
December 2018

Grace Notes



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH • 7300 W DIVISION • RIVER FOREST IL 60305 • 708-366-6900 • WWW.GRACERIVERFOREST.ORG



Moving toward stillness

by Pastor Dave Lyle

The main lodge of the Bible camp I attended as a child was adorned by a framed cross-stitching that depicted two young children, a boy and a girl, sitting peacefully by a gently babbling brook. Underneath were the words “Be still and know that I am God.” These words, from Psalm 46:10, have always evoked that image for me and with it, stillness and peace.

I was a bit surprised, therefore, when I began reading the psalms as a teenager and discovered the context in which these words were uttered. The mountains were shaking and the

waters were roaring. The nations were in an uproar as spears and bows were lifted in violence. I began to understand that these words were not from a pretty, pastoral scene. They were the words of the Lord of hosts crying out in a loud voice: “Be still! Know that I am God!”

**Sit still. Be quiet and listen.
Be with God as God
comes to be with you.**

As we enter into Advent this year, we have much more on our hearts and minds than the standard seasonal busyness (although that hasn’t gone away). Violence continues to rage, although guns have replaced spears. Nations are in an uproar; our nation

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Moving toward God, who moves toward us

Continued from page 1

and our community rage with hate and bigotry. The earth revolts against our poor stewardship with fire and flame. It is all so overwhelming. And in the midst of it all we're supposed to get ready for Christmas?

Whether your stress and fear are driven by your December to-do list or your concern for our world (or, if you're like me, both), the first and best response is to stop. To sit still. To be quiet and listen. To be with God as God comes to be with you.

This year we will focus our Advent midweek worship services upon the stillness that is to be found in the God who both reigns over the chaos and – in the form of the Christ child – comes to join us in the chaos. Each Wednesday night service will give us the chance to make a move toward the God who moves toward us.

First, we move from busyness to stillness. We stop in the Lord's presence, for God is our refuge and strength. Next, we move from noise to quiet. We still our voices so that we can hear God's promises. Finally, we move from darkness to light, stepping forward into the new future that God is unfolding. (Read more about this service and our Wednesday evening services in Pastor Lauren's article on the next page.)

We will have one additional worship opportunity this Advent, as we gather for a Longest Night service on Friday, December 21, again watching for the light of God even on the darkest night of the year. Through these worship experiences, we are prepared by our God to welcome Jesus, born into this world's chaos and pain to bring life, joy, and peace.

And God does come. In the Son, born to Mary and laid in a manger. In our grief and fear to give us comfort and home. In our joy to celebrate with us. And, finally, to shout down the tumult and proclaim a lordship that will silence all others and reign with grace forever. It is here, in God's promises, that we find our hope. This Advent, let's find our hope together in worship at Grace. Come, and be still!



Grace Notes is published monthly by Grace Lutheran Church and School, 7300 Division St., River Forest, Ill. It is mailed to Grace members, parents of students at Grace School, and friends of the congregation. The newsletter is online at www.graceriverforest.org. This issue was mailed via U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail on Friday, November 30, with the hope that it will arrive in your mailbox no later than December 7. Copies are also available at Grace.

Deadlines and submissions. The January issue of Grace Notes will be mailed on Friday, January 4. The deadline for copy is Wednesday, December 26; the issue covers events through early February. Send news to ggotsch@graceriverforest.org. Please limit your submissions to news relating to Grace Lutheran Church and School, its mission, ministries, and the benevolences the congregation supports. Articles should be no longer than 500 words. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and relevance.

Advent midweek worship: Be still!



On Wednesday evenings during Advent, we will continue our tradition of sharing a meal at 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. As dinner winds down, we will gather for worship near the Fellowship Hall doors, carrying lighted candles and singing the opening versicles of Evening Prayer. We will then travel together to the sanctuary with our candles, where we will find seats in the pews and continue with Evening Prayer.

If you can't make it to the meal but desire to join us for worship at 7 p.m., you may either come to Fellowship Hall for the opening of worship, or come directly to the sanctuary. If you do not feel comfortable walking from Fellowship Hall to the sanctuary with the assembly, please feel free to simply take a seat in the sanctuary. (If the sanctuary is empty when you arrive at 7 p.m., rest assured that the assembly will be joining you shortly.)

