



From the Pastor,

There is a word being used these days from Bishop Maas to Prepare/Enrich premarital material to Thrivent. The word is gratitude. The Rev. Robert Schuler from the Glass Cathedral preached and wrote about having an “attitude of gratitude” way before it has now become a proper term.

When we are grateful or thankful our whole attitude about God, others, and ourselves changes. We become more generous with God without time and money. When we focus our reasons to be thankful for our spouse in our lives and not focus on their faults our short comings, we can be more forgiving towards them and overlook the tiny irritations we may feel towards them at times. When we realize that God has been generous with us through the Son, we can live generously with and towards others.

November 25 the country celebrated a Day of Thanksgiving. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas charities try to contact people because at this time of year people appear to be more generous with giving to others through charities. Being grateful at Thanksgiving and anticipating being generous to family at Christmas leads to the willingness to help others.

The Church Season of Advent is a preparatory time in the church to prepare the building for the celebration of Christmas and for the members to prepare their hearts to receive the generous gift from God of the Son from heaven to earth as a child of a human being. God made human. The Son leaving His place and power in heaven to be human for the sake of humans. On Christmas the Son is born and seven days later his name Jesus becomes official.

Jesus is the Son of God. On Christmas day we receive God’s generous gift to us. On Good Friday, Jesus gives us the generous gift of His Life and thus the forgiveness of sins.

Let us spend the Church Year of 2021-2022 looking for God’s generosity in our lives and then discover ways to be generous to God through God’s Church and by being generous to others.

Merry Christmas,  
Pastor Jim



If you would like to bring a **Poinsettia** to share with the church, you can bring them at any time. If the poinsettia is in memory or honor of someone, please add that information to the sheet at the back of the church. Be sure to label your poinsettia with your name for when you come to pick it up.



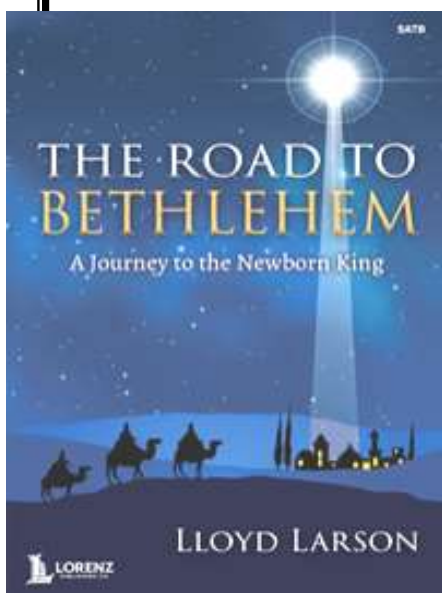
The Community Cantata will present  
**The Road to Bethlehem**

on Sunday,  
December 19th at  
7:00 p.m.

Coffee, Snacks  
& Fellowship will  
follow.

**Church** members  
joining in the  
Cantata are  
Faith Lutheran  
Church, Talmage;

Osage United Church of Christ &  
Grace Lutheran Church, Cook.



## **Children's Christmas** **Program**

Christmas Program **Practice** will be held during  
the Sunday School hour at 9:30 a.m.

**The Sunday School Christmas Program**  
will be held on **December 12<sup>th</sup>** during the  
**8:30 a.m.** Worship service at Grace Lutheran.  
This service will be followed by a  
**Birthday Party for Jesus.**

## **Christmas Eve Candlelight**

Worship at Grace Lutheran with  
Communion is Scheduled for  
Friday **December 24<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church

Offering has been designated to go to Lutheran family Services

## **Grace Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday, January 16, 2022**

Grace Lutheran Church will hold its Annual  
Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 16,  
2022 following worship services. Worship time will  
be changed to 10:00 a.m.

Annual Meeting Reports should be turned in by the  
27th of December.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/1-Jeramy Bridgmon

