

Rejoice Exceedingly with Great Joy

With tips in hand from the priests and scribes in Jerusalem that the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, the magi went off in search of the newborn king. But they must have wondered if they had been duped. Perhaps they were on a wild goose chase and nothing was going to come of their diligent searching. But then the star stopped. It stopped where the child was, and Matthew 2:10 records one of my favorite Christmas scriptures: *“When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.”* Jesus does just that. He causes us to rejoice exceedingly with great joy. And unlike the magi, we do not have to search very hard to find Him or to find reasons to rejoice. When we have the honor of serving Him, this should cause us to rejoice exceedingly with great joy. When we see Him at work in our ministry as we Worship, Grow, and Engage, this should cause us to rejoice exceedingly with great joy. When we see one of the students in our school receive the wonderful gift of adoption into God’s family through the waters of baptism, of course this causes us to rejoice exceedingly with great joy. As we witness God’s faithfulness in our lives of discipleship and witness God’s faithfulness in His steady work in our congregation, this provides us with reason to rejoice exceedingly with great joy. As we look forward to seeing what God will accomplish in us and through us, we can look forward rejoicing exceedingly with great joy. Here are some things that I am looking forward to.

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Master Plan Information Meetings

Our Master Plan Committee began working with Fuqua & Partners Architects over the summer and have continued to work with them this fall to develop a Master Plan for our campus that will best serve our ministry for years to come. We are excited to announce that those plans have progressed to a point where they are ready to be shared with the congregation. We will hold two identical presentation meetings in January. One will be held in the evening on **Wednesday, January 22nd**, and the other will take place in the afternoon on **Sunday, January 26th**. The committee is very much looking forward to sharing the plans and receiving feedback from the congregation as together we seek to honor God by being good stewards of the resources and the opportunities that He is placing before our ministry.

Christian Faith—Lutheran Perspective

God has recently blessed our congregation with many new faces, and we have been blessed as a congregation by the diversity of backgrounds that we have seen among our new members. We know that many of you have grown up Lutheran and know everything there is to know about the Lutheran Church (maybe not everything, but almost). But we also know that many others of you did not grow up Lutheran and may have questions about why we practice faith the way we do. You may be curious about the key beliefs and perspectives that make up a Lutheran Perspective on the Christian Faith. Pastor Andrew and I will be teaching a class in January that focuses on the key beliefs and doctrines of the Lutheran Church. For this first class, there will be a limit of 30 people. There is also a prerequisite for the class — you (or your significant other) must not have grown up Lutheran in order to participate. Don't worry there are plans to repeat this class in the future, but for this first session, we are limiting it to 30 people and focusing on those who do not have a Lutheran background. See the class announcement following the GROW section below for an outline of topics and the class sign-up link.

May God continue to bless you, your family, and all the ministries of Grace during this Advent season, and may we all look for opportunities to rejoice exceedingly with great joy.

In Christ,

Pastor Russ



“A Great Time to Be the Church”

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. -1 Peter 1:3-5

The former president of Concordia Seminary, Dale Meyer, has a saying he would remind us students of every time he got the opportunity. It was so popular that the seminary would make shirts with the seminary seal on the front and his quote on the back. Dr. Meyer would remind us over and over, “It’s a great time to be the church.” And he’s absolutely right. It is a truly great time to be the church.

The apostle Peter reminds the early church about how great a time it is to be the church. What a bold thing for Peter to say. The early days of the Christian church were challenging. Roman emperors did everything in their power to squash this new community of people following Jesus. But it was a great time to be the church! No matter what persecution the church was facing, there was a reality even more real and eternal that the church embraced fully. Jesus is Lord, resurrected and ascended, and he is seated on his throne in power and glory. He has given us an inheritance, that Peter describes as, “imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, and kept in heaven for you.” A great time to be the church! Persecutions may come, wicked rulers may seek to harm God’s people, but God’s reality cannot be shaken. You and I are given, “a living hope,” one that is renewed each and every day. As we begin our Advent walk to the manger, we wait, with all of God’s faithful people throughout time for that glorious day when our Lord will return, “for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” What a great time to be the church.

