

WAYS OF GRACE

Our Mission: To boldly live out our faith in Jesus through worship, fellowship, and service to God and our neighbor, here and around the world.

December 2024

MERRY CHRISTMAS!





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"15 Since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, this is the reason that 16 I don't stop giving thanks to God for you when I remember you in my prayers. 17 I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation that makes God known to you. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, 19 and what is the overwhelming greatness of God's power that is working among us believers." (Ephesians 1:15-19)



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As you open this month's newsletter, the Thanksgiving dishes have surely been washed, leftovers of turkey and mashed potatoes all cleaned up, and thoughts have turned to Christmas trees and angels. But before we get too far down that path, I would like to pause and share my thanks and gratitude for all of you and the ways you come together as the body of Christ. Our most important call as followers of Jesus is to worship the Lord and then to be sent to serve our neighbor. Thank you for worshipping at Grace and sharing your kindness, hugs, handshakes, and prayers as we walk with one another on our Christian walk. Second, thank you for sharing of your time and financial support during our recent stewardship drive. Your presence, your skills, and your offering are all essential for the ministries of Grace.

Stewarding our ministries alongside your pastors is our congregation's Council. This group of lay leaders works directly with the pastors to fulfill the mission of Grace with your prayers and support. Each year, the current Council is asked to submit names of members they feel would be excellent additions to the Council. This year's list included nearly forty names! Your co-presidents and pastors then discuss who from that list would be most needed to have a balanced Council of new and long-term members, men and women, younger and older adults, and both Sunday and Wednesday worshippers. Worship attendance is the top priority, so these ambassadors of Grace are present and visible when most members are at church to receive your feedback. If you are asked to serve on Council, please prayerfully consider this special role of the church.

In addition to thanking our Council, thank you also to everyone who serves in some way: BLAST teachers, ushers, communion preparers, readers, prayer shawl knitters, dishwashers, pie bakers, newsletter folders, prayer warriors, receipt counters, and so many more ministries. Passing on the faith to the next generation is being done by your hands and hearts! I hope you have enjoyed the personal invitations in worship over the last several weeks to join our ministry teams too. The ministries at Grace are for everyone.

As we turn the page to the Advent season which begins this month, I hope you will invite a friend to some of the many offerings we will share together. During the month of December, our adult education class will be embarking on an Advent series entitled Christmas Gifts That Won't Break and will learn about God's gifts of grace found in Jesus. On Wednesdays, we will have noon Holden Evening Prayer in the chapel and at 6:30PM, we will have a service of Joyous Light. Communion and an Advent devotion will be shared at these services as well.



Each week during Advent, we will also light a candle on the Advent wreath and remember the promise of love, peace, joy, and hope that Jesus brings. And, on December 15, at our 10:45am worship service, our children's choirs will present their Christmas program. We will hear the story of Jesus in word, song, and prayer from our youth as they share the excitement of Christ's coming into the world. And during our Wednesday night meals, I hope you meet Jesus in the people you sit with, listen to their stories, and support them during this season.

On Christmas Eve, we will again be offering three worship opportunities which celebrate Chris's birth. At 11AM, our casual Cocoa and Carols service around tables in the fellowship hall will include Christmas carols, reading the Christmas story from the gospel of Luke, a children's message, and sharing communion together. Cocoa and candy canes for all ages will round out this unique worship experience. Later that afternoon, we will offer our contemporary service in the sanctuary at 3pm and our traditional service at 8pm, both with communion and candlelight while we sing Silent Night.

As you gather this season, and we celebrate the gift of our Savior, thank you for the gift you are to Grace. The Holy Spirit has been at work at Grace in this past year, and will continue to be, as we discern where God is leading Grace next. It is a true blessing to serve as your pastor, to get to know you more each year, and walk together on our faith journey. My prayer is that you and your family will experience God's love and peace this Christmas and into the New Year!

