

# Grace Lutheran Church, School, ECC

Oak Creek, Wisconsin  
www.graceoakcreek.org

*Celebrate  
Teach  
Share*

## The Epiphany of our Lord (Observed)

January 4<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024



*"By His Grace you are saved through faith."*

Ephesians 2:8



**Image:** "Going into the house they saw the child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." (Matthew 2:11)

# Welcome to Grace! We're Glad You've Joined Us!

## WORSHIP NOTES FOR OUR GUESTS

Worship bulletins & worship activity bags (age 2-8) are available for your children to use during the service. Please see an usher if you need assistance finding them.

Children are **always** welcome - we don't want anything to keep families from attending! From time to time a child will naturally have a difficult moment in worship. If that happens and you feel a need to step out, please make use of our church narthex and entrance, so you may still be able to follow along in worship until your child is ready to return again!

If you would like to include a **prayer for someone** in our worship today, please add it to the **Prayer Request Sheet** found on the podium in the narthex.

**We're glad you're with us.** Please introduce yourself to Pastor Taggatz. If you are in search of a new church home, or are interested in learning more about Grace, we would be happy to visit with you. We hope you'll be back and give us an opportunity to know you!

### *As We Gather "People Who Don't Belong"*

We consider the mysteries highlighted by the Readings for the *Feast of the Epiphany*. The Wise Men, or Magi, mysteriously show up in Jerusalem, and these strangers are looking for the King of the Jews. The King of the Jews is mysteriously an infant, born to a humble family in Bethlehem, not in Jerusalem. And this King of the Jews mysteriously invites all people from all nations into His kingdom. These mysteries, hidden for the ages, is revealed in Jesus, the Light of the world. We reflect today on what it means to belong. We may often feel out of place at school, at work, or perhaps even in our congregation. Perhaps the Wise Men felt like they were out of place in Jerusalem. Yet, regardless of feelings, God invites all people from all nations to be heirs of His kingdom. In Christ, we all belong, and we always will.

### **We invite a moment of silence during the prelude for Prayer**

As our organist begins the prelude we move from our regular conversations and the happenings of the world around us in order to turn our attention to worship. **Please take these moments as an opportunity to focus on prayer.** Make use of this time to look through our service in anticipation of the scripture we will share and the hymns we will sing. God richly bless us as we gather in God's presence today! We hope you will take these moments as a time to transition into worship as we have entered into God's presence through Word and Sacrament.

## Order of Service...*Divine Service Setting 4, pg. 203*

### ✘ PREPARATION ✘

Opening Hymn 397 As with Gladness Men of Old (vs. 1-4)

*Stand*

**Confession and Absolution LSB 203**

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

### ✘ WORD ✘

Introit (*Psalm 45:6-8a; antiphon: v. 17, sung responsively*)



I will cause your name to be remembered in all gener- | ations;\*  
therefore nations will praise you forever and | ever.

**Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of up-  
| rightness;\***

**you have loved righteousness and hated | wickedness.**

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your com- | panions;\*

your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and | cassia.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\***

**and to the Holy | Spirit;**

**as it was in the be- | ginning,\***

**is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

I will cause your name to be remembered in all gener- | ations;\*  
therefore nations will praise you forever and | ever.

#### **Kyrie LSB 204**

**C Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.**

#### **Gloria in Excelsis LSB 204**

**C 1 To God on high be glory  
And peace to all the earth;  
Goodwill from God in heaven  
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!  
We praise and bless You, Father;  
Your holy name, we sing—  
Our thanks for Your great glory,  
Lord God, our heav'nly King.**

**2 To You, O sole-begotten,  
The Father's Son, we pray;  
O Lamb of God, our Savior,  
You take our sins away.  
Have mercy on us, Jesus;  
Receive our heartfelt cry,  
Where You in pow'r are seated  
At God's right hand on high—**

**3 For You alone are holy;  
You only are the Lord.  
Forever and forever,  
Be worshiped and adored;  
You with the Holy Spirit  
Alone are Lord Most High,  
In God the Father's glory.  
"Amen!" our glad reply.**

**Salutation and Collect of the Day *LSB 205***

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray. O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

*Sit*

**Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 60:1-6***

***(The nations shall come to Your light.)***

<sup>1</sup>Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. <sup>2</sup>For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. <sup>3</sup>And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. <sup>4</sup>Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. <sup>5</sup>Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. <sup>6</sup>A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual (*Psalm 117:1-2a; 96:8, read responsively*)**

**P** Praise the LORD, all nations!

**C** **Extol Him, all peoples!**

P For great is His steadfast love toward us,  
C **and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.**

P Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;  
C **bring an offering, and come into His courts!**

### Epistle Lesson *Ephesians 3:1-12*

*(The mystery hidden for ages)*

<sup>1</sup>For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— <sup>2</sup>assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, <sup>3</sup>how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. <sup>4</sup>When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup>which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

<sup>7</sup>Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup>To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup>and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, <sup>10</sup>so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup>This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup>in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

A This is the Word of the Lord.  
C **Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

### Alleluia and Verse *LSB 205*

C **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Alleluia Verse for The Epiphany of our Lord—***“Alleluia. Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him. Alleluia.” (Matthew 2:2b)*

### Holy Gospel *Matthew 2:1-12*

*(The Magi visit Jesus.)*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.  
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” <sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” <sup>9</sup>After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>11</sup>And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

- P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise to You, O Christ.

### Apostles' Creed *LSB 207*

- C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,

**the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life T everlasting. Amen.**

*Sit*

**Children’s Message “High in the Sky” (Matthew 2:1-12)** *The children of the congregation are invited to come up to the chancel area for a special message for them. Please note—parents of small children may also come up near the chancel area to accompany their children for the message)*

**Sermon Hymn 395 O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright (vs. 1-4)**

**Sermon “People Who Don’t Belong” (Matthew 2:1-12)**

**Offering/Attendance**

As the offerings are being passed to you by the ushers, we ask that you take this time to fill out the attendance pads located in your pews so that we can acknowledge your presence with us today. We are so glad that you have joined us in worship here at Grace!!! We also thank you for your generosity and support of Jesus Christ our Lord’s Kingdom work!!! God bless you!!!

You can now give online. It’s easy, fast, and secure. If you’re able, we also encourage you to set up recurring giving by texting **graceoc** to 206-859-9405, use this QR Code or head to our web-site at [graceoakcreek.org](http://graceoakcreek.org). You may give a onetime gift or set up your regular weekly or monthly offering. Those using this method of giving may still bring their envelope if they wish and simply write ‘online giving’ on the outside and place it in the offering plate.



*Stand*

**Prayer of the Church** *(After each petition the Pastor will say, “Lord in Your mercy,” and the congregation responds saying, “Hear our prayer.”)*

**✠ SACRAMENT ✠**

**Preface LSB 208**

P The Lord be with you.  
C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.  
C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**



- P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

### Sanctus *LSB 208*

- C Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;  
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.  
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;  
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

### Prayer of Thanksgiving *LSB 209*

- P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. As the glory of Your presence once filled Your ancient temple, so in the incarnation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, You manifested the fullness of Your glory in human flesh. We give You thanks that in His most Holy Supper You reveal Your glory to us. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood so that we may one day behold Your glory face to face. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

### Lord's Prayer *LSB 209*

- C Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.

## The Words of Our Lord *LSB 209*

- P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My T body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.” In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My T blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

## Pax Domini *LSB 209*

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
C **Amen.**

## Agnus Dei *LSB 210*

- C 1 **O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.**
- 2 **O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,  
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.**

*Sit*

## Distribution

### We celebrate the Lord’s Supper

Members of our sister LC-MS congregations are invited to join us for communion. Guests to our Lutheran Church are invited to first speak with Pastor before joining at our Lord’s Table. We hope you will learn more about us as we gather to “*Celebrate, Teach, and Confess*” the Good News of God’s Grace! In the Bible, the Apostle Paul wrote: *Let a person examine himself and so eat of the bread, and drink of the cup (1 Cor. 11:28)*. Before attending the Lord’s Supper, ask yourself the following questions:

1. *Do I believe that I am a sinner, and am sorry for my sins? (Prov. 28:13; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8-9)*
2. *Do I believe that Jesus Christ by His death, offers me forgiveness for all my sins? (Romans 5:8; Col. 2:13; Heb. 9:28; 1 John 1:7)*
3. *Do I believe that I receive the body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine (not merely symbolically present?) (Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:24-25)*

4. *Do I desire to turn from my sinful ways and live a God pleasing life by the power of the Holy Spirit? (Isaiah 1:16; John 8:11; Rom. 6:12)*

If you are unable to answer yes to these questions, please talk to the pastor before communing, as participating without a proper understanding of Holy Communion can be spiritually harmful (1 Cor. 11:27-29). If you can answer yes to these questions, then come with a repentant heart and join us in the reception of the Lord's Supper. Adults and children not yet instructed about Holy Communion are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.

**COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION PRACTICE—We are offering altar/rail communion as our communion practice. While you are at the altar, please let us know if you would like to receive the Common Cup. Individual communion cups are also available to you. You also have the option to kneel or remain standing during altar/rail communion. Gluten Free communion wafers are also available upon request. If it is physically difficult for you to commune at the altar rail, please speak to the Pastor or an elder about receiving communion in your pew.**

### **Distribution Hymns**

-400 Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning (vs. 1-5)

-412 The People That in Darkness Sat (vs. 1-6)

*Stand*

### **Nunc Dimittis LSB 211**

C 1 O Lord, now let Your servant  
Depart in heav'nly peace,  
For I have seen the glory  
Of Your redeeming grace:  
A light to lead the Gentiles  
Unto Your holy hill,  
The glory of Your people,  
Your chosen Israel.

2 All glory to the Father,  
All glory to the Son,  
All glory to the Spirit,  
Forever Three in One;  
For as in the beginning,  
Is now, shall ever be,  
God's triune name resounding  
Through all eternity.

### Post-Communion Collect *LSB 212*

- A Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have welcomed us into the Body of Christ and have given us Your Church as a home for all nations. Strengthen us through this Sacrament, that we may love others as Christ first loved us; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

### Benedicamus *LSB 212*

- A Let us bless the Lord.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

### Benediction *LSB 212*

- P The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.
- C **Amen.**

### Closing Hymn 411 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light (vs. 1-3)

#### Announcements

- P: Go in Peace and Serve the Lord!
- c: **Thanks be to God!**



### New Members Class on Sunday January 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-5:30pm at Grace Lutheran School

Our next New Members class will take place in our Grace Lutheran School building located at 8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave on Sunday January 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-5:30pm. Please also let us know if you might need childcare for this event. Whether you have questions about Christ or want to deepen your faith in Him, this class will explore what the Bible says about our God, and how His love gives direction and meaning to your life today and forever. This class is designed for those who are interested in learning or reviewing the foundations of the Christian faith. Attendance at the class may lead to membership in our church, but there are no obligations. Let us know if you might need childcare. Watch an introductory video at: [www.lhm.org/GodConnects](http://www.lhm.org/GodConnects).

**WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

*For all who worship this day, bless us through your Word, O Lord.* Pastor Bill Wurm (Alzheimer's disease); Tom Janes (healing & strength); Myles King (blood disorder); Cindy Riemer (cancer); Michael Helzer (cancer); Michael Parker (healing & strength); Jim & Kari (healing and strength); Greg Voss (healing & strength); Curt Bayer (cancer) former member of Grace; Cindy Schmidt (healing); Sandra Mallas (health, peace, comfort); Gary Forsythe (dementia); Dominic (recovery from a stroke); Brittany (cancer); Greg (cancer); Judy (poor eyesight); Darlene & Jerry Urbaniak's Nephew (Alzheimer's); Linda (brain cancer); Bryan (cancer); Jenny Rice (cancer); Dale (cancer); Cookie (lung cancer; Evan (healing & strength); Sue Klemme (pancreatic cancer); Keith Iverson (hospice); Scott (kidney failure); Jennifer (diagnosed with MS); Rachel Goodle (prayers for God's strength); Brooke Bzdawka (blood clot); Daniel Abelt (cancer); and Alyssa (healing & strength); Michael Abelt (healing & strength); Stephanie (pregnant with twins); Katie Bailey Klinge (cancer); Andora (surgery for cancer); Sabrina (cancer); Lori Jablonski (cancer) and Jessie Marshall (healing & strength) friend of Cathy Weeks; Paige (God's help & comfort), Emilee; and Isaac (healing from a broken ankle), Heather (cancer), Steve Benzie (stomach pain, hernia); Craig (stem cell transplant); Dianna Abelt (healing and strength); Sara Keno (seizures); Dale Schmidt (Huntington's Disease); and Mike Zanardi (pancreatic cancer); Doc Medek (rehabilitation); Sharon McCaigue (cancer); and Cheryl (cancer) friend of Sharon Iseli; Daniel Sinnen (cancer) Grandson of Bernice Byklum; Carol Long (cancer) friend of Joy Lussier; and Blaine Goldner (kidney transplant) friend of Carol Loveall; and Henry (spinal cancer) friend of Sharon Iseli.

*For our Homebound Members at Grace:* Betty Lemmer (hospice), Kathy Gaudian, Bernice Byklum, Art Steinborn, Patricia Groth, and Gloria Kilponen.