As a pastor, but especially as a Christian, I am encouraged by Dr. Meyer’s and Peter’s words. Because we have this living hope, we know that God is active in this community of believers and he is working in exciting ways. Because we have this inheritance that is imperishable, we are bold to share this inheritance with others. At Grace it is an especially exciting time to be the church as we Engage in service to our community. Here is what Engage has been up to lately:

The Balancing Act community recently partnered with the Huntsville Pregnancy Resource Center by doing a Serve Day. Serve Days are fantastic opportunities to Engage with the community through various projects. On this Serve Day, Balancing Act helped with landscaping and brightening up the campus. HPRC is very thankful for Balancing Act's act of Engaging in service, and we are excited to develop this partnership more. One of our Christmas Mission Offerings will be benefitting the work that HPRC is doing in Huntsville.

Grace Lutheran School is partnering with The Cottages. The Cottages is an assisted living home just down the road from Grace. We have been asked to help The Cottages with their Christmas celebration. Students will be working together to give Christmas gifts for their residents. This Engage opportunity is another relationship we look forward to building up!

January is just around the corner, which also means that LERT Training is coming up soon! We will be doing Basic LERT training here at Grace on January 10th. Basic LERT training is for those who have not been trained in disaster relief through the synod. LERT Chainsaw training will be held on January 11th. Only those who have been trained in Basic LERT will be allowed to take the chainsaw training. More information and sign-ups for either opportunity will be posted in the Church Center app and in the bulletin.

It truly is such an exciting time to be the church! May your Advent preparation be full of joyful waiting as we anticipate our Lord's return and as we continue to serve in his kingdom.

God's peace be with you,

-Pastor Andrew



PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

December 2024 Edition

November Highlights:

Veterans Day Celebration: To commemorate Veterans Day, the second grade put up flags around Grace's grounds. Caty Gilliam arranged a special assembly to help our students understand what Veterans Day is all about. During the event, veterans also came into the classrooms to share what it means to serve.



Tinsel Trail Tree: For the last two months, Grace's students have been busy making ornaments for our Tinsel Trail tree. Grace's tree can be found near the spring in Big Spring Park. Thank you to Mary Gover, Grace's art teacher, for taking the lead on this community involvement opportunity. We encourage you to visit the tree and see how the ornaments emphasize our school year theme of Endurance!



Coming Up:

Christmas Parade: The Parade Team has been working hard on getting the Grace float ready for this year's Christmas Parade. The parade is **Tuesday, December 3rd** with a **6:00 PM** kickoff. This year's theme of Christmas in Toyland is represented with a variety of traditional toys. We'll also have students and parents greeting parade-goers and wishing them a Merry Christmas.



Advent Service: The student-led Advent service will be **Wednesday, December 11th** at **6:30 PM** in the gym. The theme of GLORIA! reminds us of the Christmas Story. Come hear how the letters of "Gloria" symbolize God's Plan of Salvation. All of the classes will be performing, using song, band instruments, hand bells, and dance in our Advent worship. An Advent dinner will be held before the service, starting at **5:00 PM**. Come worship with us, giving God our Glorias.

God's Blessings,

Delaine Schiestel

CDC HAPPENINGS

December 2024 Edition

It's the holiday season at the CDC! One after the other, the holidays just keep coming. We can't wait for the biggest celebration of all this month! Merry Christmas! *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* -Isaiah 9:6

In November we got to celebrate Veteran's Day. We were blessed to be able to take a moment to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. Spoiled Rotten Photography was here to take Christmas pictures for those who signed up. The pictures turned out so cute! We will be able to report next month the total funds made from the picture orders that go directly to our CDC. We appreciate our partnership with Spoiled Rotten Photography! We ended the month of November with Thanksgiving. We were so excited to get to spend some much needed time with our families. We have so much to be thankful for every day!

Looking ahead: In December we will have an Usborne Book Fair. The kids and parents love this particular book fair. Many books are bought for Christmas gifts and many books are bought for our CDC. Our CDC loves new books! The CDC staff gets to have a night of fellowship and relaxing with painting, a meal, and an ornament exchange. We are looking forward to it! The teachers will also participate in a "Secret Santa" gifting game. **December 20th** is a big day for the CDC as our PS3 classes will sing in a Christmas program for their families. They have been working so hard and practicing multiple times a week so that the program is amazing. Santa will also be here in the CDC lobby from **2:30 PM - 4:30 PM** for pictures with the kids and to hear what they want for Christmas. We will be closing at **4:30 PM** that day so that our staff can get ready for the Grace Lutheran staff Christmas party. We can't wait! Most importantly, all month long, the CDC gets to celebrate the most important birthday in history! Happy Birthday Jesus!

Thanks be to God!