Our Advent midweek liturgy will include the Word for the day, read and proclaimed. You are then invited to explore the Word and the theme for each Wednesday through various means: an interactive station in the sanctuary with meditative prompts, quiet meditation time in your pew, and written reflection in blank space provided in your bulletin. All three of these options will be available each Wednesday evening during the reflection time.

We hope that this year's Advent midweek worship will enrich reflection and prayer in the midst of busy lives and schedules. Maybe you'll choose to do the same reflection offering each week, or maybe you'll try something different each week.

Regardless, we look forward to worshipping together as we wait for the One who calls us to be still!

Pastor Lauren Wegner



Longest Night worship service Friday, December 21 at 7pm

Sometimes the holidays don't feel merry or bright. Losing someone we love, living through difficult life transitions, or finding ourselves feeling emotionally sensitive for reasons we may not even understand can make us feel a bit out of place during holiday seasons. Our Longest Night worship service on December 21 at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary is for all who may be feeling weighed down this Advent season and for anyone who wishes to join us for prayer and worship on this night. Through the gifts of scripture, prayer, meditation, and song, we will together mark this night and the feelings and burdens we carry with us. Most of all, we will gather to hear the promises of Jesus Christ for all of us--no matter how we feel this holiday season.

I will lift up my eyes to the hills.
From whence does my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1-2



ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education classes meet at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Classes are led by Grace members as well as guest speakers. If you have ideas or suggestions for Adult Ed programming, please contact Ted Anton of the Adult Education Committee (tanton@depaul.edu) or Pastor Dave Wegner (dwegner@graceriverforest.org).

December 2

“Putting Christ Back into Christmas”

Ellie Schnack and Connie Zyer

All too often, Christmas is a commercial whirlwind of online shopping, crowded stores, and shortened tempers. Ellie Schnack and Connie Zyer offer some simple, profound and fun ways to remind children and adults alike of the spiritual and Lutheran sides of America's biggest holiday.

December 9

“The Crisis of Biblical Illiteracy”

Timothy Larsen, PhD, McManis Professor of Christian Thought at Wheaton College

This session will explore the high and pervasive level of biblical literacy that was once a part of our national culture. The Bible was the common cultural currency for all Americans, an essential touchstone for thought and expression. Politicians, poets, social reformers - everyone - evoked scripture in order to

communicate in resonant, powerful, persuasive, and effective ways. This session will then go on to examine our current level of biblical illiteracy as a society and reflect on how this impoverishes our culture as a whole.

December 16

“Religion Books of 2018”

Elizabeth Palmer, Book Review Editor, The Christian Century

Elizabeth Palmer will talk about her work and the important books in religion published in the past year.

Sunday Bible Study

Led by Bob Jandeska, the Bible study group meets on Sunday mornings at 9:45 in the Conference Room on the lower level.

Books for Advent reflection and anticipation

In Advent we prepare for the coming of Jesus through prayer, reflection, anticipation, and hope. While the world rushes to Christmas as soon as the turkey is out of the oven, Christians around the world use these darkening December days to give thanks for the star's growing light on the horizon of our lives. Here are some resources from the Church Library to shepherd your Advent journey. *Pastor Dave Wegner*

These books and others will be on display in the atrium bookcase and in the library in December. You can search the library collection online. Go to GraceRiverForest.org > Welcome > Learn and scroll down to the bottom of the page for the catalog link.

Names for the Messiah: An Advent Study, by Walter Brueggemann. Westminster John Knox Press, 2016. [232 BRU]

God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Westminster John Knox Press, 2010. [242 BON]

Celebrate Jesus! at Christmas: Family Devotions for Advent through Epiphany, by Kimberly Ingalls Reese. Concordia, 2000. [242 REE]

Rise up, Shepherd! Advent Reflections on the Spirituals, by Luke A. Powery. Westminster John Knox Press, 2017. [242 POW]

Preparing for Jesus: Meditations on the Coming of Christmas, Advent, Christmas and the Kingdom, by Walter Wangerin, Jr. Zondervan, 1999. [242 WAN]

In the Bleak Midwinter: Forty Meditations and Prayers for Advent and Christmas, by Herbert Brokering. Augsburg Books, 2008. [242.33 BRO]

Unto Us Is Born: Christmas Conversations with the Mother of Jesus, by Herbert Brokering. Augsburg, 1999. [242.33 BRO]

Christmas with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, ed. Manfred Weber. Augsburg Books, 2005. [263 BON]

Wintersong: Christmas Readings, by Madeline L'Engle. Harold Shaw Pub, 1996. [810.8 LEN]

The library is open and staffed on Sunday mornings. Stop by for a cookie or for suggestions on what to read. The library is also open for self-service during the week.

