



grace

LUTHERAN CHURCH
belong · believe · become

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Arlington, TX 76010
817.274.1626
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Newsletter
DECEMBER 2023

Pastor
Doug Widger
Lead Shepherd

Pastor Steve Roth
Community Care

Dr. Serena Pace
DCE - Director of
Ministries

Ms. Jennifer Chavez
Director of
Early Education



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Special Services

Our theme for Advent Services this year will be "Songs of Advent". Services will be held on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm on December 6, 13, and 20. On Sunday, December 24, we will have our regular 9:30 am service, and our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 6:30 pm.



Advent Meanings

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.

Sanctuary Update

The 'Telling the Next Generation' project is now underway. AMEN! We are in the process of preparing for the first stage of the project that will include removing the sound equipment, music instruments, sacred furniture, pews, hymns, and pew Bibles to store on campus in preparation for the hazard materials contractor to safely remove the asbestos tile from the sanctuary floor.

In preparation for moving the worship service to the gym, the ministry team, sound team, and musicians are determining equipment needs and will be moving the equipment from the Sanctuary to the gym. Then, they will set up there to continue to provide sound, music, and live streaming our services.

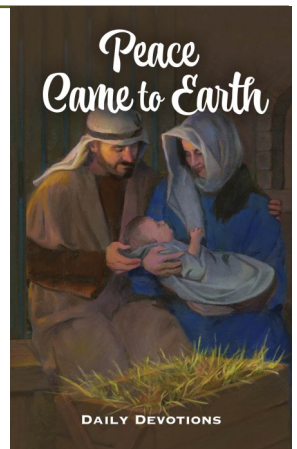
As we move through the project, we will continue to provide updates to you on the progress.

Continue to keep the 'Telling the Next Generation' project in your thoughts and prayers and consider how you can provide support with your Thank Offerings.



Advent Devotion Books

"Peace Came to Earth" a daily devotion book from Concordia Publishing House will help you worship the Prince of Peace during the month of December. Copies are available in the Narthex/Lobby area.



FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS

SUNDAY MORNING Bible Studies
10:45-11:45 AM

Babies/Toddlers: Nursery
Preschool 3's/Kinder & Grades 1-5: Preschool Wing
Classrooms
Grades 6-8: MR4 (Top Left)
Grades 9-12: Youth Shed
Biblical Parenting: Library

NO BIBLE STUDY DEC. 24 or 31



Thank you, Grace Families, for your creative additions to our Christmas Baskets for the Homebound this year!



Christmas Program Rehearsals

12/3, 12 PM - FULL CAST (Cane's Chicken Strips/chips/fruit provided)

12/10, 10:45 AM - Dress Rehearsal
FULL CAST

Please attend both practices!

DECEMBER 17

9:30 AM - CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

10:45 AM - Grace Kids Christmas Party
(HS Youth help out)

12 PM - All families invited to go out to lunch at CiCi's Pizza (\$5 each)

1 PM - Grace Youth Event

Spanish Corner

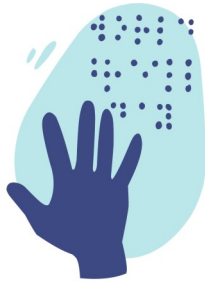
¿Podría ayudarle? (poh-DREE-a ay-oo-DAR-le)	Can I help you?
¿Puede ayudarme? (PWE-day ay-oo-DAR-may)	Can you help me?
¡Sin problema! (sin prob-LAME-ah)	No problem!
¿Puede repetirlo? (PWE-day re-pet-EER-lo)	Can you say that again?
No entiendo (no en-tee-EN-do)	I don't understand
No hablo español (no AB-lo es-pan-YOL)	I don't speak Spanish
Mi español es malo (mi es-pan-YOL es MA-lo)	My Spanish is bad
Más despacio (mas des-PATH-ee-o)	Slower

Ongoing Groups Updates

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

Braille Brunch

Lutheran Braille Workers invites you to a brunch and celebration of Christmas for all volunteers on Saturday, December 9th at 11 am. RSVP to Uvonne D by December 1st.



graceSeniors

Can't wait to see you Dec. 14 at 12 PM!



We're gathering to eat and celebrate Christmas as friends! Bring appetizers, salads or desserts to share! Pizza is provided!

CHRISTMAS SWEATER CONTEST, GAMES, CAROLS & WHITE ELEPHANT FROM YOUR HOME

RSVP with Serena by 12.12 for pizza order.

Hosts: Don, Sharon & Jeannette

Devotion: Volunteer Needed



We are planning a trip to the Planetarium in January (possibly the 17th).

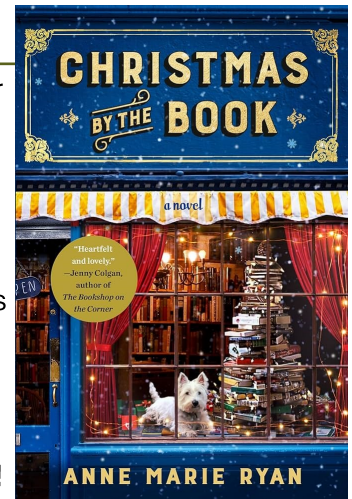
\$6 Season of Lights + Parking

We would meet at church at 9:15 AM to carpool. Please speak with Serena at church or during the Christmas Party to share your interest in attending.