Jessica McGuire



Youth Activities



GROW - BIBLE STUDY TOPICS

December 2024 Edition



Bible Studies Topics – December 2024

Sunday Morning Children and Youth

- Infant—Pre-K (Church Nursery) – Exodus: Law and Life
- K—4th (Genesis Room) – Exodus: Law and Life
- 5th and 6th Grade (School Library) – Bible Characters: Jesus
- Confirmation (Room 106) – Catechism Topics
- High School (Youth Room) – Christmas Characters

Sunday Morning Communities

- Quarter Life Questers (Room 202) - Culture Conversations
- Figuring It Out (Room 203) – Living in the Daze of Deception
- Balancing Act (School Band Room) – Mere Christianity
- Tug of War (Room 204) – The End of Me
- Discovering Together (Room 209) – Upper Room Discourse

Sunday Morning Bible Studies

- From the Heart of Matthew (Cafeteria)
- The Power of God’s Names (Assembly Room)
- Bible for Non-Native English Speakers (Room 208) – Job

Bible Studies During the Week

- Digging Deeper (Wednesday at 6:30 PM in the Assembly Room) – Will meet again in January
- Women’s Bible Study (Monday at 1:00 PM in the Church Library) – Justification and Sanctification by Good News Magazine
- Women’s Bible Study (Tuesday at 9:30 AM in the Church Library) – Promised Rest by Michelle Diercks
- Men’s Bible Study (2nd Saturday at 7:30 AM in the School Cafeteria) – Facing Disaster Like a Man
- Ladies of Grace Circles (3rd Tuesday at 9:30 AM in the Church Library and Choir Room) - Topic Varies

GROW - NEW STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

December 2024 Edition

The Power of God's Names

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM". . . . The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.

This is my name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations."

Exodus 3:14-16.

The Israelites knew Moses couldn't lead them out of slavery by his own power and authority, but only through the power of the Lord revealing His name. This was all that Moses needed to know to respond in obedience. In this study we will explore the many names of God, as a single name is not sufficient to fully communicate His power and majesty. Our goal is to experience His presence more deeply, in a real and meaningful way, as we study the power of His names. June Kalange will lead the Bible Study on **Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM** in the **Assembly Room**.

Christian Faith - Lutheran Perspective

Led by Pastor Russ & Pastor Andrew

In Acts Chapter 11, Luke tells how the Gospel of Jesus Christ spread to Antioch. On hearing the news of the spread of the Gospel to Antioch and the way the Gospel was warmly received there, Saul and Barnabas went to Antioch (and spent a whole year there) to teach them the truth about Jesus. Luke then records that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. In our world today, there seems to be a link between the word "disciple" and doing certain things (action) and a link between the word "Christian" and believing certain things (understanding/thinking). In the early Christian Church, this distinction was not there. The Christian Faith is something we do, and it is something we believe. In this class we will explore the teachings of the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. It is designed for those who are new to Lutheranism. Therefore, in order to enroll either you or your spouse must not have grown up in a Lutheran setting. The class will be limited in number of participants, but we intend to repeat this class soon. If interested, please register to attend the class [here](#).

1/5 – Introduction | Faith Journey

1/12 – Reformation & LCMS Formation and Endurance

1/19 – Sola Sunday | Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura, Sulus Christus

1/26 – Justification | Sanctification | Vocation and 2KR

2/2 – Means of Grace

2/9 – WORD of God (Story of Everything)

2/16 – Baptism and Communion

2/23 – Confession and Absolution – Office of the Keys – Office of Public Ministry

3/2 – The Church

OUTREACH CONNECTIONS

December 2024 Edition



LOCAL MISSION ENGAGE CONNECTIONS

Grace Lutheran has developed a relationship with **McDonnell Elementary School** (4010 Binderton Place, Huntsville, AL 35805). We have been advocates for the school and open to responding to needs as they are shared with us. We are still stocking their Little Library with children’s books. The library has been moved nearer to the school building as it was knocked down twice recently. **We have a need for children’s books, activity books, and basic school supplies.** You can support this project by contributing gently used children’s books or providing such items as commercially wrapped individual snacks (examples: Cheez-It crackers, Lance sandwich crackers, Rice Krispy or granola bars). Books and school supplies along with food supplies may be placed in the chest in the church narthex. Thanks for your generous support as you respond in the love of Jesus.



First Stop encounters the homeless where they are, connects them to critical services and support, and empowers them toward independent sustainable living. So far this year, the First Stop team has successfully assisted 53 individuals from homelessness to independent, sustainable living. These are 53 people who are no longer living on the street but are sleeping in the safety and comfort of their own homes.

