



Equippier

Equipping God's people as we celebrate, teach, and share God's Grace.



January 2024

Pastor's Message

"Jesus is All That We Need"

"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)

The end of the 1st chapter of Paul's letter to the people living in Corinth long ago applies especially well to our present day. Paul reminded those people who they had been without God, who they now were in Christ, and then what they were to do in this life as God's people until the day they would see their Creator and Redeemer face to face for all eternity. I thought this passage was worth looking at in this New Year, especially because of the uncertain times in which we live. What's my point? When life reduces you to virtually nothing, whether physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually, and yet you have Jesus as your Lord and Savior by faith, then He is all you need for an abundant, useful, and eternal life, both now and forever. He gives you power to face whatever comes your way each and every day.

This passage from 1st Corinthians calls us to *"boast in the Lord"* alone. This reminded me of the story of a Vietnamese man named Hien Pham. Christian evangelist Ravi Zacharias got to know him while working in Vietnam in 1971. Of Hien, Zacharias said, *"One of my interpreters was Hien Pham, an energetic young Christian. He had worked as a translator with the American forces, and was of immense help both to them and to missionaries such as myself... We did not know if our paths would ever cross again. Seventeen years later, I received a telephone call. "Brother Ravi?" the man asked. Immediately I recognized Hien's voice, and he soon told me his story. Shortly after Vietnam fell, Hien was imprisoned on accusations of helping the Americans. His jailers tried to indoctrinate him against democratic ideals and the Christian faith. He was restricted to communist propaganda in French or Vietnamese, and the daily deluge of Marx and Engels began to take its toll. "Maybe," he thought, "I have been lied to. Maybe God does not exist. Maybe the West has deceived me." So, Hien determined that when he awakened the next day, he would not pray anymore or think of his faith.*

The next morning, he was assigned the dreaded chore of cleaning the prison latrines. As he cleaned out a tin can overflowing with toilet paper, his eye caught what seemed to be English printed on one piece of paper. He hurriedly grabbed it, washed it, and after his roommates had retired that night, he retrieved the paper and read the words, "Romans, Chapter 8." Trembling, he began to read, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him...for I am convinced that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Hien wept. He knew His Bible, and knew that there was not a more relevant passage for one on the verge of surrender. He cried out to God, asking forgiveness, for this was to have been the first day that he would not pray...After finding the Scripture, Hien asked the commander if he could clean the latrines regularly, because he discovered that some official was using a Bible as toilet paper. Each day Hien picked up a portion of Scripture, cleaned it off, and added it to his collection of nightly reading...What his tormentors were using for refuse — the Scriptures — could not be more treasured to Hien." (www.sermoncentral.com/sermon-illustrations/11926/ravi-zacharias-tells-the-amazing-story-of-a-by-rodney-buchanan)

Lutherans are constantly reminding ourselves and others of Paul's words from Romans 1:16 which declare that the Gospel "is the power of God for salvation." So, in spite of our unworthiness, we are bold about speaking God's Law and God's Gospel. When you are reduced to having only that Gospel message in your life, you begin to see and understand more clearly what a precious jewel it really is. Hien Pham was finally released from prison and fled to Thailand. Today he is a businessperson in the United States, but, more importantly, he is a Christian whose only boast in life is Christ. God prepared him to be a living testimony to the transforming power of God's Word. That's what our Lord does for you too as you put your faith in Him alone so that you can, in all circumstances, love others as God in Christ loves you.

Prayer – *Dear Lord Jesus, let our bold boasting in You alone prepare us to be useful in Your hands, especially for times such as these. Amen.*

See you in worship,

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Pastor John M. Tagatz



GIVING TO GRACE THROUGH THE THRIVENT CHOICE PROGRAM

When you're ready to make an impact on the causes and nonprofits you care most about, we're here to help. Through our Thrivent Choice® program, you can make a personal donation or direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® to more than 40,000 churches and nonprofits. Eligible members can recommend where Thrivent distributes a portion of its charitable funding by directing Choice Dollars®. Members become eligible for Thrivent Choice based on insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent volunteer leadership. *****Special notice regarding the Thrivent Choice Program:** Thrivent members wishing to continue their automatic withdrawal to the charity of their choice will have to let Thrivent know either by e-mail or phone. All you have to do is call this 1-800 number in order to see if you have Thrivent Choice dollars to give. **To continue to direct your Choice Dollars to the charity of your choice call: 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836) and state "Thrivent Choice."** **For More information on the Thrivent Choice Program please go to:** <https://www.thrivent.com/what-we-offer/generosity/thrivent-choice.html>

Announcements

Please Note

Call the church office at 414.762.8990...

