

Grace Lutheran Church, School, ECC

Oak Creek, Wisconsin
www.graceoakcreek.org

*Celebrate
Teach
Share*

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 22nd, 2024

"By His Grace you are saved through faith."
Ephesians 2:8



Image: "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days." (*Micah 5:2*)

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 "Preparing for the Promise Fulfilled"

The Advent season of preparing for the promised Savior to be born as one of us soon reaches its climax. Though in our homes and lives we may be wondering if we have done all we have needed to get ready for our own celebrations, we give thanks that at the center of our coming Christmas observations the Lord has prepared all we need. In this last Sunday of Advent and in the days ahead of anticipated Christmas joy, may we find peace in the preparations done freely for us out of grace, mercy, and perfect love centered on the Savior we soon welcome, who was born for us and all the world.

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 1, pg. 151

✠ PREPARATION ✠

Opening Hymn 343 Prepare the Royal Highway (vs. 1-4)

Stand

Confession and Absolution LSB 151

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 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. 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 (1 Samuel 2:1b, 2, 5b-7; antiphon: Luke 1:46b-47, read responsively)

My soul magni- | fies the Lord,*

and my spirit rejoices in God my | Savior.

My mouth derides my | enemies,*

because I rejoice in your sal- | vation.

There is none holy | like the LORD;*

there is none besides you; there is no rock | like our God.

The barren has borne | seven,*

but she who has many children | is forlorn.
The LORD kills and | brings to life;*
he brings down to Sheol and | raises up.
The LORD makes poor and | makes rich;*
he brings low and | he exalts.

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.

My soul magni- | fies the Lord,*
and my spirit rejoices in God my | Savior.

Kyrie LSB 152

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
C **Amen.**

During Advent the Hymn of Praise is omitted

Salutation and Collect of the Day LSB 156

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

P Let us pray. Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Old Testament Reading *Micah 5:2-5a*

(The coming King born in Bethlehem)

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. ⁵And he shall be their peace.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual (*Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt., read responsively*)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zion.*

Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | rusalem.

Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*

righteous and having sal- | vation.

Blessèd is he who comes in the name | of the Lord.*

From the house of the Lord we | bless you.

Epistle Lesson *Hebrews 10:5-10*

(Jesus comes to do God's will)

⁵When Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; ⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. ⁷Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'"

⁸When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Alleluia and Verse LSB 156

- C Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia Verse for the 4th Sunday in Advent—“*Alleluia. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel. Alleluia.*” (Matthew 1:23a)

Holy Gospel Luke 1:39-56

(Mary visits Elizabeth.)

- P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.
C Glory to You, O Lord.

³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

⁴⁶And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; ⁵²he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.” ⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

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

Apostles' Creed LSB 159

- 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 everlasting. Amen.

Sit

Children's Message "A Little Town" (Micah 5:2-5a) 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 354 Arise, O Christian People (vs. 1-4)

Sermon "Our Newborn King" (Micah 5:2-5a)

Offertory *LSB 159*

- C What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?
I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord.
I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.
I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,
in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

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. 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 160*

- 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, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. 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 161*

- C **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving *LSB 161*

- P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer *LSB 162*

- P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- 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 162*

- 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 163*

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

Agnus Dei LSB 163

- C Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

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 spiritual 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

-357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs. 1-7)

-348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns (vs. 1-4)

Stand

Thank the Lord LSB 164

- C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name.
He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

Post-Communion Collect *LSB 166*

- A Let us pray. Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever. We thank You for the new covenant You have established, given and shed in the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Grant that we live in Your loving presence, serve You humbly, and love You by our loving of others in Your grace. Amen.
- C Amen.

Benediction *LSB 166*

- 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.

Sit

Closing Hymn 352 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord (vs. 1-4)

Pastor: Go in Peace and Serve the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!!!



WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

For all who worship this day, bless us through your Word, O Lord. Tom Janes (healing & strength); Myles King (blood disorder); 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); 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); Scott (kidney failure); Jennifer (diagnosed with MS); Daniel Abelt (cancer); and Alyssa (healing & strength); Lori Jablonski (cancer) and Jessie Marshall (healing & strength) friend of Cathy Weeks; Steve Benzie (stomach pain, hernia); and Mike Zanardi (pancreatic cancer); Sharon McCaigue (cancer); and Cheryl (cancer) friend of Sharon Iseli; Carol Long (cancer) friend of Joy Lussier; and Blaine Goldner (kidney transplant surgery) friend of Carol Loveall; Sharon Iseli (healing); Mariya (cancer); Brooke Bzdawka (healing & strength) relative of Sharon Bzdawka; Jake (cancer) Grandson of Rose Adams; Terri (healing and strength) friend of Joy Lussier; John Loveall (bone cancer) brother in law of Carol Loveall; Cris Evers (healing & strength); Georgeanne (Parkinsons disease) friend of Sharon