12/6-Shayla Thompson

12/9-Kenneth Rosenthal

12/10-Kathy Helgren

12/11-Jody Bruns

12/14-Chris Weber

12/15-James Armknecht

Morgan Smith-O'Connor

Lisa Weber

12/16-Crytal Haake

12-20- Adeline Perkins

12/21-Ashlei McDonald

12/22-Amelia Walters

12/25-Jesus Christ Our Lord

12/26- Julie Effken

12/27-Melanie Bailey

12/30-Shari Siepelmeier

## December Anniversaries

December 8 - Keith & Eunice Weber

December 27 - Larry & Colleen Naber

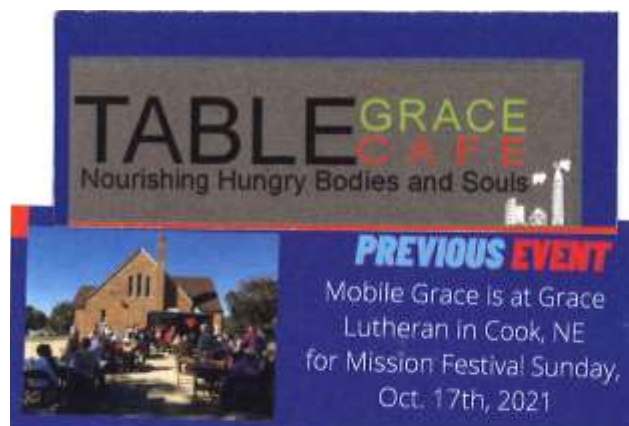
Our sympathy to Shari Siepelmeier and her family as her mother, Charlene (Hesterman) Schafer of Morongo Valley, California, passed away November 15.



Our heartfelt prayers and sympathy to the families of

**Delbert Peters.**

Delbert passed away November 23rd - 21 days away from becoming 80 years old. His funeral was held at Grace Lutheran on November 27th.



Thank you to our members who gave financially or filled a Thanksgiving bag for the Tecumseh Ministerial Assoc. Thanksgiving Project. The goal was to fill a total of 70 bags that were distributed through SENCA in Tecumseh.





### Historic Board

Presiding Bishop of the ELCA Bishop Eaton has been elected as vice-president of the National Council of Churches. The 2021 board of the NCC has made history through the election of women to all five positions. Three are women of color.

### Nebraska Synod Bishop Election

Bishop Brian Maas announced November 22, that he would not fulfill his entire six year term as bishop. His term will end August 31, 2022. At that time he will accept a call as Vice President for Mission and Spiritual Care at Immanuel. He chose this date so the Nebraska Synod has time to hold election of bishop during the 2022 Nebraska Annual Synod Assembly. This will allow the new bishop elect to transition into office with no need for interim bishop.

## **THE Tanzania Scholarship PROJECT**

Grace Lutheran again this year is sponsoring—The **Tanzania Scholarship Project**. This project sponsors orphans so they can attend a Christian high school. Primary schools in Tanzania are free but secondary schools have fees. Our scholarship students attend one of eleven Lutheran High Schools in northern Tanzania, East Africa. The scholarship for one year of tuition, boarding, uniforms, and school supplies is \$450. In the past fourteen years of this project we have witnessed God working through his people. ***We have made a difference!***

There are many orphans in Tanzania who have no parents due to motor accidents, malaria, or other illness. This is leaving many orphans who go to live with extended families. These families do not have the money to pay the orphan's secondary school fees. Without a scholarship, some of these orphans will have to leave school at a young age and fend for themselves. These students are very thankful for the opportunity that the project provides.

In the past 3-4 years Grace has received donations to sponsor 3 orphans. Your contribution is tax deductible. 100% of your donation goes to your orphan's education! *Donations towards this project should be designated on your offering envelope and then one check will be sent to Sheridan Lutheran in Lincoln. These donations must be in NO LATER than December 28<sup>th</sup>.*

We will receive the name of our orphan, a picture, and a letter from our orphan. Sheridan Lutheran has members who travel to Tanzania and visit the schools. We are encouraged to write letters to the orphan(s) that we are sponsoring. They collect letters from sponsors in January and September and deliver those letters directly to the schools via Sheridan Lutheran missionaries.

**Church Seasons:** There are two church seasons in December. The first is Advent. The first four Sundays in December are part of Advent. It is a time to prepare the building for the Christmas Season as well as prepare our hearts to receive the Christ Child on Christmas morn. The Nativity of Our Lord is December 25 and the beginning of the Christmas Season which runs through January 5th. The twelve days of Christmas is the official time to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Son of God.

**Church Festival Days:**

- December 20 - Katharina von Borra Luther, renew of the Church, died 1552
- December 21 - Thomas, Apostle
- December 24 - Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Eve
- December 25 - Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day
- December 26 - St. Stephens, Deacon & Martyr
- December 27 - St. John, Apostle & Evangelist
- December 28 - The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

**U.S Holidays**

- December 21 - Winter Begins
- December 24 - Christmas Eve
- December 25 - Santa Arrives
- December 31 - New Year's Eve

# December 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 5 <b>8:30 am Worship w/ Communion</b>	6	7	1 Confirmation 4:00 p.m.	2	3	4
	12 <b>8:30 am Worship w/ Sunday School</b> Christmas Program Birthday Party for Jesus to follow	13 Bible Study 1:30 p.m.	8 Confirmation 4:00 p.m.	9	10	11
19 <b>8:30 am Worship w/ Communion</b> NO Sunday School 7:00 pm Community Cantata Presentation Fellowship to follow in the basement	20	14 Church Council 7:00 p.m.	15 Confirmation 4:00 p.m.	16	17	18
26 <b>8:30 am Worship</b> NO Sunday School	27 Annual Report Articles & Tower Echoes Deadline	21	22	23	24 <b>CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 5:00 pm @HOPE 7:00 pm @ GRACE</b>	25  <b>REJOICE</b> <i>Christ Is Born</i>