- When a member of your family is admitted to the hospital, so a visit can be made by Pastor Taggatz.
- When your address, email, or your home or business phone number have changed, so church records can be corrected.
- When you are planning to move either out of town or locally.
- When you know you are pregnant so that we will be able to assist you in any way we can with prayers, encouragement and support.
- When a new baby arrives in your family and/or in the family of another church member.
- When you are planning a wedding, baptism or funeral.

Monday 8:00 am-1:00 pm
Tuesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm
Wednesday 8:00 am-1:00 pm
Thursday 8:00 am-1:00 pm
Friday Pastor OFF

Visitations: Monday-Thursday afternoons

For appointments or emergencies, call church office or Pastor's cell phone.

Pastor John Taggatz, cell: 715.467.1231

Heidi, Church Secretary

Church office: 414.762.8990

Church office hours: T-W-Th 9:00am – 12:30pm

REMINDER: If you have any announcements and/or additions you would like printed in the monthly *Equipper* please forward to the church office at church@graceoakcreek.org by the 17th of each month.

**The Mites collection dates
for January are: 4th and 7th**



When you or your group plans to hold a meeting at the Grace Lutheran School campus, it must be cleared by Principal Steve Gettelman. His email address is: principal@graceoakcreek.org

Choir at Grace

Choir practice is on Thursday evenings in the church following worship. Please consider joining our church choir. Music has a unique way of connecting us with God, and being a part of the choir is a beautiful opportunity to share your voice and your faith. Whether you're an experienced singer or someone who simply loves to sing, we welcome you with open arms. Martin Luther once said, "He who sings, prays twice." Please contact Kathy Kolb, our Choir Director, for further details if you are interested in joining our church's choir.

Volunteers Needed to Assist with Worship!

We are in need of additional people to assist as ushers and lay readers during worship services, especially for Sunday mornings at 8am and Thursday evenings at 6:30pm. Ushers arrive early, greet people and hand out bulletins before service, gather offerings and assist with communion during service, and straighten up the church after service. Lay readers proclaim God's word to the congregation by reading the Old Testament and Epistle lessons during the worship service. If you are able and willing to help in either of these capacities, please sign up on the sheet in the back of church -- your assistance is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to approach the elder on duty with any questions you may have about these opportunities.

Your 2024 Grace Lutheran Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex of the Church. Please feel free to pick your envelopes up and we thank you for your continued support of our Church, School, and Early Childcare Center through the stewardship of your time, talents, and treasures! God bless you!

Please do not use until January 2024.



Altar Flowers

- *Sign-up for 2024 Altar Flowers! The sign-up sheet is posted on the white board in the narthex.*
- *Place your flower order directly with Parkway Floral in South Milwaukee at (414) 762-0246.*
- *Flowers will be delivered to church, free of charge, before the Thursday evening service.*
- *You can also supply your own arrangement. Rachel Miliacca at the ECC can provide you with a vase liner.*
- *Your flowers will be refrigerated after the Thursday service so they will be fresh for Sunday's services.*
- *Take your flowers to enjoy at home after the 10:30am service on Sunday.*

Reminder: If you want to put flowers on the altar, you must pay for it directly to the florist (Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee) if using a florist. Also, there are special offering envelopes in the narthex for Altar Flowers that you can use to make payment.

Stephen Ministry Training at Grace

Are you interested in becoming a Stephen Minister?

Stephen Ministers are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation.

Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life, but they all share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need. Trainees learn how to listen to, care for, and walk with those going through difficult times in life. After being matched with a person experiencing a life crisis, the Stephen Minister meets with that person on a weekly basis to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support. The caring relationship lasts as long as the need for care exists.

We are going to begin a new training session for Stephen Ministers in February of 2024.

The training is scheduled to take place on Sunday evenings from 6-8:30pm starting February 11th and ending June 23rd.
(We will take off for Easter Monday and Memorial Day).

If you would like to learn more about Stephen Ministry, you can contact Jeanne Meyer at: meyorch@sbcglobal.net or 414-423-0010. Look for a special informational meeting between our Sunday morning worship services in December where you will have more information to learn about training to become a Stephen Minister at Grace!