**We mourn with the family and friends of Pastor Kurt Schilling and his wife Pauline, friends of Pastor Tagatz and family. The Schillings' children were tragically killed by a drunk driver near Waupaca, WI in a car crash on Saturday December 16<sup>th</sup>. We pray for Pastor Schilling and his wife Pauline as they mourn their children's deaths. We pray.** *Almighty God, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, deal graciously with the family of Pastor Schilling as they mourn the death of his four children: Daniel, Fabian, Lillian, and Daniela, that casting every care on You, they may know the consolation of Your love. Amen.*

***All those on the Grace Prayer Line dealing with long term health and medical issues;*** Hear our prayer. We encourage you to submit prayer requests for worship and/or our prayer line by emailing: [Paulinemom@aol.com](mailto:Paulinemom@aol.com).

**If you do not have access to a computer you may call:**

Prayers for worship:			
Church Office:			414-762-8990
Requests on prayer line:	10am-3 pm	Carol Thurber	414-762-9615
	3pm-9 pm	Pauline Parker	414-764-5574

## Assisting with the Divine Service

We thank God for all those individuals who have been involved in supporting our worship services this week. If you are interested in assisting in any of the ways shown below, please speak with pastor or one of our elders.

	<u>Thursday 1/4 6:30pm</u>	<u>Sunday 1/7 8:00am</u>	<u>Sunday 1/7 10:30am</u>
<u>Elders</u>	Lance Kopperud	Adam Voss	Eric Kamprath
<u>Readers</u>	Kathy Szefflinski	Cris Evers	Beth Jackson
<u>Communion Set-up</u>	Suzie Mirenda	Jeanne Meyer	Jeanne Meyer
<u>Linens</u>	Sharon Iseli	Sharon Iseli	Sharon Iseli
<u>Acolyte</u>	Elder	Elder	McKenzie Isenhart
<u>Ushers</u>	Keith Goodle	Madilyn Hundt	Tommy Szefflinski
	Jim Robinson	Garrison Hundt	Andrea Szefflinski
			Mike Huber
<u>Livestream</u>			Glenn Dotson

### **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.\*\***

### **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.

## **Welcome to our New Members at Grace!!!**

We welcome these new families to Grace as of this past month.

We are so happy that you have joined our Church family!!! *Mary & Tammy Rowley, Jared & Erika Zeimentz and family, & Rebekah Lofton and family!*

**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.

### **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.

### **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."*

### **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](mailto:olenjennifer@aol.com) OR ask one of the altar ladies as you see her working in the altar room!

## **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](http://www.lwml-swd.org)

### **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!

**SAVE THE DATE - 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! We will put out the particulars and sign-up sheets in the Narthex. There was also an email sent to all church members with a link to sign up as well.

You are invited to the

### **Stephen Ministry Informational Meeting**

**When:** Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup> (after 10:30am service)

**Time:** 11:30am

**Where:** Grace Lutheran Church

**What:** Find out more about the Stephen Ministry training which will start in February

**Why:** *"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples." (John 13:34-35)*

*If you would like more information and are unable to attend at this time please contact:*

Pastor Taggatz (715) 467-1231

Jeanne Meyer (414-423-0010) or Lori Kachelmeier (414-828-0290)



## **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 \$35,856.63 for the church & school furnace fund, thank you for your support!**

**Adult Bible Class Topic** (*note: we will take a break from Bible Class December 24<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>, we will resume Bible Class on Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024*)— **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.

## **IN THE WORD FOR THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD**

**Catechism**: Lord's Prayer—Seventh Petition and Conclusion

**Verse of the week**: John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

**Psalm of the week**: Psalm 100

**Hymn of the week**: LSB 410 "Within the Father's House" (stanzas 1-4)

**Bible Readings for the Week**:

**Sunday**— The Boy Jesus in the Temple—Luke 2:41-52

**Monday**— The Ark of the Covenant Is Captured—1 Samuel 3:21—4:18 (19-22)

**Tuesday**— The Ark Brings Judgment upon the Philistines—1 Samuel 5:1—6:1

**Wednesday**— The Ark of the Covenant Is Returned to Israel—1 Samuel 6:1—7:1

**Thursday**— Samuel Judges Israel—1 Samuel 7:2-17

**Friday**— The Woman at the Well—John 4:1-30, 39-42

**Saturday**— The Lord Shows Moses His Glory—Exodus 33:12-23

“What is it that is essential for your life this New Year? What gifts do you cherish? Certainly, Jesus is the most precious gift we have! Let Him shine through your whole life this year. Take Him with you everywhere. Remember whose family you belong to! Cling to Jesus, our Father’s Son this New Year! Our Father goes with you and promises His blessings, now and forever!” *Rev. Darren Green, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)* Hurting from abortion? Word of Hope can help. [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org); 888-217-8679.