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Allison



Memorials:

Lynette Johnson Memorial

Steven & Phyllis People Helping People

Niehaus

Harlan & Larainne People Helping People

Gorath

Mick & Carole People Helping People

Eberle

Dale & Eva Marters People Helping People

Judy Pletz People Helping People

Janet Nielsen Building

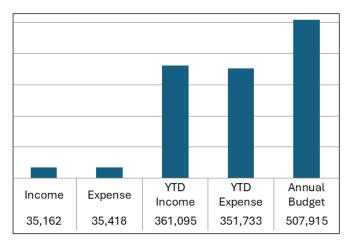
Marian Holland Building-trees

Maynard & Audrey Johnson Building

Rev. Neil Christopherson Memorial

Curt & Ellen Nelson Undesignated

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT FOR OCTOBER





WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays: 8:30AM Traditional

10:45AM Contemporary

Tuesdays: 2:00PM Fairmont Cable TV Channel 12

(pre-recorded)

Wednesdays: 6:30PM WOW, Worship on Wednesday!

Fridays: 1:00PM Fairmont Cable TV Channel 12

(pre-recorded)

Goldfinch Senior Living Worship Service is the 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10AM on Assisted Living side with Communion. Every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 10AM, at Lakeview Methodist home, with communion. Please come and worship with our friends and members of Grace!

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE



Tuesday, December 24:

- ⊕ Cocoa and Carols Worship: 11:00AM, Fellowship Hall
- Contemporary Christmas Eve Worship, 3:00PM, Sanctuary
- ⊕ Traditional Christmas Eve Worship, 8:00PM, Sanctuary

A Service of Lessons and Carols: On Sunday, December 29, we will have once worship service at 9:30AM. Come for a special service of readings, singing, communion, and prayer. Hope to see you there!





Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die. John 11:25

In profound grief and hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we announce the death of Karen Hertzke. Rest eternal grant Karen, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon her.

Gracious God,

Surround the family of Karen Hertzke with your love, and grant them your peace, that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss, but have confidence in your goodness, and strength to meet the days to come. Thanks be to you, O God, for you give us the victorious through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Baptisms: In November we celebrated the baptisms of

- Bexley Lynne Bolte, daughter of Kevin Bolte and Lacy DeJaynes on Nov. 10.
- Rory Karl Jensen, daughter of Brandon and Christine Jensen on Nov. 17.



^{*}Communion is offered each Sunday and Wednesday.

^{*}Sunday services will be streamed on Facebook, YouTube, and our webpage.

CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY

Wednesday Schedule

Open Door Meal: 4:45PM - 6:30PM - All are invited to the Fellowship Hall for a meal.

BLAST, PreK - 6th Grade: 5:30PM - 6:30PM - This includes Cherub & Alleluia

Choir, learning lessons, and fun!

Wednesday Worship: 6:30PM - 7:00PM

Confirmation, 7th-10th Grade: 6:30PM - 7:45PM





"The True Christmas Story"

A Christmas Program Presented By
Grace Lutheran BLAST Children
Sunday, December 15, 2024
10:45 a.m. Service

Confirmation Service Project: Glows Parade Nov. 22 and writing Christmas cards and making ornaments at Confirmation on Nov 20th!





Youth Mission Trip

We are excited to share that prayers have been answered! A Youth Mission trip to the Appalachian region is coming! Students entering 7th grade through 12th are able to attend July 18 - July 26, 2025. Planning has just begun - watch for more detailed information to come!

BUSINESS OF GRACE

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting September 15, 2024

CORE VALUES: Faith, Christ-Centered

Community/Connections, Service Our Mission: To boldly live out our

faith in Jesus through worship, fellowship, and service to God and our neighbor, here and around the world.

2024 Focus Areas: Constitution, Stewardship, Community Relationships

<u>Members Present:</u> Carolyn Bird, Joice Forster, Kris Boerner, Mark Morris, Ardel Prescott, Joyce Eisenmenger, Josh Ensrud, Troy Nemmers, Jane Reiman, Pastor Cole McCormick and Pastor Allison Cobb

Absent: Jaime Core and Brandon DeClercq

Call to Order:

Co-President Carolyn Bird called the meeting to order at 11:54 a.m.

<u>Devotional:</u> Pastor Allison led the devotional on using our spiritual gifts to glorify God.

<u>Gathering Prayer:</u> Council members shared prayer requests, with Pastor Allison concluding with a prayer to address these requests.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The October minutes were approved on October 21, 2024, via email.

