of Pastor Widger's Bible class for three Sunday's in December (12/4, 12/11, 12/18). Please join us in MR2 beginning at 10:45 for this short but useful series.



Comunidad de Gracia - Community of Grace Hispanic Ministry



Las Posadas
December 18th, 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Experience a traditional Latin American Christmas celebration. All are invited. Dress warmly.

ESL CHRISTMAS PARTY
December 21st, 6:30 - 8:30 pm in the Gym
Let Serena know if you would like to help serve, wrap gifts, or bring food.

BLESS AN ANGEL!
Sign up in the Narthex or through Serena to adopt a boy or girl for the 12/21 Christmas Party. Please bring your wrapped gift to Serena's office.

Zumba will restart in January 2023!



Loving Liberia Update

The people in Liberia are very determined in building infrastructure that allows them to have a better life. The people of the District of Zarflahn in River Cess County built this bridge by raising the money among themselves. Some people bought steel, others bought cement, and others bought wood and other items to build this footbridge that is rated for foot traffic and motor scooters.

The local people came together and built the bridge themselves and the national government sent an engineer to inspect the bridge when it was completed. This bridge is the first of four bridges that will need to be constructed to get back to Perry's village in Gayes Zahn Town, River Cess.



Can you imagine getting your neighbors together and building the bridge or making things happen that will make life better for all? Well, isn't that neighboring? Doing things together with your neighbors to make life better for all.

The bridge may not look like much but it is a work of art when you see all the people of the local villages smile and share their excitement of having a better life. Before the bridge was built, you had to walk across a log to get from one side to the other side of the river. This is a big deal for the people in Perry's home country and having two Lutheran schools with 257 children is a big deal for the country and the kingdom of Jesus. Peoples' lives are being changed with sharing the gospel of Jesus in our schools. "Won't you be my neighbor?" was what Mr. Rogers used to say. Let's make some new neighbors every day. Pastor Doug said this Sunday, November 20: "Let's Make Easter Great Again." We are MEGA Christians working for the king and his kingdom. God bless you and thank you for your support for Loving Liberia.



Funding Ministry

Thrivent Financial offers money for community and ministry projects. This is Thrivent's money, not members money. Members just have to say, "Hey! How about this project?"

So far, just this 2022 year alone, Grace members' Thrivent Financial Action Teams have supported over 96 projects totaling \$24,000 for:

- Staff retreat
- Easter egg hunt and breakfast
- Funeral receptions
- Embrace Grace
- GLEE
- VBS
- ESL
- Festival of Lights
- Youth
- Loving Liberia
- Fall festival
- 70th anniversary
- Arlington Life Shelter
- Arlington Charities
- Church service music
- Campus cleanup planting
- Family ministry
- Homebound
- Sanctuary sound equipment
- Basketball
- Christmas
- Braille
- Plus many more campus ministries.
- Plus multiple projects in communities with schools, animal, clothing/food, and children's therapy.

**THERE IS ONLY ONE
LAWGIVER AND JUDGE,
HE WHO IS ABLE TO
SAVE AND TO
DESTROY.
BUT WHO ARE YOU TO
JUDGE YOUR NEIGHBOR?
-JAMES 4:12 ESV**



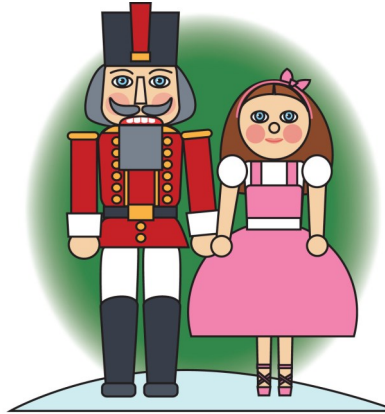
LOOKING
AHEAD TO
2023

IF:Gathering 2023

We will be hosting this Women's Conference locally in the spring of 2023! Speakers include Jennie Allen, Christine Caine, and many more. Please talk with [Jenna](#) or [Serena](#) if you would be interested in helping coordinate this event!

Explore Grace

Our next Explore Grace event will be January 21st! This half-day seminar is meant for people interested in joining membership at Grace Lutheran. Save the Date and contact the Church Office if you're interested or know someone who may want to attend.



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 12/1 Daryl & Susan Seefeldt
- 12/10 Jim & LaJuana Kettler
- 12/12 Nathaniel & Doris Davies
- 12/13 Jim & Uvonne Dupstadt
- 12/20 Mike & Serena Pace
- 12/24 Bill & Judith (Judy) Murrell
- 12/24 Stan & Melinda Taber
- 12/28 Paul & Sherry Burgdorf
- 12/30 Griffin & Molly Giles

Get involved in Embrace Grace!

The second phase of EG, Embrace Life, begins in February. If you are interested in helping and have not participated before, please [speak with Serena](#) or Nancy G.



Thrivent Meeting

Thrivent members, SAVE THE DATE for Sunday, January 22 at 12 noon - there will be a Thrivent lunch meeting in the gym.

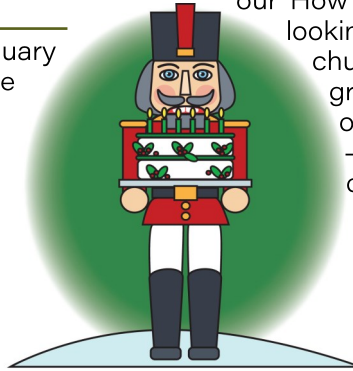
This is an opportunity to hear more about your Thrivent membership benefits, talk with Thrivent representatives, direct your choice dollars, sign up for 2023 action teams, and fellowship - plus a great Sunday lunch!