To learn more about Stephen Ministry you can also visit:
www.stephenministries.org/stephenministry/default.cfm/917

Note:

**There will be a special informational meeting regarding Stephen Ministries on Sunday, January 21st, after the 10:30am worship service.
If you are interested, please attend!**

Worship Services at Willow Crest Nursing Home Volunteers Needed--Grace Lutheran Church members have helped out with leading worship services at Willow Crest Nursing Home on Sunday mornings. We have started leading these worship services again and could use some volunteers to help out with this ministry. The worship services are roughly 30 minutes long and are held at 10:00am on Sundays at Willow Crest Nursing Home located at: 3821 Chicago Ave., South Milwaukee, WI 53172. We typically meet at Willow Crest at 9:45am to get prepared for the service and are done by 10:45am. You may end up leading a worship service at Willow Crest once a month, or every 5 to 6 weeks, depending on how many people are willing to volunteer. We would also provide you with resources to help you lead worship services at Willow Crest, and if you would like to shadow someone to see how the worship services are conducted, we can show you how it is done. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Jeanne Meyer at: meyorch@sbcglobal.net or 414-719-2257.

Church & School Furnaces Needed

We are currently in need of funding for our aged furnaces at both the school and church. This fundraiser is to replace the 7 remaining furnaces at our school and the boiler at our church. All units are over 20 years old. The goal is \$50,000. Please prayerfully consider donating above and beyond your general offerings. There will be offering envelopes in the narthex and a donation box for your offerings. Thank you for your ongoing support of our ministries at Grace! God bless you!

Currently we have raised over \$30,331.63 for the church & school furnace fund, thank you for your support!!!



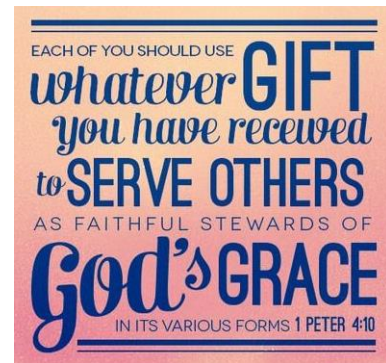
Adult Bible Class Topic— God's Word for Today: 1 & 2 Thessalonians—*The Lord is Faithful.* On Sunday mornings in the school building, we will be studying 1 & 2 Thessalonians from 9:15-10:15am. In this bible study you will learn that God gave Paul a vision. In it, a man from Macedonia pleaded with Paul saying, "*Come over to Macedonia and help us*" (Acts 16:9). Following the Lord's call, Paul and his entourage eventually reached Thessalonica. In his two letters addressed to the Thessalonian Christians, Paul expresses his deep care as a founding pastor concerned about his fledgling congregation. In addition to Christian persecution, the Lord's second coming, the antichrist, and Christian discipline, in this bible study you will learn about:

1. The power of the word of God
2. The importance of living a God-pleasing life
3. The reason why we are faithful to the bible's teachings

As we look back on the past year and all the challenges that we have faced, we need to look to the upcoming year with stewardship in mind. Remember, every day is sacred. Everyday presents opportunities to live more fully in relationship with God and our neighbors. Every day is for love and joy and peace and fulfillment! This month, consider making a resolution on stewardship of your time – how you spend every day God gives you!

Stewardship

Corner



Blessings on your stewardship journey!

“Be Imitators of Jesus”

God created man and announced His creation to be “*very good*” (Genesis 1:31), but, because of self-will and pride, Adam and Eve sinned, causing man to be separated from God. To bridge that separation, God rescued us with the greatest gift of all: His very own Son. In Christ, God speaks to us, reaches out to us with forgiveness, and receives us into fellowship. All we have has been freely given to us, not because of who we are or what we do, but because of Whose we are. Through faith, we see God’s redemptive grace in Jesus, and we are motivated to live our lives for Him (Ephesians 2:8-10).

In Jesus, we see the attributes of God. In Hebrews 1:3-4 we read, “[*The Son*] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.” God the Father has revealed the light of His glory in His Son, Jesus. As true man, Jesus lived the life of a perfect steward for the glory of His Heavenly Father. Just as Jesus put aside his own interests and desires— “*Not as I will, but as You will*”— (Matthew 26:39), we are called to be obedient through faith to God’s ways rather than the ways of the world and our own natures. As God’s stewards, we also receive joy and encouragement in knowing that we are obediently serving the Lord.