Financial Report

Jane Reiman, finance director, gave the council an update on the finances of the church. Giving was up 2% over last year at this same time, however we still have a ways to go to meet the 2024 budget. A motion was made by Troy to approve the financial report. Seconded by Kris. Motion carried.

Team Reports

All team reports were sent via email for the council to read. Joice reported the CYF team has 115 children attending BLAST. The Christmas program is being practiced with the performance scheduled for 10:45 on December 15th. The Worship Team has been busy preparing for the Advent and Christmas season. It was noted that the Litany of Thanks to Veterans on November 10th was well-received and should be continued yearly. Ardel reported the Fellowship Team will be serving pumpkin bars and cider between services on November 24th in celebration of Thanksgiving. They will also be helping with a community Christmas Songfest at the Red Rock Center on Sunday, December 15th.

The Service Team finalized the 2025 budget and sent it to council for a vote. They also addressed several needs of the church building, including a need to purchase and install a new projector. The Stewardship Team sent out pledge cards for the current stewardship drive. The Personnel Team is working on end of year chats with Grace Lutheran Church employees.

Old Business

Troy is compiling the updates to the constitution that were discussed at previous work sessions. The goal is to have it ready for congregational approval in January of 2026.

New Business

The 2025 church budget was presented by finance director, Jane Reiman. After discussions and clarifications, Joyce made a motion to approve the budget for 2025. Ardel seconded. Motion carried. There will be a budget meeting open to all members in January. It will then be presented at the annual meeting.

Pastor Allison suggested the Service Team make list of repairs that need to be done at Grace, prioritizing from high to low and then present them to council. The council agreed. She also asked the council if they wanted to have two congregation members speak at the annual meeting, as has been done in the past couple years. The council agreed and brainstormed some names. Pastor Allison will contact these people.

Pastor Allison gave an update on the recruitment of new council members. Four are needed. One person has answered the call, thus far.

Pastor Cole has been contacted by FEMA if Grace would consider sharing our general contact information with them in the case of a disaster in which the church may be needed as a shelter. The council agreed to this request. He also stated that he was contacted to see if a Hispanic regional gathering of three congregations could use the church for their meeting. After discussion, Pastor Cole is going to get more detailed information from them and bring it back to council.

Pastor Allison reminded that all team reports for the Annual Meeting Booklet should be given to Nicole the first week of December.

Pastor Report

Pastor Allison and Pastor Cole sent written reports on the work they have accomplished the past month. The council is very appreciative of the work they are doing at Grace Lutheran Church.

Upcoming Dates

Monday, December 2nd at 5:30 p.m. CYF Team Meeting
Monday, December 2nd at 6:30 p.m. Worship Team Meeting
Tuesday, December 10th at 5:30 p.m. Outroach and Followship T

Tuesday, December 10th at 5:30 p.m. Outreach and Fellowship Team Meeting

Tuesday, December 10th at 5:30 p.m. Service Team Meeting

Tuesday, December 10th at 6:30 p.m. Stewardship

Meeting

There will be no church council meeting in December.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Joice Forster, Secretary

Approval of Secretary's Report

The November 17, 2024 minutes were approved on November 19, 2024. Motion by Kris. Seconded by Troy. Motion carried.

December Open Door Meal Menu

Join us in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evenings from 4:45 - 6:30 PM

Dec 4: Soup/ Chili
Dec 11: Tacos
Dec 18: Creamed Chicken on

Biscuit

Dec 25: Christmas, NO MEAL

Reminder Year End Reminder: A reminder to please have any year end givings into the church office prior to 12PM on Monday, December 30th. Thank you!

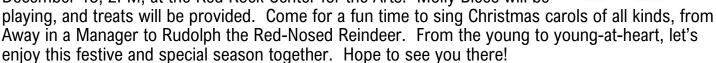
The Sock Tree Returns: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news, proclaim peace, who bring good tidings! (Isaiah 52:7) You are invited to bring new socks for all ages to keep the feet of God's beloved warm and toasty. Good quality new socks are needed which will be given locally to our schools for children needing socks, Options Pregnancy Center for women and children, the Salvation Army, and Grace Care Bags for our guests this winter. Decorate the bare trees in the Gathering Space with your socks as Grace Lutheran prepares for Christ's coming at Christmas.



