



From the Pastor,

January 12 at Grace we handed out star words to the congregation. I have also handed out words to those not in attendance that Sunday. If you have not received your word please pick one up from the table at the back of the church.

This is an opportunity to have a word to help you focus on for the year. Use it in your prayer life. Put it somewhere where you will see it daily. Mine is on my desk and at this moment it is covered up by my newsletter article.

The Synod monthly themes are also a tool to help us in our prayer life and in contemplating how we can live our lives more Christlike everyday this year. My challenges on January 5 was for us to be more Christlike every day this year. The affirmation of Baptism service I used on January 12 was a way to remember we are baptized by affirming our Baptism and promising to live out our baptismal promises everyday or so to say be Christlike daily.

Tools can help us have little epiphanies. These tools like the bible can only be helpful if they are used. So our challenge this year is to be more Christlike by using the tools provided by God, our church and the Nebraska Synod. Enjoy growing in faith by living as a child of God. I will uncover my word when I finish this article.

Pastor Jim

**Church Seasons:** The Church Season of Time After Epiphany continues through February. It is a season of following God's light in a dark world. Finding God in ordinary things. To be curious as the Wise Men's curiosity led them to the baby in Bethlehem.

**Church Festival Days:**

February 2—Presentation of Our Lord

February 18—Martin Luther, renewer of the church died, 1546

**U.S. Holidays**

February 2—Groundhog Day

February 9—Super Bowl

February 14—Valentine's Day

February 17—President's Day

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1st—Mikaela Thomas

3rd—Prestin Thomas

5th—Eliot Bohling

6th—Bill Cropp

13th—Rachelle Grof

16th—Louis Bentzinger

18th— Charla Eggleston

20th—Devon Roesener

23rd—David Armknecht

27th—Ethan Bohling

29th—Diane Roesener

## FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

**14th**

Bill & Carolyn Cropp  
Bruce & Carol Armknecht

**26th**

Les & Kris Gerking

### *55th Wedding Anniversary*

*Please join us on celebrating  
Bill & Carolyn Cropp's  
55th Wedding Anniversary, on  
February 15th from 1-4 p.m. at  
the Cook Community Center with  
Cake & drinks.*

### Faith Forward

Faith Forward is offering the workshops once again. I attended the Grandparents and Triple-A-Adult zoom workshops in 2024 and felt they were very helpful. I do recommend them. I did not attend the parent workshop.

FF Grandparents Zoom workshop—February 16—6:00—7:15 p.m.

FF Triple-A-Adult Zoom workshop—February 20 or 23—6:00-7:15 p.m.

Parent Zoom workshop—March 2—6:00—7:15 p.m.

### Cultivating Love...

The February theme is Cultivating Love through Epiphanies. We are in the church season of Epiphany, that time when we discover God working in our lives. It is the aha moment when the light bulb goes on above your head and you suddenly understand something or realize something. My sister at 72 has been diagnosed to be on the Autism spectrum. Aha! This diagnosis explained my entire life with my sister. I now understand some of the clashes we had together as well as the daily clashes she had with mom. And the ongoing clashes she has with staff at the Assisted Living facility where she lives. These epiphanies can help us be at peace and forgive one another and live out our call to be children of God.



# February 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>During the month of February we will be collecting Socks, underwear &amp; mittens/ gloves for men, women and children to be given to the People's City Mission</b>						
2 8:30 am Worship w/ Communion 9:30 am Sunday School	3	4 Piecemakers Blanket Making All Day	5 8th Grade Confirmation 6:00 p.m.	6	7	8
9 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Sunday School	10 Bible Study 2:00 p.m.	11 Piecemakers Blanket Making All Day	12 Kids for Christ 4:00 pm 8th Grade Confirmation 6:00 p.m.	13 ELCW Meeting 7:00 p.m.	14	15 
16 8:30 am Worship w/ Communion 9:30 am Sunday School Faith Forward Grandparent Zoom Workshop —6:00 p.m.	17 Church Council 7:00 p.m.	18 Piecemakers Blanket Making All Day	19 8th Grade Confirmation 6:00 p.m.	20	21	22
23 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Sunday School Faith Forward Triple-A-Adults (mentor) Zoom Workshop—6:00 p.m.	24	25 Piecemakers Blanket Making All Day	26 Kids for Christ 4:00 pm 8th Grade Confirmation 6:00 p.m.	27	28	

# Grace Lutheran Church

## January 15, 2025

The regular meeting of the Grace Lutheran Church Council was called to order by President Bret Wellensiek at 7:00 pm. Pastor Helgren led with an opening prayer. Present were Sarah Purcell, Robin Eggleston, Bret Wellensiek, Jody Wellensiek, Cheryl Grundman & Pastor Helgren.

Minutes of the December meeting were reviewed. Cheryl Grundman motioned to accept the minutes, Sarah Purcell second. Minutes approved.

**The Treasurer's report** was reviewed. Sarah motioned to accept the treasurer's report. Robin Eggleston second, motion carried.

### **Pastor's report:**

Visitation conducted with congregation shut-in's.  
Funeral Garry Carman – Hope.  
Will be writing articles of Chieftain for February and October.  
SS Program, Community Cantata and Candlelight Service conducted for Christmas.  
Orchard Park services will be changed to 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday.  
Confirmation scheduled for 2/16/25 for Kaiden Dorn. Council approved.  
Faith Forward Bags will be distributed to parents and grandparents.  
Confirmation will be limited to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students only beginning 1/29/25.  
New office chair purchased.