Jesus is always to be our preeminent model for our lives as stewards. We have a Savior Who lived the perfect life in our places. With an attitude of gratitude and joy in what God in Christ has done for us, we read and adopt the Apostle Paul’s admonition, “*Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ*” (1 Corinthians 11:1). Through the working of the Holy Spirit, our goal is to “*Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you*” (Colossians 3:5). By God’s grace, we fix our eyes on Jesus, Who is the “*founder and perfecter of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:2). To that end, we should saturate our minds with the truths in God’s Word rather than the teachings of the world. “*Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!*” (2 Corinthians 9:15).

SCRIP at Grace Lutheran Church, School & ECC

Did you know that Grace Lutheran Church Sells SCRIP??? Scrip is a **No-Cost Fundraiser** that helps to support the ministries here at Grace for our Lutheran Church, School, and ECC. Scrip is gift cards that we buy from various restaurants, gas stations, and grocery stores to name a few and then sell at face value to you. Examples include: Woodmans, Kwik Trip, Meijer, Menards, Culvers, Kohls, to name a few. Each merchant sets their own discount percentage, so some scrip purchases “*earn more*” than others. The gift cards you buy and then use at these stores our Church, School, and ECC earns a certain percentage of the purchase from the retailer that you shop at. Gail Nowakowski is our new Scrip Coordinator. If you are interested in Scrip please contact our Church office. We sell Scrip after each of our worship services, if you would like to take a look at what Scrip cards you can buy to help support the ministries of Grace.



ONLINE GIVING AT GRACE

You can now give to our Church online. It's easy, fast, and secure. If you're able, we also encourage you to set up recurring giving. Thank you for supporting our ministries here at Grace!!! Text the word: graceoc to 206-859-9405, use this QR Code or head to our web-site: graceoakcreek.org. You may give a one time gift or set up your regular weekly/monthly offering. Thank you for your generosity and support of the ministries at Grace!!!



LWML South Wisconsin District Winter Getaway

February 2 & 3, 2024

Marriot West, Waukesha

'Growing Together'

Mentoring Workshop

Retreat Speaker: Darcy Paape from the Women's Leadership Institute at Concordia University

More information and registration forms are available at: www.lwml-swd.org

Grace Ladies Guild

*****Please Note: There will be NO January MEETING*****

Mitten Tree

Thank you for your generous gifts!

All the mittens, gloves, hats and scarves will be donated to the South Milwaukee Human Concerns program. The official count will be in February's Equipper.

Blessings for Baby - A Place of Refuge

January 14th - Life Sunday

Blessings for Baby items will be collected starting Jan 14.

List of items needed: Baby wipes, Coloring Books, Bibs

Infant socks, sleepers, headbands, wash clothes, toys, Baby Powder

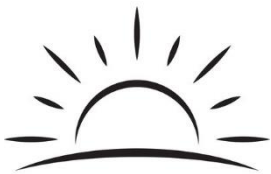
Altar Guild

We at Grace are blessed with not just one faithful and selfless individual who tends to the altar, we have a whole team of such folks! And we are looking for more to join the team! Altar Guild duties are divided into Communion Set-up and Linen Care. Our schedules are flexible so we can accommodate your schedule. Questions about serving? Contact Jennifer Olen 414.305.3740 olenjennifer@aol.com OR ask one of the altar ladies as you see her working in the altar room!

Ladies Wednesday Morning Bible Study

The Ladies Wednesday Morning Bible Study has started a new Bible Study on Wednesday mornings. It is entitled, "God's Provision in a Wilderness World" by [Lindsay Hausch](#) through **Concordia Publishing House**. In this Bible Study we will learn that for the Israelites wandering through the wilderness and us, God's manna is a gift wrapped in struggle. This example of God providing manna invites us to look at our present life—with its bittersweet beauty—and see how our Creator is blessing us with His gifts in our everyday struggles. The forty studies in this book will lead you through the Book of Exodus as the Israelites wander through the wilderness, pointing you to what God wants you to know and apply to your own life. This women's Bible study is broken up into eight weeks, with five sessions per week, for a total of forty studies. Our culture is a wilderness where our effort to satisfy our needs with things of this world leaves our hearts empty and aching for more. Every day, no matter where you wander, God invites you to take time in His Word and re-center your heart on Him. God's provision for you is personal. He meets you where you are. And He gives you what you need.