Iseli; **Laura** (Lou Gehrig's Disease) friend of Jim & Janine Pieper; **Diane Krueger** (knee surgery); **Don Adams** (cancer) relative of Pauline Parker; **Larry Herte** (healing & strength); **Linda Stecker's Son in Law** (battling brain cancer); **Brennan** (motorcycle accident, healing & strength) friend of Greg & Gail Nowakowski; **Diane Poris** (medical tests); **Charlotte Klipfel** (upcoming surgery); **Gayle Stephen** (pancreatic cancer) cousin of Suzie Mirenda; **Martha Rowley** (healing & strength) Grandma of Mary Rowley; **Grace Miskimen** (cancer) sister of Beth Jackson; **Dale** (pancreatic cancer) brother of Joy Lussier; **Mary** (broken hip) friend of Joy Lussier; **Evan Kopperud** (hospitalized); **Barb Praxel** (healing & strength).

For our Homebound Members at Grace: Kathy Gaudian, Bernice Byklum, Art Steinborn, Patricia Groth, and Gloria Kilponen, Doc Medek, and Joanne Morgan.

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. **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 in 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 12/19 6:30pm</u>	<u>Sunday 12/22 8:00am</u>	<u>Sunday 12/22 10:30am</u>
<u>Elders</u>	Keith Goodle	Brandon Dachel	Greg Nowakowski
<u>Readers</u>	Connie Roettgen	Chris Evers	Martin Taggatz
<u>Communion Set-up</u>	Advent	Kathy and Morgan	Kathy and Morgan
<u>Linens</u>	Char Klipfel	Gail Nowakowski	Gail Nowakowski
<u>Acolyte</u>		Kiley Stecker	Brilee Simmons
<u>Ushers</u>	Keith Goodle	Bob Buzzell	Mike Huber
	Jim Robinson	Lynn Buzzell	Edward Taggatz
			Martin Taggatz
<u>Livestream</u>	Jennifer Olen	Glenn Dotson	

New Members Class on Sunday January 19th 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. I am looking to have the New Members Class on Sunday January 19th 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 child-care. Watch an introductory video at: www.lhm.org/GodConnects.

OUR GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL PANTHER NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX HERE AT CHURCH FOR ANY PARISHIONERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO PICK IT UP TO SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING AT OUR LUTHERAN SCHOOL...



Rosie Miliacca is sponsoring a Toy Drive through the Make a Wish Foundation of Wisconsin, you can see the toy drive box back in the narthex if you are interested in donating some toys to children in need this Holiday Season. There are instructions on what toys they are looking for as well. You can go to this website or scan the QR code below for the wish list: [https://wish.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/MAW-](https://wish.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/MAW-WI_ToyDrive24_Themes_Flyer_8-5x11_Winter.pdf)

WI_ToyDrive24_Themes_Flyer_8-5x11_Winter.pdf **The deadline for this toy drive is December 24th, Christmas Eve. Thank you for your toy donations for children in need!!!**

“Poinsettias for Christmas!”

Special thanks to those who placed poinsettias in the chancel area this year. Thank you for making our Church Sanctuary beautiful during the seasons of Advent & Christmas!!! God bless you all!!!

Greg and Gail Nowakowski

Sharon Russell

LeRoy Handle

Tony and Suzie Mirenda

Dawn Jantz

Mike and Barb Huber

Rick and Cathy Weeks

Leah Abelt

Lori Kachelmeier (In Honor/In Memory of Jim, Steve and her father Norman)

Bob and Gail Olen

Ron and Mary Savarino

Craig and Donna Marie Roush

David and Amy Pankow

Donna Smith

Mark and Jennifer Olen (In Honor/In Memory of Susan Olsen)

Sandy Hamburger (In Honor/In Memory of Del Hamburger)

Brandon and Tricia Dachel

Janice Barrett

Your 2025 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 2025.****

2025 Altar Flowers

- ❖ Sign-up for 2025 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 *"O Mitten tree, O Mitten tree Your branches are so bare and cold! O Mitten tree, O mitten tree Your branches are so bare and cold. We will fill you with hats and mittens! Wrap you with warmth and love. O mitten tree, O mitten tree Your branches are so bare and cold."* Thank you! -Ladies Guild. Once again this year, the Mitten Tree has been placed in the narthex. Guild will be collecting mittens, hats, scarves and gloves which will be donated to the South Milwaukee Human Concerns group. Please help us to *"decorate"* the tree! All sizes are needed! If you are a knitter or crocheter...Pauline Parker has bins of yarn to be used for this project...please reach out to her if you need some

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.