**LUTHERAN HOUR "As We Forgive"** Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. Dr. Michael Zeigler discusses forgiveness--what it is and what it isn't. (Matthew 6:12; Luke 11:4) **The Lutheran Hour can be heard any time on the internet at: [lhm.org](http://lhm.org)** scroll down the page and click on, “listen now.” Or listen to any of these local radio stations on Sunday mornings.

WTMJ 103.3 FM Milwaukee, WI Sun 6:30 am  
WTMJ 620 AM Milwaukee, WI Sun 5:30 and 6:30 am

**Stewardship Minute**— Because we know that we have a God Who loves us, has adopted us as His children, and wants the best for us, we are energized to be about His work. Out of gratitude for who God is and what He has done and continues to do for us, we respond by using our lives and blessings in ways that give honor and praise to our Lord. Acknowledging God as our creator and sustainer of all things, we understand our role as God’s stewards. As God’s stewards, we seek to manage our time, talents, and money faithfully and according to His will, which we discover in His Word. We become God’s instruments through which He works to further His kingdom and help those in need.

**INSTEAD OF WORRYING  
ABOUT WHAT THE NEW YEAR  
MIGHT BRING, PLAN AHEAD,  
SEEKING GOD’S WILL AS YOU  
DO SO.**

“Commit your work to the Lord,  
and your plans will be established”  
(Proverbs 16:3).



**Growing in Grace  
December 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Offering**

General Offering	\$2650.00		
On-Line Giving	\$848.01		
Missions	\$0.00	<i>Attendance –</i>	
Debt Fund	\$0.00	<i>Sunday Service</i>	50
Mortgage Offering	\$0.00	<i>Total Communed</i>	35
Portals of Prayer	\$0.00		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3498.01</b>		

**Please note:** In order to meet budget each week we need to receive \$6,586 in offerings. Thank you for your generosity and support of the ministries here at Grace. We could not do what we do without your prayers, volunteering of your time and talents, and financial support!!!

**OPPORTUNITIES AT GRACE THIS COMING WEEK**

Sunday	1/7	<b>8:00 am</b> <b>9:15 am</b> <b>9:15 am</b> <b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Divine Worship</b> <b>Adult Bible Study</b> <b>Sunday School</b> <b>Divine Worship</b>
Monday	1/8	<b>6:30 pm</b> <b>6:30 pm</b>	Confirmation Class Grief Share
Tuesday	1/9	<b>7:00 am</b>	Men’s Bible Study and Breakfast (OC Diner)
Wednesday	1/10	<b>9:30 am</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> <b>7:15 pm</b>	Ladies Bible Study All Boards Meeting Council Meeting
Thursday	1/11	<b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>Divine Worship</b>
Friday	1/12	<b>All Day</b>	<b>Better Together Dining Out</b>
Saturday	1/13	<b>8:00 am</b>	<b>Rise &amp; Sonshine Bible Study</b>
Sunday	1/14	<b>8:00 am</b> <b>9:15 am</b> <b>10:30 am</b> <b>1:30 pm</b>	<b>Divine Worship – Life Sunday</b> <b>Adult Bible Study</b> <b>Divine Worship</b> <b>New Member Class</b>

**SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS**

We have gathered today to celebrate the most precious gifts and treasures our Lord gives us: His forgiveness, life and salvation. It would be our honor to have you join us again next week as we “Celebrate, Teach, and Share” the Good News of God’s Grace among all people.

Grace is committed to supporting families through our Early Childhood Center, Day School, and High School. We are blessed to be a member of the Lutheran High School Association of Milwaukee.

Pastor	Rev. John M. Taggatz	414-762-8990 (O) 715-467-1231 (Cell) 262-664-4365 (Home) <a href="http://thewordendures.blogspot.com">thewordendures.blogspot.com</a>
Principal	Mr. Steve Gettelman	414-762-3655
ECC Director	Mrs. Rachel Miliacca	414-762-8755
Director of Music	Mrs. Lisa Hengst	
Choir Director	Mrs. Kathy Kolb	
Congregation President	Mr. Tony Mirenda	414-807-7445
Fax:	Church/School	414-762-8869
	ECC	414-856-9262

Pastor		<a href="mailto:pastor@graceoakcreek.org">pastor@graceoakcreek.org</a>
Church Office	Heidi Brunzelle, Church Secretary	<a href="mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org">church@graceoakcreek.org</a>
Principal		<a href="mailto:principal@graceoakcreek.org">principal@graceoakcreek.org</a>
School Office	Dena Guziewicz, Admin. Asst.	<a href="mailto:school@graceoakcreek.org">school@graceoakcreek.org</a>
ECC Director		<a href="mailto:eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org">eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org</a>
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