First Stop relies on volunteer support to provide hot meals twice a day at the temporary facility location – 2820 Governors Drive.

Volunteer Tips for providing meals:

- Meals should serve 80-100 people. Prepare food for 80 people! **3-4 servers** are needed to serve the meal.
- Provide food that is already prepared and only needs to be heated. No cooking, please.
- We serve Breakfast and Lunch, Monday through Friday. Breakfast meals are to delivered to **First Stop** by 7:45 AM and lunch meals by no later than 11:15 AM.
- Breakfast is served from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM.
- Lunch is served from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.



For more information, **contact Karen Davidson!**

OUTREACH CONNECTIONS

December 2024 Edition

ACTS Ministry



ACTS (Actively Caring, Tenderly Serving) Ministry has been redefined. We have a new email address which is **ACTS@gracelutheran-hsv.org** that can be used to volunteer to support **ACTS** activities or to request specific help/support. Please respond to let us know how you desire to participate and help this ministry on an occasional basis.

We now have five coordinators in place to support the ACTS Ministry via Grace Lutheran:

- **Pam Lowe** (Hospitality - Meal trains, potlucks, etc.)
- **Mairlyn Johnson** (Cards - Those ill or recovering/birthdays, etc.)
- **Kathy Cook** (Visits/Calls - Friendly calls, friendly visits)
- **Bill Duncan** (Transportation - Pickups and appointments)
- **Rusty Graves** (House/Yard Work - Technology help, lawn, repairs)

If you know of someone who can benefit, or if you have a particular need for yourself, let us know the need by calling the church office. Call and ask for extension **347** to leave your message. If calling after hours, please select option 7 and you can leave a voicemail.

Volunteer Support:

- Sending cards to homebound and those on our care list.
- Checking in by phone with individuals on our care list.
- Visiting those in need, primarily our homebound.
- Providing meals - Case by case, but normally for an illness or coping with a health condition.
- Errand/driving support - Pick up a prescription or groceries, take someone to a medical appointment.
- Helping someone with a technology equipment issue.
- Miscellaneous - Mowing a yard, shrubbery care, cleaning up a kitchen, or whatever a family member might need.

Help Request:

- I would appreciate a friendly visit.
- I have a need for meals.
- I need help with someone to pick up items (i.e. groceries or prescription).
- I need help to get to a medical appointment.
- I need help with upkeep of my lawn/shrubbery.
- I need help with technology use and equipment.
- I need help with a repair in my home (list): _____

It is our intent to share needs as they arise with the ACTS Ministry volunteers. You choose which activity you want to respond to and help!

Please join us in prayer as together we seek to care to serve one another sharing the love of Jesus!

CONNECT CARD – You are encouraged to invite a friend, neighbor, or work colleague to visit our church’s website at www.gracelutheran-hsv.org and complete a **CONNECT CARD**. The link is located on the lower part of the homepage. Persons completing the **CONNECT CARD** are added to our MailChimp list and receive the weekly e-mail from Pastor Russ with a link to our livestream worship service.

Serving Persons Via Facebook: Visit the **Grace Lutheran Ministries — Church & School** page on Facebook. Go to the page and “**LIKE**” the page (in the top section at the bottom left side of the cover page — not below the posted comment). Liking the Grace Lutheran page helps us to get information to your Facebook account!

CONNECTION GROUPS

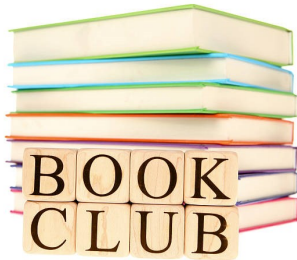
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ARE YOU CONNECTED?

Connection Groups (formerly called interest groups) are a means of “building bridges” to connect with others (unchurched or dechurched) in your neighborhood or our community. It’s about building a group around a similar interest (hobby, craft, fun activity, sport, or just about anything else under the sun). The goal is to help connect persons to Christ, the church, and the community. Dream the possibilities and then explore the opportunity to set up a group that meets at least on a bi-weekly basis. Of course, you can choose to take breaks in the schedule as needed for holidays/summer vacation, etc. Grace Lutheran’s vision is to grow in being passionate servants. Organizing or leading a connection group is a means of being a passionate servant. Have you ever thought that you can be instrumental in connecting others around interests as a means of serving God?