Grace Counter Volunteers Needed - We are looking for volunteers to be considered for training as counters and stand-by counters, beginning in January 2025. The counters work in pairs, so either individuals or a couple would be welcome. Each pair of counters is scheduled for one counting session per month that takes about 2 hours, usually on a Sunday after the late service, but the schedule can be very flexible. Complete training is provided, and newly assigned counters are scheduled with experienced people. This is an important process in our church's administration, and we welcome interested members. If you would like more information, please contact our Financial Secretary, Lori Kachelmeier at jlkachel2@gmail.com or 414-828-0290.

Substitute Wraparound Care Worker Needed at the Day School: We are in need of a substitute wraparound care worker at Grace from 6:30-8:05am or that can be available from 3:30-5:30pm, Monday through Friday. The pay for this position is \$15.00 an hour. If you are interested in helping out with this position in subbing on a routine basis, please contact our ECC Director Rachel Miliacca at: eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org or at 414-762-8755.

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.

Ladies Bible Study

Please join us on Wednesday mornings at Church at 9:30 a.m. We are studying, *"Flowing from the Cross: Six Facets of God's Forgiveness"* by Daniel Paavola. Join us!!! **Please note:** There will not be Ladies Bible Study on Wednesdays December 25th or January 1st. We will meet again on Wednesday January 8th...

Saturday January 18th - Fellowship Bingo - Our Fellowship Committee will once again have a Fellowship Bingo Night on Saturday January 18th. from 6:30-8:00. It will be a free night of fellowship, fun, food and prizes. We will ask that you bring finger food to pass and your own nonalcoholic beverages for your family. (We are not allowed to have alcoholic beverages on school property. This event is for all Church, School and ECC families. Keep the date saved and we will put more information out as the date gets closer. Upcoming Events--- On March 29th we will be having a Game Night. You will be able to bring your favorite board game to play. If you don't have a board game or you would like to play a game, you will be able to join in the games that we will have available. More information to follow. We will also have an Ice Cream Social in the summer. Keep watch for any other Events we will put out and more information will be following. **To register for this event, please go to:** <https://tinyurl.com/2xhy8kkf> A paper registration form is also available in the narthex.

2024 Advent Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

"Come, Let Us Adore Him"

It is true that God deserves our worship and praise for all that He has done for us. And in the birth of Jesus into our world, born to save us from our sins, born to give us eternal life—God has given us His very Best. To which we can only respond: *"Come, Let Us Adore Him!"* The events surrounding Jesus' birth—the prophecies foretold and fulfilled, the birth of John to point to Jesus, the divine way God guided Mary and Joseph, the preservation of Jesus' life from King Herod—all speak to God's intimate involvement in our salvation. This is the God we adore—the God who spared not His own Son but gave Him up for us all.

Daily Devotions from LHM will help strengthen and encourage your faith as you do the same for others. Have them delivered right to your inbox by going to this link: <https://www.lhm.org/newsroom/default.asp>. Perfect for personal reflection or to share with family, friends and congregations, these seasonal meditations will help prepare you to celebrate the true meaning of these seasons. We have copies of the Advent Devotions available for pick up in our church narthex, which will include our Holiday Worship Schedule that you can share with your neighbors, family, and friends to invite them to worship at Grace during the holiday season!!!



Holiday Worship Schedule for 2024

“The Nativity: Songs of God and Men”

Tuesday Dec. 24th 4pm, 5:30pm—Christmas Eve “The Song of the Angels” Luke 2:1–20

Wednesday Dec. 25th 9:30am—Christmas Day “Idols and Lies, Word and Flesh” John 1:1–18

Sunday December 29th 9:30am worship with Holy Communion

No Thursday evening worship on Thursday December 26th & Thursday January 2nd

Wednesday January 1st New Year’s Day Worship 6:30pm “Endings and Beginnings” Isaiah 51:4–6

Sunday January 5th The Epiphany of our Lord 8am & 10:30am Services “Soaked and Bloody: Our Lord and You” John 2:1–11

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. 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 in leading worship services at Willow Crest. We would also provide you with resources to help you lead worship services at Willow Crest. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Jeanne Meyer at: meyorch@sbcglobal.net or 414-719-2257 or Lori Kachelmeier at jlkachel2@gmail.com or 414-828-0290. You would also be able to shadow a current Willow Crest Worship Leader if you are wanting to learn more information about this ministry

Sunday Morning Bible Class from 9:15-10:15am in the School Library starting Sunday September 15th—Luke: *To All Nations*. (Please note: There will no Sunday morning Bible Class on Sunday December 29th, we will resume Bible Class again on Sunday January 5th) Luke's carefully written Gospel, compiled from both oral and written accounts, points to God's gracious salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. The peace that Christ has brought to the world enables us to break out in a liturgy of praise. The salvation story did not end with Christ's ascension, however; Christ's Church is called to go to "*all nations*"—men, women, children, the poor, the sick, and the disenfranchised—proclaiming the victory found only in Jesus Christ. We hope you can join us for our Adult Bible Class on Sunday mornings at Grace as we learn how Luke's Gospel speaks to us about:

- God's plan for bringing salvation to both Jew and Gentile;
- believers' unceasing joy upon hearing the Good News;
- the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life and in our own;
- the enduring value and importance of prayer.