**Grace Lutheran Church Council**  
**16 November 2021**

Grace Lutheran Church Council met 16 November 2021. The meeting was called to order by Paul Wilken. Pastor Jim Helgren started the meeting with a prayer. Council members present were: Paul Wilken, Amber Beard, Bret Wellensiek, Erin Ebeler Rolf, and Kate Dietz. Also in attendance were: Pastor Jim Helgren and Diane Wilken, church secretary/treasurer. Absent was Tucker Drake.

Erin Ebeler Rolf made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 2021 meeting. Bret Wellensiek seconded. Motion carried.

The financial report was reviewed. Bret Wellensiek made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Kate Dietz seconded. Motion carried.

**Pastor Helgren's Monthly Report:**

- Ministered a wedding and two funerals since last meeting
- Good Sam's visit will be November 18<sup>th</sup>
- November 21<sup>st</sup> for ELCW Thankoffering
- Thanksgiving Eve Service will be held November 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at Hope
- Sunday School Program will be December 12<sup>th</sup> during the Sunday Service
- December 22<sup>nd</sup> Pastor will have off due to a family wedding
- December 24<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Eve Worship will be held at Hope at 5:00 pm and Grace at 7:00 pm (candle light service)
- Held several October visits
- Lent 2022 – We will participate (Round Robin)
- Ash Wednesday is March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

**Correspondence:**

- Table Grace placed a photo of the Mission Fest/Food Truck @ Grace Lutheran on a mailing
- Bill: Damme Appliance for an oven heating element in the church basement
- Bill: Southeast Plumbing corrected an issue with the disposal at the Parsonage
- Letter from the Nebraska Synod: 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (hoping to raise \$150,000 by the Synod Assembly by June 4, 2022)

**Committee Reports:**

**Property committee: Council – Bret Wellensiek:**

- ◇ Sidewalks – still waiting
- ◇ Parsonage window – still waiting
- ◇ Trees – planning on replanting three
- ◇ Council will schedule a time to do a walk-through of the Parsonage
- ◇ Snow Removal was discussed
- ◇ Emergency Exit lights were purchased and installed for the sanctuary

Worship, Evangelism, Music & Fellowship: Council – Erin Ebeler Rolf:

- ◇ COVID Report – Nebraska is higher than national average
- ◇ Technological Error occurred November 14, 2021 for the online service (this was resolved)

Parish Ed & Young People: Council – Amber Beard:

- ◇ Sunday School Program – stated above
- ◇ Fundraiser (movie with drinks and treats at the Cook Community Building for the youth) – went well and was well received
- ◇ Planning to have a soup luncheon following the 2022 Annual Meeting

Stewardship & Memorial: Council – Kate Dietz:

- ◇ GLC Pastor Plaque went back to get some updates

Other Business:

Old Business:

Cluster Meeting was held 11/14 with Synod leader – for the cluster churches with options for the future.

New Business:

- Service/Communion
- Noisy Coin Offering Designation for November to Tanzanian Scholarship
- Christmas Eve Service Offering to Lutheran Family Services (Motioned by Bret Wellensiek, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kate Dietz, Motion carried)
- Budget for 2022 was briefly reviewed
- Audit Committee – needed
- Annual Meeting – January 16, 2022, at 10:00 am (need reports by December 27, 2021)
- Christmas decorating will be done before November 28, 2021
- Set up for candlelight service December 19, 2021 after church
- Pastor Review

Next Meeting will be 14 December 2021 at 7PM

Meeting was adjourned by Paul Wilken and the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amber L. Beard

#### UPDATES

*Please be sure to **send in any updates** (new addresses, phone numbers, email address, etc.) **for all family members on the Church membership list, and for the ELCW Yearbook.** **Please let us know if you or someone you know is not receiving the Tower Echoes and would like to - we would like you to be on the list, either mail or by email.***

~~~~~  
Please contact Rich or  
Joyce Roesener (financial  
Secretaries) if you need a  
RECEIPT FOR Offerings GIVEN  
to Grace Lutheran for 2021  
~~~~~



## Grace Lutheran Church

306 N. First St.

P.O. Box 96

Cook, NE 68329



Church Office: 402-864-4201

Pastor Jim Helgren: 402-864-2113

Church Email: [grace68329@gmail.com](mailto:grace68329@gmail.com)