Want to start your own group? Contact Kathryn Bradshaw or the church office. Not in a group? We encourage you to join one of our existing groups.

Here is a listing of the current Connection Groups (Continued on next page)



The Christian Book Club meets in the church library at 10:00 AM on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, December 11th**, and we will be discussing *Fascinating Stories of Forgotten Lives* by Charles Swindoll. Our next read will be *Mrs. Budge Goes to Fountain City* (A Mildred Budge Christmas Story) by Daphne Simkins. If interested in attending, contact Karen Crout or the Church Office with any questions.

*Can't come to the Book Club? Books from our reading selections are also available in the church library. When you enter the library, go to the bookcase on the opposite wall (to the left of the window). You will find the books on the bottom two shelves. There is a sign indicating that these are Book Club books. **Feel free to take any of the books!***

The Sew 'n Sews meet on Mondays from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM in the Genesis Room.

We recently donated some hats, scarves, and coats to the Marshall County Sheriff’s Department for hurricane victims in North Carolina. Other donations included blankets, hats, bibs, and burp cloths for the National Child Advocacy Center, and lots of baby blankets went to the Huntsville Pregnancy Resource Center.

No special skills needed! Come and join us! Contact Harriett Kicklighter or the church office for more information.



CONNECTION GROUPS (PAGE 2)

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A Bridge Group meets once a month on the 4th Thursday except in November and December (meeting instead on the 3rd Thursday). This is party bridge – just for fun and friendship. If interested, contact Mary Jane Reumann or the church office for more information.

Friday Afternoon Golf is organized by Dennis Sierk and Phil Nelson. Time and place: The par 3 course at Hampton Cove every Friday afternoon. For more information, contact Dennis or Phil. Please note the following rules:

1. No score keeping.
2. If you don't like your shot, take another one.
3. If you don't like your lie, move it.
4. Refreshments in the clubhouse, afterward.



INTERESTED IN A LWML SMALL GROUP?

Peace Circle
 3rd Tuesday | 9am | Genesis Room
 Contact: pamjons1@bellsouth.net

Hope Circle
 3rd Tuesday | 9am | Church Library
 Contact: crout@juno.com

MITES COLLECTED ON 5TH SUNDAYS IN THE NARTHEX

SAINTS ALIVE

December 2024 Edition

Saints Alive is an adult organization within Grace Lutheran Ministries. The group is open to Grace Lutheran members and their friends. The organization hosts two activities each month on the first and third Wednesdays. Always sign up on the sheets on the narthex easel. There is a little change for the sign-up sheets going forward. There will be two sheets, one will be for those riding the bus and the other for those who are planning to drive themselves. This just makes it easier for us to keep track of when the bus is full.

Saints Alive Year In Review

Saints Alive participants have had a busy year. We have had fun, eaten well, and learned a lot of history during our twice monthly activities. Saints Alive is open to anyone who is interested in joining us for our adventures. Whenever we have an activity, we also go to lunch at a restaurant near our event. We would love to have you join us on some of our outings. Each of our activities is coordinated by a Saints member. Below you will find out about our many activities this past year.

We began the year in February with an outing to Wheeler Wildlife Refuge in Decatur to visit the whooping cranes that spend the winter at Wheeler. Then two weeks later we toured the new Back 40 Brewery here in Huntsville and learned about the beer brewing business. Still in February we hosted one of the Lenten dinners at church.

March brought us knowledge of meteorology thanks to Jordan Dressman, the weatherman at our local Fox TV station. We also took a trip to Scottsboro for a history lesson on the Scottsboro boys as we visited the Scottsboro Boys Museum.

In April we visited the Huntsville Museum of Art where we enjoyed the current art exhibit at that time. Later in the month we went to Tullahoma, TN, where we toured the Beechcraft Museum where we learned a lot about Beechcraft planes.

The warmer weather of May took us to two historical Huntsville activities. First we visited the Dallas Water Treatment Plant and learned about how the plant works to help us get our water and the history of drinking water in Huntsville. Later in the month Bob Wank gave us a bus tour of Huntsville history as we toured past many of the historic buildings in the city.

During June we took a trip to Pritchard's Distillery in Kelso, TN, where we learned about the making of rum and other alcoholic beverages. Two weeks later the group went to the Jesse Owens Museum in Danville, AL, where they learned about the history-making activities of Jesse Owens in the 1936 Olympic games.