Book Club

Our new book for December is "Christmas by the Book" by Anne Marie Ryan. Delightful and hopeful, this novel is the perfect Christmas treat.

Come join us in the church library on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2 pm!



Joybells Rehearsal Schedule

We will be adjusting our rehearsal schedule through the Advent season to account for the Songs of Advent Wednesday services! For the first 3 weeks of December, Bells will meet on Sunday mornings at 9 am. Choir rehearsals will continue taking place on Wednesdays at 7:30 pm (after services). [Contact Will Land](#) if you would like to join either group through this special holiday season!

Interested in Groups Ministry?

Do you have interest in joining a team to help coordinate Small Group Ministry? We are beginning to pray, form, and assemble a group who can help propel this ministry forward in the seasons ahead.

Responsibilities include meeting throughout the year to pray, plan, and seek God's will for small groups here at Grace. You may also be asked to help in propelling that plan forward by reaching out to group facilitators, assisting in communications with groups, and providing input on study materials and timeline. Please prayerfully consider if this is a ministry where God is calling you to serve, and reach out to [Jenna Del Cristo](#) or [Pastor Widger](#) if you are interested or have any questions.

ESL Ministry

We had a great time and good fellowship with our ESL students and their families for our Thanksgiving meal on Nov. 15th. We served approximately 80 people.

Lots of good food was shared and Roberto lead us in a short Bible lesson and prayer prior to eating. This was a great way to keep connected with these families.

I am thankful for all of the Grace volunteer staff that works with this ministry on a weekly basis, they are a blessing to these students and their families.

ESL DECEMBER NEWS:

Dec. 6 - ESL Classes - 6:30 to 8:00 pm

Dec. 10 - Las Posadas Celebration - 5:30 to 8:00 pm (Las Posadas commemorates the search for shelter by Mary and Joseph.) We will have a coffee truck, traditional Mexican meal and Piñatas for the children after the walking service.

Dec. 13 - ESL Classes - 6:30 to 8:00 pm

Dec. 17 - Deadline for Angel Tree gifts to be turned in to church office for ESL children.

Dec. 20 - Christmas Party for ESL students and their families - 6:30 to 8:00 pm
ESL Classes will resume in the new year on Wed., January 10th.



We are always looking for additional volunteers for this growing ministry. If you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact me directly or through the church office.

Merry Christmas and God's Blessings for the New Year,

Dawn Stacy

Holy Smokers

The Holy Smokers want to thank everyone that placed their Thanksgiving order with us. We smoked 10 whole turkeys, 11 turkey breasts, 1 whole pork loin, 3 half pork loins, 41 mild sausages and 26 spicy sausages. We hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving.

Thank you,

The Holy Smokers

Volunteer Opportunity

We need at least one volunteer for Tuesday night open gym basketball. The time is from 7:15 to 9:15 every Tuesday night. The primary task is to operate the electronic scoring device and scoreboard. Please call Jim Runzheimer at 817-795-2020 (office) or 817-917-2208 (cell) for more information.



Loving Liberia Update

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

Thank you for your prayers and support that bring the life changing experience that Christian education will have on the students' life and his or her family. You are fulfilling the mission of Jesus across the world.

We have been in the planning phase of making our first trip to Liberia in January 2024 as board members. This would give us an opportunity to encourage the teachers, visit the students, and see for ourselves what God is doing among the children in our two schools. Liberia just held their presidential election in October with a runoff in November between the two top candidates with a very close election. We feel that with the uncertainty of political unrest in the Liberia at this time, that we will look at mid-October to mid-November 2024 to make our first trip.

We also have some other news as our shipment of computers, air conditioners, school supplies and playground equipment made it to Liberia in mid-November after being shipped in late



August. Thank you for all your support as we will have computer classes at both schools. This will be a great addition to help the students to be successful in Liberia and beyond their country. Thank you, Jesus, for opening this door on education at our two schools.

Speaking of Jesus, He is the reason why we celebrate Christmas when He came to earth as a baby to be born under the Law to fulfill the Law for us. By His sinless life on earth, His death on the cross for the sins of all humanity, and His resurrection shows the world that His sacrifice was complete in setting us free from our sins. Faith is a gift from God and all who believe in Jesus have the guarantee that we live in eternity with Jesus because He is in us and we are in Him.

May the love of Jesus be with you this Christmas and always,

Perry Geevon Smith



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS & 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

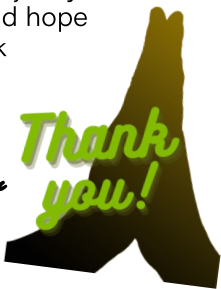
Thank You Note

Dear Church Family,

This is a much delayed thank you for the many prayers you have sent for Mark and myself in the past months. Also, for some beautiful altar flowers from time to time. A special thanks to Janice Dehoney and Nancy McCormick for so faithfully keeping our names on the prayer list. This means so much to us. We join you all in worship every Sunday and hope that we can soon be back together again.