**We meet on Wednesday mornings at church at 9:30 a.m.
All women of our congregation are invited to attend.**



Rise & Sonshine Bible Study

**January 13th & 27th at 8:00am-9:30am
At Grace Lutheran School**

We will conclude our study of "Promised Rest" on January 13
New study will be selected...ladies watch for that announcement!
Happy New Year!

Grace Lutheran Greeting Card Ministry

The greeting-card ministry consists of volunteers mailing cards and notes of encouragement to people in nursing facilities, who are homebound, or otherwise can't be at church regularly. *'Think of your neighbor, love your neighbor.'* This is the way people answer that message, letting people know they haven't been forgotten. If you would like to share in this ministry, please take a card which is provided for you on the table in the narthex of the Church. Remember...you are giving joy to these people. If you are interested in taking part in this ministry, please contact Pauline Parker at: 414-807-6338 or paulinemom@aol.com

SAVE THE DATE!!

January 5th - LOCK IN FOR GRACE YOUTH

We are planning a lock-in at Grace Lutheran School on Friday, January 5th, starting at 6:30pm and concluding on Saturday, January 6th around 6:30am. This lock in is open to our 5th grade through High School youth. For this event to be a success, we need your participation and support. Parents or adult members willing to chaperone and assist during the lock-in, please reach out to Pastor Taggatz at: pastor@graceoakcreek.org. Your involvement will greatly contribute to creating a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. During the lock-in, we have an array of activities lined up, including devotions centered on God's Word, snacks, a Friday night dinner, and engaging games. To ensure we accommodate everyone, kindly inform us if your child will be attending by no later than Tuesday January 2nd. Also, please have your child bring snacks, a pillow, a sleeping bag, a Bible, and a comfortable sleeping mat for the night.

January 20th - Bingo Night at Grace

Our Fellowship Committee at Grace would like to announce our next event on Saturday, Jan 20th at 6:30-8:00. It was such a hit last year and we were asked to bring it back. It will be a free night of fellowship, fun, food and small prizes. We will be asking you to bring finger foods to pass and non alcoholic drinks for your family. (we are not allowed to have alcoholic drinks on the school premises.) This is a family event for all Church, School, and ECC families.

We will have activities for grade school children, kindergarten and up, to keep them entertained. We will NOT be able to accommodate younger children. We are also looking for students that need service hours to help entertain these young ones, or if some adults would be interested that would be fine. Please mark your calendars and be sure to sign-up! We would love to see all of you there! There was an email sent to all church members with a link to sign up. We will also put out the particulars and sign-up sheets in the Narthex.



Let's
PLAY
BINGO!



February 11th - New Member Potluck

On Sunday February 11th, following our 10:30am worship service, we will be having a New Member Potluck in our School Gymnasium. During the month of January, we will have a sign-up sheet in the Church Narthex requesting our members to bring a main entrée, side dish, and/or desserts for this event. Please plan on coming to our New Member Potluck to get a chance to meet and get to know our new members at Grace!

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod • January 21st -28th, 2024

Every year at Grace Lutheran, we look forward to National Lutheran Schools Week (NLSW) and the opportunity it brings to celebrate with over 1,850 schools nationwide. We give thanks for the gift of Lutheran schools to our students, families and the communities they serve. Churches and schools rejoice in partnership with a shared vision for proclaiming God’s grace and mercy to equip the next generation of faithful Christian servants. We give thanks to God for the opportunity to touch the lives of thousands and thousands of children and their families who attend Lutheran schools.

National Lutheran Schools Week is an annual celebration that promotes the important role of Lutheran schools in the United States and around the world. The theme for the 2023–2024 school year celebration is “*Connected*,” inspired by John 15:5: “*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*” The theme “*Connected*” emphasizes the importance of staying connected to God and to one another when we face challenges and difficulties and when we share in joys and triumphs! It encourages Lutheran schools to continue to cultivate an environment of faith, love and fellowship, where students can learn, grow and thrive.

Throughout National Lutheran Schools Week, Lutheran churches and schools organize various activities and events such as chapel services, prayer gatherings, community service projects and special programs that highlight the theme of being connected to God and to each other. These celebrations provide an opportunity for Lutheran schools to come together and celebrate our Lutheran mission and values, which guide our Lutheran schools as they serve students and families.