**Correspondence reviewed:** Brotherhood Mutual

### **Committee Reports –**

**Property** - Light replaced in sanctuary.

**Worship, Evangelism, Music & Fellowship** – Old hymnals discussed, members encouraged to take a green hymnal home with name. Recycle opportunities reviewed.

**Parish Ed & young people** – Sunday School has resumed regular schedule, Kids for Christ is back from Christmas break.

**Stewardship & Memorial** – Wilken name plate ordered for memorial board.

### **Old Business**

Worship Duty schedule reviewed – council members signed up – will encourage members to sign up.

Annual meeting and Potluck – council will provide meat and buns and members encouraged to bring a dish.

Retirement Discussion – Pastor Helgren plans retirement in 18 months. Bret visited with Synod and they will require we complete a congregational profile before we can form a call committee. Bret will present at annual meeting and recruit members to help with completing profile.

### **New Business**

Christmas Decorations

Insurance Coverage

Lenten services – Ash Wednesday at Grace, Maundy Thursday at Hope, Good Friday at Grace. Wednesday services alternate weekly.

Pastor doesn't plan on participating in a round robin.

Other Topics – Book Study Synod Council, Greg Burger

Next meeting – Will be scheduled following annual meeting with new council members.

Meeting adjourned with Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jody Wellensiek

# **Annual Meeting Minutes– Grace Lutheran Church**

## **January 19, 2025**

Annual meeting of Grace Lutheran called to order at 11:10 am by President Bret Wellensiek. Pastor Helgren opened the meeting with Prayer.

Annual reports distributed – 32 voting members signed the attendance register.

Secretary's report from January 2024 was reviewed. Jody Bruns motioned to accept, Joyce Roesener 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Minutes approved as presented.

The following reports were reviewed from the annual report:

Pastors' Report

Statistical Report

Council President Report

Treasurer's Report

Report of Benevolence Giving.

Budget Reports

Financial Secretary Report

Sunday School Report

Kids for Christ

Memorial and Stewardship

Worship & Evangelism

75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report

Audit Report read into the record: Carl Purcell and Jody Bruns reviewed the 2024 Financial Documents and found no discrepancies. The books are in good order.

ELCW Report

Women's Report

Unfinished Business –

Cluster meeting. Grace will pay cluster dues as the cluster is now ready to receive funds again.

75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Thank-you to everyone who helped with the anniversary celebration. Round of applause from members.

New Business

President Bret Wellensiek reviewed that Pastor Helgren has scheduled his retirement, explained the Call Process and Synod Conversations. The Synod has indicated that we will need to do homework and Build our Resume before we are ready for the call process. Erin Ebeler and Nick Weber volunteered to begin the resume' process.

Eleta Eisenhower brought up that she felt the Helgren's should be allowed to stay in the community of Cook and the Council needs to communicate this message to the Synod.

President Wellensiek requested discussion on the number of council members. Jody Bruns motioned that council numbers stay at 5. Gene Ekhoft 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion carried.

President Wellensiek reviewed the following members were going off council – Bret Wellensiek, Cheryl Grundman and Sarah Purcell are finishing their current terms, Bret is unable to serve another term due to term limits. Robin Eggleston and Jody Wellensiek will have another year on their term. Volunteers or nominations requested. Cheryl and Sarah indicated they would serve another term. Council will call those names presented.

Kate Dietz motioned to close nominations, Rich Roesener 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried.

Election of Delegates for Synod Convention – May 30, 31 and June 1, 2025. Gene and Diane Ekhoﬀ volunteered to attend.

Financial Secretary – Rich and Joyce Roesener indicated they will serve another term. Jody Bruns motioned nominations cease, Robin Eggleston 2<sup>nd</sup>; motioned carried.

Sunday School Superintendent – Bret and Melissa Wellensiek are willing to continue. Dean Wellensiek motioned nominations cease and Kate Dietz 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Budget for 2025 presented. Floor opened for questions.

Jody Bruns brought up how “**Benevolence**” is determined. Pastor provided the following clarification: *Benevolence - those funds that are designated on the offering envelopes, checks or authorization forms to go to Benevolence. If not designated by the member it goes to Current Expense.* Our congregation does not send a percentage of total offering as some congregations may. For special services the Council will designate a specific cause or organization to receive those funds. Those are listed as Designated Benevolence giving on the annual report.

Rich Roesener motioned to accept the budget as presented. Nick Weber 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion approved. Membership Roster presented.

The green hymnals are available for anyone to take home.

Question asked regarding Pastor’s discretionary fund. The fund currently contains \$109. No members are currently contributing to this fund. Pastor can use these funds to help a family with an immediate need – for example unpaid utility bills, need for transportation funds. Any member can designate their offering to this fund if wanted.

Alta Bohling thanked Bret for his years of service on council.

Alta Bohling moved to close the meeting, Diane Ekhoﬀ 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jody Wellensiek, secretary

## **Grace Lutheran Church Council Reorganization meeting – January 26, 2025**

Council members were installed during worship service.

Robin Eggleston and Jody Wellensiek – 1 year term remaining.

Mike Carman, Cheryl Grundman and Sarah Purcell – 2 year terms.

Election of Officers as follows:

Cheryl Grundman - elected president.

Robin Eggleston – vice president

Jody Wellensiek, secretary.

Next meeting scheduled - Monday, February 17, 2025 at 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Jody Wellensiek



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underwear & mittens/gloves for men, women and children to be  
given to the People's City Mission**







## *Grace Lutheran Church*

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