Advent and Christmas Season Worship



Sunday, December 2, 8:30 and 11 a.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Jeremiah 33:14-16, Psalm 25:1-10, I Thessalonians 3:9-13,
Luke 21:25-36

Sunday, December 9, 8:30 and 11 a.m.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79, Philippians 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6

Sunday, December 16, 8:30 and 11 a.m.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Zephaniah 3:14-20, Isaiah 12:2-6, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

Sunday, December 23, 8:30 and 11 a.m.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55, Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45

Monday, December 24

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD: CHRISTMAS EVE

4:15 and 6:00 p.m.

Lessons and carols
led by the children of Grace

8 p.m.

Holy Communion

10:45 p.m. (Music at 10:30)

Candlelight Holy Communion

Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20

Tuesday, December 25

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD: CHRISTMAS DAY

10 a.m., Holy Communion

Isaiah 52:7-10, Psalm 98, Hebrews 1:1-12, John 1:1-14

Sunday, December 30, 8:30 and 11 a.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

I Samuel 2:18-20, 26, Psalm 148, Colossians 3:12-17,
Luke 2:41-52

Monday, December 31, 7 p.m., Holy Communion

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13, Psalm 8, Revelation 21:1-6a,
Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday, January 1, 10 a.m., Holy Communion

NAME OF JESUS — NEW YEAR'S DAY

Numbers 6:22-27, Psalm 8, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:15-21

Sunday, January 6

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

ONE SERVICE of Holy Communion at 10 a.m.

Bach Cantata *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen*, BWV 65

They will all come forth out of Sheba

Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12,
Matthew 2:1-11

Creative Epiphany Star activities for children and
adults of all ages in the atrium from 9 to 9:45 a.m.

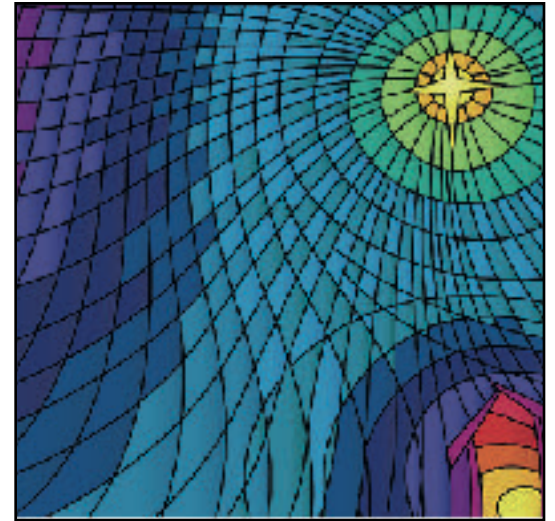
Music at the Advent/Christmas concert on December 16 includes prayers for peace

*Come now, O Prince of Peace, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.*

The annual Advent/Christmas concert at Grace at 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 16, focuses on the theme of peace. “As we celebrate the gift of the Christ Child during this season, we do so in a world desperately crying out for the redemption that God will ultimately bring on the Last Day,” writes Pastor Michael Costello in a program note. “We pray for the return of the one who is named Prince of Peace.”

The concert includes Pastor Costello’s setting of the prayer attributed to Francis of Assisi “Lord, Make Us Instruments of Your Peace” as well as Gerald Finzi’s “In Terra Pax,” a 1954 work for soprano and baritone soloists, chorus and orchestra. Finzi’s composition combines St. Luke’s account of the angels’ appearance to the shepherds with a poem by Robert Bridges, “Noel: Christmas Eve, 1913.” The singer imagines the angels’ song, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men,” sung over the present-day English countryside.

Other music on the program includes Paul Bouman’s setting of the Robert Herrick poem “What Sweeter Music,” a new setting of “The First Noel” by Carl Schalk, John Rutter’s “Carol of the Children” sung by the 5–8 choir of Grace School, Catalonian carols sung by Joyful Voices, and music from the Grace Handbell Choir. A reception follows the concert in Fellowship Hall.