Presidential Proclamation - National Lutheran Schools Week

Whereas, God loves us and sent His Son to be our Savior; and

Whereas, Lutheran schools provide opportunities for teachers and students to teach and hear this Good News of God’s love; and

Whereas, Jesus told His church: “I am the vine; you are the branches” (John 15:5); and

Whereas, Students in Lutheran schools are the branches, connected to the Vine by their Baptism and faith; and

Whereas, Teachers in Lutheran schools are also the branches, connected to the Vine by their Baptism and faith; and

Whereas, “The branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine” (John 15:4); and

Whereas, All who believe and are baptized abide in Jesus and by Him “bear much fruit” (John 15:5); and

Whereas, Lutheran schools bear much fruit by teaching the Good News of Christ’s death and resurrection for sinners; and

Whereas, Christ commanded His church, “to love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12),

Whereas, Every Christian repents daily, knowing that apart from Jesus we can do nothing (John 15:5); and

Whereas, Jesus told His church, “Abide in me, and I in you” (John 15:4); and

Whereas, Salvation by grace through faith because of Jesus comes through God’s Word; and

Whereas, Through hearing God’s Word each and every day, students and teachers in Lutheran schools abide in His love; and

Whereas, Lutheran schools carry on a legacy of excellence in preparing students to explore the manifold gifts of creation in all academic fields and to serve their neighbors in varying vocations and diverse careers; and

Whereas, During National Lutheran Schools Week, we rejoice that by God’s grace and through God’s

Word we are “*Connected*” to Christ, who is the Vine; therefore, **be it Resolved**, That Jan. 21–28, 2024, be officially proclaimed as National Lutheran Schools Week in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Lutherans For Life Celebration

Sunday January 14th, 2024

“Just As ... I AM” is the theme for our Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on Sunday January 14th, 2024 at Grace Lutheran. Our theme verse for this year is from Ephesians 2:10, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

Charlotte Elliott wrote the familiar hymn *“Just As I Am”* in 1834. Born in 1789, a severe illness at age 32 left her unable to care for herself. Charlotte thereafter lived with her younger brother, Henry. The parish he pastored in the resort town of Brighton, England, decided to hold a bazaar. Its proceeds would fund a school building and scholarships for underprivileged children. Charlotte felt herself useless because she could not assist with preparations. This hymn’s stanzas embodied her cries in answer to the despair. She then offered it as encouragement in a collection she called, *“The Invalid’s Hymnbook”* (1836).

Just As I Am ... its beloved lines memorably testify to the sanctity of every human life. Almighty God does *“receive, welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve”* each member of our race with the heart of a Heavenly Father and the arms of a Gracious Savior. No ages, appearances, or abilities, no impairments or illnesses, not even guilt and grief can exclude from a place in His kingdom and a part in His family. We get to rejoice in our own lives and in our neighbors as gift and privilege. If our Lord’s forgiving favor can overcome sinful failures, then His lavish love will more than make up for human limitations.

“Just” has become an especially precious word for Lutherans. Its verb *“justify”* occupies the heart of the Gospel. The Holy One Himself gives the reason for every existence by declaring humankind righteous for the sake of Jesus Christ. *“Just”* means *“worthy,”* but it also means *“barely.”* Any humanity from fertilization to final breath amounts to enough. God’s creating work, redeeming labors, and calling activities never come up short. Persons undergoing surprise pregnancy, experiencing disability, or suffering terminal diagnosis matter as much as you and me. Indeed, they matter as much as the Son of Man, since Jesus incarnates all of our conditions and carries every sorrow. Even when human mouths cannot utter *“I am,”* Lord God lends them His own likeness and proclaims, *“I AM!”* We Lutherans love life because He first loved all.



We use these social media platforms to share the special things going on at church, school and the Early Childhood Center. However, most importantly, we share on social media the Gospel of God's redeeming love!

We enjoy using technology to continue the work of spreading the...

...Good News of God's Riches at Christ's Expense!

LIKE our page, and make sure you SHARE these messages with others too!