RESERVATIONS are required so there will be a meal ordered for you. Watch for more info or call Chris Owens at 817 247-7122.



Life Groups

We hope you were blessed going through our 'How to Neighbor' series this Fall! We're looking ahead to potentially doing another church-wide study after Easter. Some groups, though, will meet at the beginning of the year before the next series begins - keep an eye out for announcements or contact Jenna for more information!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 12/1 Christian Joeckel | 12/14 Sid Cook |
| 12/1 Mark Topel | 12/15 Lou Anne Williams |
| 12/1 Sydnee Homeyer | 12/20 Mark Oxner |
| 12/2 Anna Burgdorf | 12/22 Melanie Schlesinger |
| 12/2 Shelby Howle | 12/24 Lyn Mangels |
| 12/2 Wayne Hankins | 12/24 Roland Savant |
| 12/3 Charlie Barrett | 12/25 Marilyn Roberts |
| 12/5 Martin Bode | 12/25 Michael Johnson |
| 12/8 Sonya Sorensen | 12/26 Anthony Lee |
| 12/9 Audrey Moore | 12/28 John Rukavina |
| 12/9 Sharon Alloy | 12/28 Kevin Schlotte |
| 12/11 Betty Auth | 12/29 Heather Long |
| 12/11 Cathy Alberts | 12/30 Mary Jo Cook |
| 12/14 Brian Bassett | 12/31 Perry Smith |
| 12/14 Richard Chavez | |



Call 817.274.1626 or email jdelcristo@grace.lc to:

- ◇ Receive a copy of *Portals of Prayer* mailed to your home.
- ◇ Be added to the group email list that receives prayer requests.
- ◇ Submit updated address and contact information.
- ◇ Receive a current Church Directory as an active Grace member.
- ◇ Submit and/or update a prayer request.

Your Elders Are Here for You

If there is any way we can assist you with any spiritual needs or physical concerns do not hesitate to contact your elder. If you need their contact information, please request it by calling the church at 817-274-1626 or email:

jdelcristo@grace.lc.

New to Grace? Reference the adjacent list. If your last name begins with "N" for example, Mike Curtis would be your assigned elder.



ELDERS & THEIR ASSIGNED MEMBERS

Ernie Owens	A-B
Hank Jacobs	C-E
David Swille	F-H
Mike Kennedy	I-L
Mike Curtis	M-O
Ernie Owens	P-R
Joe Masterson	S
Jim Schmidt	T-Z
Head Elder: Joe Masterson	



A **Memorial** is a monetary gift designated to a Grace Ministry as a living memorial in memory of loved one or a friend.

An **Honorarium** is a monetary gift designated to a Grace Ministry as a living tribute honoring an achievement, deed or celebration of a loved one or a friend.

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With deep appreciation, we accept the following Memorial gifts given as of November 18, 2022:

### Braille Ministry

In memory of *The Rev. Dr. David Joeckel* by Linda Buck and Tommy & Delores Smith

In memory of *Kevin Hohbaum* by Tommy & Delores Smith

In memory of *The Rev. Dr. David Joeckel and M. Judy Joeckel* by Lou Ann Kersten

### GLEE Ministry

In memory of *M. Judy Joeckel* by Nancy McCormick

### Loving Liberia

In memory of *The Rev. Dr. David Joeckel* by Joe & Phyllis Sparks

In memory of *M. Judy Joeckel* by Joe & Phyllis Sparks

### Ministries of Grace

In memory of *The Rev. Dr. David Joeckel* by DelRay & Cathy Alberts, the Barron Family, Walt Baumann Family, Stephen Brookshire, Ruth Brown, Beverly J Cameron, Craig Caudle, Kayne & Stacy Coulter, Jack Crutchfield, Walter & Linda Degner, Marilyn Jones, Mitch & Shannon Martin, Diane Nelsen, Dean Jack Nowlin/TX Tech Law/TX Tech L S F Trustees, Jan Penland, Rusty & Vanessa Phillips, Parker, Natalie, Conner & Walker - Ann Phillips, Eric & Bette Rathjen, Wayne Rohne, Gene & Vickie Rosentreter, Roland & Kay Savant, Sondra Schubert, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Sparks, David Swille, David & Cathy Taylor, Mary Thiede, Neil & Penny Quinn, Gary Walker, Bryan & Susan Williamson, Marlow & Paula Wojtek, and Shr Hua Wu

In memory of *The Rev. Dr. David Joeckel and M. Judy Joeckel* by Lanelle Hyde & Kelly & Blake, Jo Ann Jeske, Lisa Schultz, Craig & Michelle Smith, and Rilla Terry

In memory of *M. Judy Joeckel* by the Barron Family, Walt Baumann Family, Linda Buck, Ruth Brown, Beverly J Cameron, Craig Caudle, Jack Crutchfield, Marilyn Jones, Mitch & Shannon Martin, Diane Nelsen, Eric & Bette Rathjen, Wayne Rohne, Roland & Kay Savant, Tommy & Delores Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Sparks, David & Cathy Taylor, and Marlow & Paula Wojtek

### Music Ministry (Handbells)

In memory of *The Rev. Dr. David Joeckel* by Karen Bornsen

In memory of *M. Judy Joeckel* by Karen Bornsen