Blessings and love to all,

Mark and Kathy Lauer



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 list to the right. If your last name begins with "L," for example, Mike Kennedy 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

12/2 Anna Burgdorf	12/15 Lou Anne Williams
12/2 Wayne Howle	12/20 Mark Oxner
12/2 Wayne Hankins	12/22 Melanie Schlesinger
12/5 Delane Peery	12/23 Jordan Hart
12/5 Martin Bode	12/24 Lyn Mangels
12/8 Sonya Sorensen	12/24 Roland Savant
12/9 Audrey Moore	12/25 Marilyn Roberts
12/9 Sharon Alloy	12/25 Michael Johnson
12/11 Betty Auth	12/28 John Rukavina
12/11 Cathy Alberts	12/28 Kevin Schlotte
12/14 Brian Bassett	12/30 Mary Jo Cook
12/14 Sid Cook	12/31 Perry Smith

Thrivent Upcoming Events

SOUP-ER BOWL SUNDAY. Grace will be collecting canned SOUP during January and ending on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11.

Watch for sales and bring your canned soup to the stage any Sunday starting in January, all to be donated to Arlington Charities. (Pastor Joeckel was on originating board of directors for Arlington Charities)



thrivent

Grace's ANNUAL THRIVENT MEETING and lunch, tentatively scheduled for January 28. Watch for details.

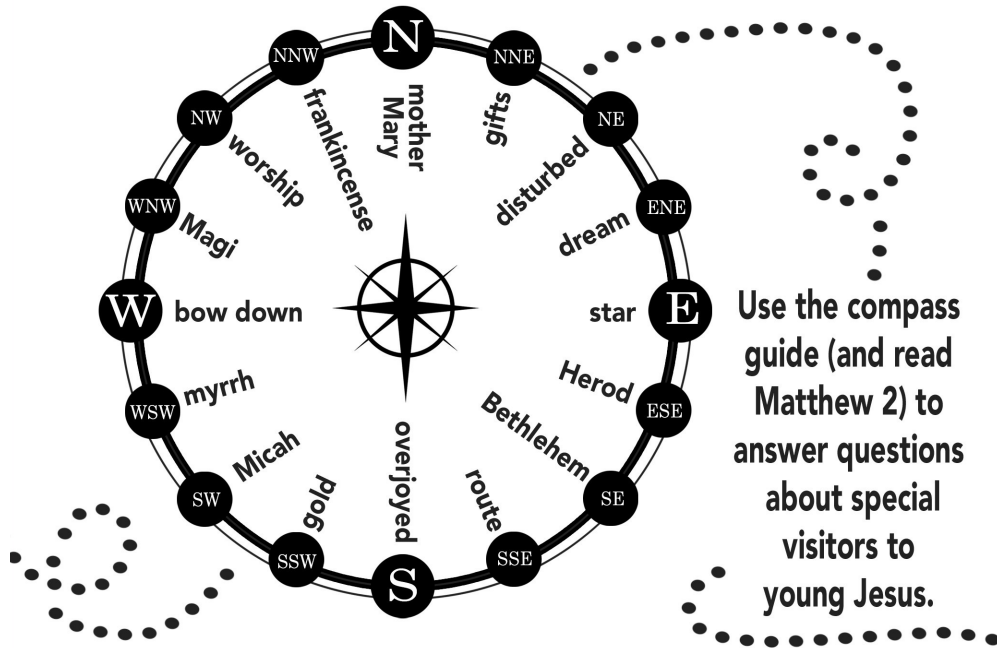


Did you know that the church calendar is available ONLINE? [CLICK HERE \(go.grace.lc/calendar\)](http://go.grace.lc/calendar) to access it. Any calendar changes and/or additions made in the church office are updated in real time!

Call 817.274.1626 or email churchoffice@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 an updated address and/or contact information.
- ◇ Receive a current Church Directory as an active Grace member.
- ◇ Submit and/or update a prayer request.

Puzzle!



1. Who was king at the time of Jesus' birth? _____ (ESE)
2. Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews?
_____ (WNW)
3. How did King Herod feel about Jesus' birth? _____ (NE)
4. Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? _____ (SW)
5. In what city would Christ be born? _____ (SE)
6. King Herod lied to the wise men, telling them to search and report back so he, too, could do what to Christ? _____ (NW)
7. What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? _____ (E)
8. When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? _____ (S)
9. Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His _____ (N)
10. Before they worshiped the child, what did the Magi do? _____ (W)
11. Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus.
_____ (SSW) _____ (NNW) _____ (WSW)
12. These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as _____ (NNE)
13. What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A _____ (ENE)
14. The Magi had to return to their country by another _____ (SSE)

Answers: 1. Herod; 2. Magi; 3. disturbed; 4. Micah; 5. Bethlehem; 6. myrrh; 7. star; 8. overjoyed; 9. mother Mary; 10. bow down; 11. gold; frankincense; 12. myrrh; 13. gifts; 14. route