Handbells ring in concert on Sunday, Dec. 23



The Sunday morning handbell concert is back this year! Come to Fellowship Hall on December 23, 9:45 a.m. for music of the season presented by the 6th–8th graders of the Grace Lutheran School Strike Team and the adults in the Grace Handbell Choir, directed by Lisa Wolfanger.

Thank you from Paul Bouman

Whew! My birthday turned out to be a big one, one fully as memorable as I can handle.

Before the big day arrived I was frequently asked, “How are you going to celebrate your big day?” It turned out that others in various places had been working on that same question.

On that day, August 26, the single service was scheduled for 10 a.m. to clear the day for a picnic for the children. Great! That gave me the idea of a “picnic” of song celebration that might compare with any I have ever

attended. Michael Costello then prepared a musical treat that ranks with the best Grace Church has experienced (I venture to say). The congregational liturgy and hymn singing was glorious — a reminder of how good at that our congregation is. The choir was magnificent! My heart leaped with joy throughout the service thanks to their fine efforts. Alleluia! Pastor Lyle’s sermon was excellent, an example of the thoughtful preaching Grace has always experienced.

I am deeply grateful for the care and kindness I receive from all of my dear friends at Grace, and I am speechless with gratitude for the support people have given to Grace in my name. Support for the cantata series is particularly close to my heart — the realization of a dream. Thank you and God bless you all.



Photo by Lucy Bouman

Come to the Christmas lunch, Dec. 12

Monthly Cornerstone lunches are a long-standing part of the hospitality tradition at Grace Lutheran Church and School — especially the festive Christmas luncheon!

Cornerstone lunches began in the 1980s (not the early 1990s, as reported last month in Grace Notes). Kathryn Jandeska, who originated the lunches along with Wendy Will, recalls:

The original program consisted of planning and serving lunches during the Wednesdays of Advent and Lent for our “cornerstones.” [The name Cornerstone referred to the age of the retirees who gathered on Wednesday mornings — folks who had been alive when the Grace Church cornerstone was laid in 1929.] At that time, it was only a luncheon, not also Bible study.

The special Christmas luncheon has taken different forms over the years, including many years as a Grace Women’s Society



Christmas luncheon
served by the Cornerstones cooks

Wednesday, December 12, 11:30 a.m.
Morning Prayer for Advent, followed by Christmas music from the Grace School orchestra and choirs.
Then a special lunch in Fellowship Hall.
All are invited—seniors, Grace members, parents of the performers, guests, everyone!

event. Christmas music from the school children has often been part of the celebration.

If you’re free during the day on December 12, come for worship at 11:30 then stay for the music and lunch. There will be great food and even some Christmas cookies to take home!



Cookies needed for the Cookie Walk on Dec. 14

Women @ Grace need dozens and dozens of homemade Christmas cookies, candies and treats for the Cookie Walk between services on Sunday, December 16, and for the reception following the Advent/Christmas concert later that day. Please drop off your cookies in the warming kitchen by the gym on Saturday, December 15, 9 a.m.–12 p.m., or on Sunday, December 16, before 9:30 a.m.

Come to the Cookie Walk on Sunday morning, December 16! For just \$10 you can wander among tables of scrumptious cookies of all shapes and sizes, and fill a box with the ones you find most tempting. Proceeds from the cookie sale will benefit Lutheran Disaster Response.

Save the date for “Bold Women”

Saturday, February 2, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., at Grace

All women, young and old, single and married, are invited to the Women’s Retreat sponsored by Women @ Grace. Pastor Phyllis Kersten and Louise Williams will lead Bible study and discussion on the topic “Bold Women” for women from Grace Church and Harmony Community Church.

The \$20 registration fee includes a continental breakfast and a soup and salad lunch. Registration starts soon, online or at the Grace reception desk.

Advent Thankoffering

The Stewardship Committee invites you to respond to the many ways God has blessed your life in 2018 with an Advent Thankoffering gift to Grace Lutheran Church. Let your gift reflect your gratitude for the fullness of God's grace which is freely given to us. Watch for a letter from Pastor Lyle and the Stewardship Committee and use the enclosed envelope to make your Advent Thankoffering gift. Or simply write Advent Thankoffering on the memo line of your check. You can also give online at GraceRiverForest.org

The end of the tax year on December 31 may mean that there are financial reasons for considering an extra gift to Grace of appreciated stock or other assets or an IRA distribution. If you'd like to know more about these possibilities, please contact Jim McClanahan, Director of Administration and Finance (708-366-6900, ext. 202; jmccclanahan@graceriverforest.org).