“I don’t know what exactly you expect this Christmas. But I can tell you to set your expectations high as you listen to God’s Advent call. Listen to His promises. Look in the manger. And you’ll find hope and unity now and into eternity.” *Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org.* Hurting from abortion? Word of Hope can help. www.word-of-hope.org; 888-217-8679. Word of Hope can help. www.word-of-hope.org; 888-217-8679.

LUTHERAN HOUR "Does It Matter If Jesus Is God?" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. Jesus sets a good example, but good examples can't help dead people. Only God's Son can make us alive again. (Luke 2:10-11) The Lutheran Hour can be heard any time on the internet at: 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

IN THE WORD FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Catechism: Creed—Second Article

Verse of the week: John 1:14, “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*”

Psalm of the week: Psalm 111

Hymn of the week: LSB 382 “We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth”

Bible Readings for the Week:

Sunday—“Make Straight the Way of the Lord”—John 1:19-28

Monday— The Birth of Christ Is Foretold to Joseph—Matthew 1:18-25

Tuesday— Christmas Eve: The Nativity of Our Lord—Luke 2:1-20

Wednesday— Christmas Day: The Word Became Flesh—John 1:1-18

Thursday— St Stephen, Martyr—Acts 6:8– 7:2a, 51-60

Friday— St John, Apostle and Evangelist—John 21:20-25

Saturday— The Holy Innocents, Martyrs—Matthew 2:13-18

CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE GREATEST GIFT EVER GIVEN – GOD COMING TO EARTH IN THE FLESH TO SAVE US FROM OUR SINS!

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4).



Stewardship Minute

C. S. Lewis said, “He who has God and wealth has no more than he who has God alone.” In God’s Word we read that Christians are *“sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything”* (2 Corinthians 6:10). As Christians, we understand that true wealth does not consist of possessions but in being rich toward God. As believers, we may not have much in the ways of material things, but we have all we need in Jesus. May God grant us the attitude of Job who said, *“The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord”* (Job 1:21).

Financial Peace University at Grace Oak Creek!!!

Are you feeling the pinch from holiday shopping? Does your paycheck never seem to cover all the needs, let alone some of the wants? Would you like to be more generous in your giving to church and charity? If you answered yes to any of those questions, Financial Peace University is for you. It's a great way to learn how to make your money work for you, rather than constantly working for your money. Financial issues are one of today's biggest stressors, so spend a few Monday nights figuring out ways to save for your future. This class is led by Lisa Kamprath (a graduate and teacher of FPU) with guest appearances by her son, Nathan, who is a relationship banker with Chase. We'd love to help you thrive in 2025.

When: Sundays, January 5th-February 23rd

Where: Grace Lutheran School Building **Cost** \$20 (for workbook)

Questions: contact Lisa Kamprath at 414-659-0161.

To sign up for this course please go to: <https://tinyurl.com/39esdpek>

Growing in Grace – December 12th & 15th

General Offering	\$2658.00		
On-Line Giving	\$1094.60		
Mortgage Fund	\$0.00		
Missions	\$10.00	Total Attendance	38/80
Debt Fund	\$0.00	Total Communed	65
Sunday School	\$15.00		
Total	\$3777.60		

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	12/22	8:00 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Divine Worship Adult Bible Class Divine Worship
Monday	12/23	-----	-----
Tuesday	12/24	7:00 am 4:00 pm 5:30 pm	Men’s Bible Study and Breakfast (OC Diner) Christmas Eve Service Christmas Eve Service
Wednesday	12/25	9:30 am	Christmas Day Service
Thursday	12/26	-----	-----
Friday	12/27	-----	-----
Saturday	12/28	-----	-----
Sunday	12/29	9:30 am	Divine Worship – Pastor Klug

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) thewordendures.blogspot.com
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 ECC	414-762-8869 414-856-9262
Pastor		pastor@graceoakcreek.org
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Principal		principal@graceoakcreek.org
School Office	Dena Guziewicz, Admin. Asst.	school@graceoakcreek.org
ECC Director		eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org
ECC Office		ecc@graceoakcreek.org

Church & ECC

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School & Church Office

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