Christmas Star Tree: Each year Grace has a Star Tree where our members can take a star to purchase gifts for those less fortunate in our community. Each Star lists the gender, age, and gift request and whether your package should be wrapped or unwrapped. The Star Tree will be ready on Sunday, November 10 and gifts should be returned on or before December 8. Please be sure to sign out your Star with your

name and phone number. If you know of someone that you would like added to our giving list or if you have any questions or if you would like to pick a star but shopping is inconvenient for you. please contact Cindy Wohlhuter 507-236-4403. Thank you!

Community Carols Sing-A-Long! Invite a friend and come to the first annual Community Carols Sing-A-Long hosted by our ecumenical partner churches: Grace Lutheran, First United Methodist, First Congregational, and St. John's Congregational churches! This free hour-long event will be held on Sunday, December 15, 2PM, at the Red Rock Center for the Arts. Molly Blees will be





Let Us Walk to the Manger Together! The season of Advent will soon be upon us, and there is a place for you here at Grace! Each week in Advent, we will be offering Holden Evening Prayer at Noon and Joyous Light at 6:30PM. Come for supper from 4:45-6:30pm and then enjoy a time of peaceful worship in the sanctuary. Confirmation students are asked to invite their mentor to join

them for worship and discussion which conclude at 7:15pm. This replaces our regular weekly class. Parents are asked to drop off and pick up their students at the parking lot entrance. The Staff at Grace wish you and yours a blessed Advent season and hope to see you here!

Mid-week Advent Worship: The season of Advent begins on Sunday, December 1 as we await the coming of Emmanuel God with Us. Each week in worship, we will be lighting one candle of the Advent wreath and sing hymns proclaiming the coming of Jesus. On Wednesdays, we will worship at Noon with Holden Evening Prayer and at 6:30PM as we sing Joyous Light. This peaceful and contemplative worship service speaks to Christ's coming at Christmas. The Noon service will be held in the chapel and the evening service in the sanctuary. Confirmation students will worship in the evening with their mentors, followed by discussion, from 6:30-7:15PM.





The Miracles of Jesus!

Come join the discussion on Sunday mornings about the miracles of Jesus. In November we began our five-week Advent study. This year, we will be talking about Christmas Gifts That Won't Break by Rev. Jacob Armstrong and Rev. James Moore. These gifts are hope, love, joy, peace, and Christ. Invite a friend and come for a time of faith formation together. Hope to see you there!

Men's Breakfast on Monday, December 2: Men of all ages are invited to a monthly breakfast at The Ranch restaurant on the first Monday of the month at 7:00AM. Come for a devotion, fellowship, and good breakfast food.

When: 6:30AM - Where: The Ranch Restaurant - Why: Because Jesus says that when a few are gathered in his name, he's there too!





Grace Mission Team Christmas Tree Sale!

Tree sales will go until all trees are gone, in the Fairmont Fleet & Farm Parking lot! MANY volunteers are still needed to cover shifts at the lot. Please follow the link provided to sign up today! Thank you! https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050A4DA9AA28A6F94-52467495-2024

The Gift of Final Wishes: During this time of giving, one of the most helpful gifts we can give our loved ones is to have our final wishes written down. Join the pastors on Sunday, January 5 between the services and talk about what questions are typically asked when planning a funeral. What are your chosen scripture readings, hymns, organ or piano, special music, military honors, favorite memories, and so much more. The best gift we can give our loved ones is to take the stress away in planning our church service. Come to learn more, walk through Grace's funeral planning guide, and take it home to make selections and talk with your family. When you are finished, please bring a copy of your wishes to Grace and we will keep it on file for you. Funeral guides can be found on our Care Table in the gathering space as well as under the *Resources* tab on our webpage. For more information, please see Pastor Allison.



Pizza with the Pastors: For everyone who is new to Grace, who have recently joined the church and those who may want to join in the future, come for a fun lunch with the pastors! Join us for a time of getting to know one another, learning about the ways to plug into Grace, and answering any questions you might have. We will meet at Noon in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 12. Please let the office know if you plan to attend so we can order the right amount of pizza. Hope to see you there!