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Grace Lutheran Church General Fund

Church budgeted contributions

July 1 – November 30, 2018 \$ 899,800
(\$40,900 per week)

Church actual contributions

July 1 – November 30, 2018 \$ 561,000
(Last year at this time: \$ 566,000)

Church giving is \$338,000 below budget and \$5,000 behind last year.

Fašiangy celebration at Grace benefits the CCE in Martin, Slovakia

In Slovakia, the traditional time of pre-Lenten merriment, partying and rich food is known as *fašiangy* (fosh-ee-ON-gee), similar to the German *Fasching* or Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Grace's annual benefit for the Center for Christian Education (CCE) in Martin, Slovakia, will celebrate this season of carnival on Saturday, January 26, with food, music and fun, bringing warmth and light to the cold days of winter.

The CCE operates a Lutheran preschool, elementary and high school in Martin, sharing the good news of Jesus with young people whose parents grew up under communism with no religious education. This year marks the 20th year of ministry for the CCE, and the high school graduated its first class in May. The people of Grace Church and School have shared many connections with the CCE over the years, hosting exchange students and traveling to Slovakia in the summer to teach in the Vacation Bible School.

The dinner begins with a cash bar at 5:30, with dinner at 6:30. There's also a silent auction. Special guests from the CCE will talk about their work and entertain with Slovak music. Tickets (\$50/person; \$400 for a table of 8) are available online at GraceRiverForest.org.

2019 Slovakia Mission Trip

June 27 — July 9, 2019

More volunteers are needed to teach Vacation Bible School at the Center for Christian Education. You don't have to be an experienced teacher. Just come and share the good news of Jesus Christ as you meet and work with new people. Look for the brochure at the reception desk at Grace or contact Julie Modrich for more information (jmodrich@graceriverforest.org; 708-366-6900 ext. 229).



Do you recognize these four young women from the CCE's first high school graduating class? Left to right, they are Barbora Sopoligová, Júlia Ozaniaková, Maria Simova, and Terezia Kucbelova. They came to Grace as exchange students in the summer of 2015 and attended the ELCA Youth Gathering with our youth. They are now pursuing college studies in the United States, England, and the Czech Republic.

Benefit Dinner for the Center for Christian Education in Martin, Slovakia

January 26, Fellowship Hall
5:30 p.m., Cocktails, 6:30 p.m., Dinner
\$50/person \$400/table of 8

Tickets at GraceRiverForest.org

Manage stress, eat well to stay healthy during the Christmas season

Tips from Grace Church's Health Cabinet

Managing holiday stress

Emotional stress, both positive and negative, can have an effect on our health. The upcoming holiday season is a time for joy and celebration of Christ's birth. However, it can also be a time of stress.

- Sometimes a break in tradition is needed to make things go smoother and more enjoyably. Take time to set priorities, re-think gift giving, and schedule time for yourself.
- If buying gifts is making you anxious, ask people what they want, shop early, and stick to a budget.
- If you find yourself becoming overwhelmed, you can take care of yourself by engaging in relaxing activities, exercising, and limiting alcohol intake.
- Set priorities by deciding what traditions are important to you, and who you want to spend time with. Remember, the holidays are a time to connect with others and rekindle relationships.

Bryan Bernard, Ph.D

Healthy eating for the holidays

The American Heart Association states that 18 percent of people say it is hard for them to eat in a healthy manner because they don't want to stop eating their favorite foods around the holidays. Many of my patients seem resigned to the fact that they are going to gain weight over the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year holidays. I want to share some tips that may help you make it through the holiday season with your weight relatively intact!

Set priorities by deciding what traditions are important to you, and who you want to spend time with.