Facebook:
Grace Lutheran Church, School & Early Childhood Center, Oak Creek, WI



Instagram:
gracelutheran_oakcreek



***Thank you to all who ordered
Poinsettias for Christmas!***





*1/1 Jeannette McLain
 1/3 Erica Juarez
 1/3 Mark Roettgen
 1/4 Pamela Umaske
 1/7 Kathy Gaudian
 1/11 Matthew Morrisette
 1/12 Paul McKinster
 1/17 Brent Endres*

*1/19 Jennifer Olen
 1/21 Rick Swainston
 1/23 Patrick Manoil
 1/26 Joy Lussier
 1/27 Jeanne Willms
 1/28 Lisa Kamprath
 1/31 Tricia Dachel*

*1/5 Craig and Lauren Frank
 1/31 David and Amy Pankow*

Stay connected with your church community all the time, anywhere with the MyUCD App at no cost.

- Watch Church Services Anytime, Anywhere
- Announce Events & Programs
- Members are able to contact staff easily
- YouVersion Bible for daily verses and study
- View Church events for immediate access.
- myUCD
- Email Church
- Call or Message the Church
- Easier to Give
- Full Directory of all church members
- Increase visits to your Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter & other Social Media Pages

Introducing Our Grace Lutheran Church Mobile Directory! Now you can have an updated directory with you 24/7





Updatable by the church
 - Update or Add Family photos, names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails
 (*No photography with Universal required for updates)...

We have been working with Universal Church Directories to establish our congregation on their APP made for your mobile phone or tablet. From the APP, you can watch downloaded services, contact us directly, access the church calendar, online-giving, You Version Bible, and the church directory. You will be receiving an email from Universal Church Directories with directions to download the APP to your device, along with a unique identifier that is required to login to the APP. Tip: It is also easiest to copy and paste this unique identifier code into the APP to gain access to the church directory. If you have any questions please contact Heidi, Tuesday through Thursday 9am-12pm 414-762-8990.



January 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:30am New Year's Eve Worship - Guest Pastor Jim Klug	1 *NEW YEARS DAY* 	2 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner) 6:30pm Stephen Ministry Meeting	3 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	4 6:30pm Divine Worship	5 6:30pm Lock-in for Youth at Grace Lutheran School	6
7 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Study 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Divine Worship	8 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Grief Share	9 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	10 9:30am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm All Boards Meeting 7:15pm Council Meeting	11 6:30pm Divine Worship	12 Better Together Dining Out 	13 8:00am Rise & Sonshine Bible Study
14 Life Sunday 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Divine Worship	15 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Grief Share	16 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner) 10:00am - 10:00pm Culver's Dining Out Event 	17 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	18 6:30pm Divine Worship	19	20 6:30pm Bingo Night at Grace 
21 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Study 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Divine Worship 11:45am Stephen Ministries - Special Informational Meeting	22 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Grief Share	23 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	24 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	25 6:30pm Divine Worship	26	27 8:00am Rise & Sonshine Bible Study
<i>National Lutheran Schools Week</i>						
28 8:00am Divine Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Divine Worship	29 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Grief Share	30 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	31 9:30am Ladies Bible Study	1 6:30pm Divine Worship	2	3 9:00am Chili Assembly

Radio Worship Service

"*The Lutheran Hour*" can be heard anytime on the internet at lhm.org – scroll down the page and click on, "*listen now.*" You can also listen to any of these local radio stations on Sunday mornings:

WTMJ Milwaukee, WI 103.3 FM Sunday at 6:30 am
WTMJ Milwaukee, WI 620 AM Sunday at 5:30 am
WTMJ Milwaukee, WI 620 AM Sunday at 6:30 am

"*The Lutheran Hour,*" which began in 1930, is the world's oldest continually broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program, now heard on more than 1,200 radio stations, pro-claims the message of Jesus Christ to a world-wide audience.



Prayer Hot Line

In order to request prayers by members of Grace, please contact one of the following people. Your request will be made known to all members of our Prayer Line. Prayer requests for worship service should be directed to the church office or Pastor Taggatz.

10AM – 3PM

Carol Thurber, 762-9615

3PM – 9PM

Pauline Parker, 764-5574

Internet Prayerline

Pauline Parker

paulinemom@aol.com

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, SCHOOL, ECC



CHURCH & ECC

3381 E. Puetz Rd.
Oak Creek, WI 53154

SCHOOL & CHURCH OFFICE

8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oak Creek, WI 53154

WEBSITE

<https://graceoakcreek.org>

Pastor John M. Taggatz

PH: 414.762.8990

Thursday Worship 6:30 pm

Sunday Worship 9:00 am