Mark Your Calendars: The Annual Meeting at Grace is on Sunday, January 19 between the services. We will meet in the fellowship hall for discussion, and over donuts and coffee, talk about the wonderful ways God is at work at Grace through our ministries. This is a great opportunity to discern together about where the Spirit is leading us in the new year. A pre-budget meeting will be held the prior Sunday, January 12 between the services to answer questions and discuss the financial picture of Grace. We need a quorum for this meeting so please plan to attend!



WORDS FOR WORSHIP

Sunday, December 1 - First Sunday of Advent
Advent is about the "coming days." God's
people have always lived in great expectation,
but that expectation finds specific, repeated
enunciation in the texts appointed for these
four weeks. The ancients anticipated a
"righteous Branch to spring up for David." The
Thessalonians awaited "the coming of our
Lord Jesus with all the saints." Jesus'
contemporaries hoped for the time "to stand
before the Son of Man." With them we eagerly
await the coming days: another Christmas
celebration, a second coming, and the advent
of Christ in word and supper.

First Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16 Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

Sunday, December 8 - Second Sunday of Advent
Forerunners and messengers advance the
advent of our God. While John the baptizer's
voice in the wilderness may be the principal
focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as
easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner
of the Lord of hosts. Finally all the baptized are
called to participate in the sharing of the
gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the
coming of Jesus and assist all people in
capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4
Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Sunday, December 15 - Third Sunday of Advent Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20 Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

Sunday, December 22 - Fourth Sunday of Advent
Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on
the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely
tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and
Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to
the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms
that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the
body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind
of tension in which the church always lives as
when in holy communion—with high delight—
"we proclaim the Lord's death."

First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10 Gospel: Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Sunday, December 29 - First Sunday of Christmas
On the first Sunday of Christmas we find the
boy Samuel and the boy Jesus, both in the
temple, both growing in wisdom and stature
and in favor with God and humankind. We too
have returned to the house of God "to sing
psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God,"
who has gifted us with a savior. As the festival
continues, "let the peace of Christ rule in your
hearts." It is Christmas, still.

First Reading: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-17

Gospel: Luke 2:41-52



December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8:30am Traditional Worship Service Care Bag Assembly 9:40am Adult Ed. 10:45am Contemporary Worship Service	9:00am - 10:00am Staff Meeting 1:00pm Mary Circle 5:30pm CYF Team Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS 6:30pm Worship	9:00am - 11:00am Sewing Circle 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible	9:00am - 12:00pm Women's CBS 12:00pm Noon Worship 4:45pm - 6:30am Open		1:00pm Worship Service Aired	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
8:30am Traditional Worship Service 9:40am Adult Ed. 10:45am Contemporary Worship Service 10:45am Baptism	Staff Meeting 10:00am Lakeview Senior Worship 6:00pm Evening CBS 6:30pm Shalom Circle	Sewing Circle 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 5:30pm Outreach/ Fellowship Team Meetings 5:30pm Service Team	10:00am Goldfinch Memory	Aktion Club Theatre 6:00pm - 8:00pm Boyscouts	1:00pm Worship Service Aired	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Ways of Grace Submission Deadline 8:30am Traditional Worship Service 9:40am Adult Ed. 10:45am Contemporary Worship Service	Staff Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS	Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible	12:00pm Noon Worship 4:45pm - 6:30am Open	1:00pm Ways of Grace Assembly Team	1:00pm Worship Service Aired	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Staff Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS	Christmas Eve - Building Open Until Noon, Office Closed 11:00am Cocoa & Carols worship 2:00pm Worship Service Aired 3:00pm Contemporary Worship 8:00pm Traditional Worship	Christmas Day - Office Closed NO OPEN DOOR NO Women's CBS - Christmas Break		1:00pm Worship Service Aired	
29	30	31				
Worship	Staff Meeting 6:00pm Evening CBS	9:00am - 11:00am Sewing Circle 1:00pm Weekly Prayer Meeting 1:30pm Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Worship Ser- vice Aired				





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Fairmont Grace Lutheran Church - www.gracelutheranchurch.org



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