- Eat a healthy snack prior to going to a party. The likelihood of overeating is lower if you go to a party with some nutritious food in your system and you are not starving.
- Contribute a healthy dish to the party. There will probably be plenty of higher-calorie food present, so if you bring something, at least there will be a healthy dish you can eat.
- Carry sugar-free mints to eat when you feel you have had enough to eat, as this will help stop you from eating more.
- Try to put more low-calorie items and smaller amounts of the higher-calorie foods on your plate.
 - Try your hardest to continue to work out at least two times a week.
 - Watch the amount of food you are putting on your plate and try to eat slowly. Taking a sip of water after each bite can be helpful to cut down on how much you are eating.
- Avoid excessive alcohol intake. Try to alternate a glass of alcohol with a glass of water. One beer is roughly 140 calories and one 5-ounce glass of wine is 100 calories.
- Pay attention when you eat. The likelihood of eating more occurs when you are distracted and not paying attention to how much you are eating. This can occur when talking at a party, watching TV or sitting in front of your computer.
- Use technology! There are several apps that can be used to help track what you eat. Some acceptable apps include MyFitnessPal, MyPlate Calorie Tracker, My Diet Coach, Mango Health, and Lose It.

I hope that some of these tips can be useful to you during this upcoming holiday season!

Leslie Steuwen, M. D.

Social Ministry collections for Christmas giving

Giving Tree/Mitten Tree

Social Ministry's Mitten Tree welcomes decorations of gloves, mittens, hats and scarves for children in need. Bring your donations to the atrium beginning December 9.

Toiletries collection

The toiletries collection for stockings for The Night Ministry runs through December 9. Needed are items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, wide-toothed combs, hand and foot warmers, warm socks (adult size), small sewing kits, pens and small note pads, and decks of cards. These will be distributed to homeless teens who are clients of The Night Ministry in Chicago. Grace School children are also participating in this project. Their recent pizza lunch raised funds to buy items for stockings. Grace students will fill them, assembly-line style, later this month.

GRACE NEWS

KNITTING/CROCHETING GROUP will not meet in December. The knitting group will be back at their stitchery on January 15 at 1 p.m. in the church library. Beginners are welcome.

LECTIO DIVINA meets next on Monday, January 28, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the church library. Contact MaryBeth Buschmann for more information (marybeth1942@sbcglobal.net).

RETIRED LEADERS AND OTHERS meet on Tuesday, December 11, at 10 a.m., in the Church Library. Carl Schalk and Jill Baumgartner are the presenters. Guests are welcome.

GRACE NOTES MAILING CREW will be at work on the January newsletter on Thursday, January 3, at 9:30 a.m. They welcome more helpers.

CORNERSTONES fellowship and Bible study meets on Wednesdays, December 5, 12, and 19, in the church library, with treats and conversation at 10 and Bible study with the pastors at 10:30. Advent Morning Prayer follows at 11:30 a.m. There is lunch on December 5 and 12. Festivities on December 12 include music by Grace School choirs and orchestra. Cornerstones will not meet on December 26 and January 2.

RELIGION IN LITERATURE. The book group meets next on Friday, December 21, at 8 p.m. for a reading of W. H. Auden's "For the Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio." Jill Baumgaertner will lead the discussion. Copies of the poem are available at the reception desk. Hosts are Barbara Hofmaier and David Heim, 210 S. Elmwood Ave., Oak Park. All are welcome.

YOGA, taught by Ackli Howell, meets on Thursday evenings, 6:30–7:30 p.m., December 6 and 13, in Fellowship Hall. Newcomers are welcome! Bring a mat and a towel (preferably a beach towel), and wear comfortable clothing. Call Ackli if you have questions (708-366-4487).

MOMS OF LITTLES. The Moms of Littles group meets for a Christmas Brunch on Saturday, December 8, from 10 a.m.–1 p.m., at the home of Ali Carris, 1117 Thomas Ave, Forest Park. Please bring a dish/treat/beverage to share. All are welcome! Contact Pastor Lauren for more information (lwegner@gracriverforest.org).

SANDWICH-MAKING AT FRATERNITÉ. Grace members will be making lunches at Fraternité Notre Dame, 502 N. Central, on Monday, December 17, at 7 p.m. Contact Kate Hogenson with questions or to arrange a ride (hogenson@msn.com; 708-445-9687).

CHRISTMAS CAMP

Saturday, December 15, 9am-12pm

For children age 4 through 4th grade

\$10 per child or \$25 per family

Register at GraceRiverForest.org by December 12.

Fun for kids!

A chance for parents to get things done!

PRAYERS

WE PRAY FOR all who mourn the death of Evelyn Chizzo, daughter of Sara and Andy, sister of Natalie, Audrey and Vera.

PRAYER LIST. The weekly Prayer List can be found in the worship bulletin on Sunday. Contact Karen Christopher (kchristopher@gracriverforest.org; 708-366-6900 ext 207) to be included on the published prayer list.

PRAYER CHAIN. Contact Kathy Lucht (kathy.lucht@gmail.com) or Kathy Garness (708-366-7584; KMGfinearts@comcast.net) with

BAPTISMS

WE CELEBRATE with those who will be baptized:

December 23 — Adeline Poppy Ewert, daughter of Danielle and Mark Ewert, granddaughter of Tom and Grazyna Ewert, who will be baptized on December 23.

December 30 — Hunter Bunetta, son of Kelsey and Michael Bunetta, grandson of Henry and Bonnie Becker.

December 30 — Frida Salinas-Lazarski, daughter of Elyssa and Derek Salinas-Lazarski, granddaughter of Jill Johnson.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Donate flowers to remember a loved one or commemorate a special birthday or anniversary. Use the sign-up sheet at the reception desk in the atrium. .

December 16 — from Michael and Diana Sicuro in honor of the birth of granddaughter Sophia Edie Sicuro.

Thanksgiving Day — The mums in the chancel on Thanksgiving Day were given in loving memory of Walter, Maxine, and Nancy Christopher by their family.

PASTORS' EMERGENCY PHONE

Call 708-689-3032 for emergency pastoral care on weekends, or when the Grace building is closed.

Eighth grade students explore learning environment design with the professionals



Students and teachers from Grace participated in an unusual field trip on Thursday, November 1. They traveled to the Palmer House hotel in downtown Chicago to a conference sponsored by the Association for Learning Environments, where they participated in a session titled “Tapping into the Creative Potential of Teachers and Students as Designers.”

The architects and designers participating in the session worked in small groups with Grace eighth-graders to brainstorm redesign ideas for learning spaces in our building. The goal was to learn how to engage students and teachers in the design process. They are important stakeholders in questions about learning environments, yet they are often left out of the design process.

Discussions focused on four spaces: the gym mezzanine, the Learning Media Center, the third-floor school commons, and the handbell rehearsal room. Principal Bill Koehne, eighth-grade teacher and handbell director Lisa Wolfanger, and learning-media specialist Christa Holm also participated in the process. Students took the lead in presenting their ideas to the whole group.

“We were blown away by your students’ poise, creativity and public speaking skills!” said Julie Baeb, one of the session leaders, in a follow-up email to Mr. Koehne. She works on the design team at the Minnetonka Public Schools in Minnesota and is a former member of Grace Church.



News from Grace Lutheran School (GLS)

Gift cards purchased through Scrip benefit Grace Lutheran School. Great Lakes Scrip Center offers gift cards from over 600 retailers, who donate 1.25 to 50% of the value back to the school. Order forms are available at the school office desk or online at GraceRiverForest.org > School > Parent Resources > Scrip gift cards. Submit your Scrip order form by December 10 to Eileen Maggio in the school office, with payment by cash or check. Cards will be delivered in time for Christmas.

Academic competitions. Fourteen students from GLS competed in teams at a science competition at Walther Christian Academy on November 13. Students built a rocket that took off using force created by a chemical reaction. The team of Sophia Augustine, Eunice Ho, and Anna Scholtens took 2nd place. In December Grace students will compete in the annual Scholastic Bowl at Walther in math, science, and social studies.

Boys volleyball takes 2nd in state. Grace boys finished second after a tough battle in the championship match at the Lutheran Sports Association State Volleyball Tournament. Eighth-graders Gabe Becerra and Emmanuel Matel-Sanchez were named to the all-state team.

**First Look Fridays
at Grace Lutheran School**

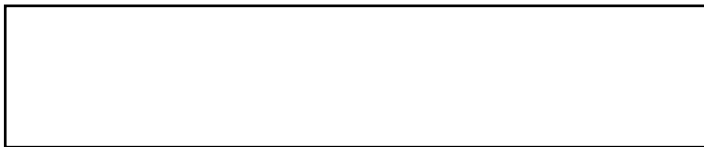
Drop by for a tour!

**January 18, February 15
8:30–10:30am**



**Come, O Prince of Peace
 Advent/Christmas Concert
 Sunday, December 16, 4 p.m.**

**Choirs and handbells of
 Grace Lutheran Church and School**



7300 Division St.
 River Forest, IL 60305

**GRACE
 LUTHERAN CHURCH
 & SCHOOL**

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