In August there was a tour of the Historic Decatur Union Depot where we learned about the effect that the railroad has had on Decatur. Our next outing took us to the new Huntsville City Hall where we learned about the workings of our city government and saw the new art work that is on display in the building.

The next month we traveled just north of Huntsville to the Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Center. It is one of only a few agricultural research centers in Alabama. It is connected with Alabama A&M University. A few weeks later we went to Black Patch Distillery Co. in Madison where we learned about whiskey production.

In October we went to Noccalula Falls to see the Noccalula Princess Statue and also to Wills Creek Winery. There we learned about how the business got started and how they make their wine. Also that month we visited Constitution Hall Park here in Huntsville where we learned about life in 1819 when the Alabama Constitution was adopted.

Finally, in November we first traveled to Tuscumbia, AL, where we visited Belle Mont Mansion, one of Alabama's crowning architectural achievements. Following a tour of the mansion we went to Key Underwood Coon Dog Memorial Graveyard to visit the only such cemetery in the world. Two weeks later we were blessed to hear a presentation by Dennis Madsen, Huntsville's Manager of Urban & Long-Range Planning. He shared with us the many plans that are in the works for Huntsville in the next decade.

That brings us to December where we will enjoy a Christmas luncheon at Huntsville's Valley Hill Country Club with Pastor Andrew as our featured speaker.

So, you can see that there is a lot of activity for people who come to our outings. There is always a sign-up sheet in the narthex for folks to sign up to come with us on our trips. Please think about coming in the future.



We will have a planning meeting **January 8th at 10:00 AM** to plan the activities for the first six months of 2025. We welcome new ideas at that meeting. If you have ideas of places to visit in north Alabama or southern Tennessee, please come to share them.

We look forward to having folks join us for the fun, information, and fellowship of these activities. For any questions, contact Donna Behnken.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

December 2024 Edition



The Assignment of a Lifetime

By Merle Trich

Recently I heard someone proclaim that they had been given the “assignment of a lifetime,” and I began to wonder what that assignment was. I began to ponder the assignments I have had over the years; school, work, home, family... and decided none of them individually was an “assignment of a lifetime.”

God the Father gave Jesus the “assignment of a lifetime” here on earth. It began with His birth on Christmas to faithful humans. John 3:16-17 reminds us of the assignment... *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”*

Mary, Joseph, and the disciples entered into their assignments of a lifetime as they followed God’s plan for his Son, Jesus. Jesus told them, as recorded in Matthew 20:25-28, *“Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served to but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

So, what is our assignment of a lifetime? Ephesians 2:10 tells us, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* And in 1 Peter 4:10, we are told, *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”*

This Christmas, may we use the gifts we have received in Christ to love and serve others. May we remember to *“walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call - one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift.”* -Ephesians 4:1-7

May joy fill your Spirit as you complete your assignment of a lifetime on earth, and as you enter into heaven, may you hear *“well done, good and faithful servant.”*

Merry Christmas!

If you are struggling during the holidays, Stephen Ministers are available to help. A Stephen Minister will reflect and listen as you seek God’s grace and strength in your life. Or, if you are in search of ways to serve through Grief Share or Stephen Ministry and have any questions about either of these ministries at Grace, please contact Judy Zecher or Pastor Russ, to discuss your questions or desire to be assigned a Stephen Minister.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 2024 Edition

Midweek Advent Worship

Today is the first Sunday in Advent! Join us as we enter the season of anticipation and celebration of our Savior's birth and prepare our hearts for Him!

12/4 - *Hope for Today*
12/11 - Grace Lutheran School Program
12/18 - *Hope for Tomorrow*

There will be a pre-service meal from **5:30 PM - 6:30 PM** in the cafeteria, with the service beginning at **6:30 PM**. To accommodate the crowd for the school program, the meal will begin at **5:00 PM** in both the cafeteria and the Assembly Room.

Staff Gift

The tradition at Grace Lutheran, during the Christmas season, is to provide a staff gift to each of our faithful and dedicated employees for their extraordinary leadership to our members, students, parents, friends, and families. We request that you prayerfully consider donating towards this special gift for those who minister among us each and every day. We would like to receive your gift **no later than December 8th**. Please make your check payable to "**Grace Lutheran Church**" or "**Grace Lutheran School**" with the notation "**Staff Christmas Gift**." You may mail these gifts to the Church office, give them to any of the elders, or donate through the Grace online giving portal by clicking [here](#). Thank you for your consideration!

Volunteers Needed!



GLS Advent Service Assistance

We expect a large crowd for the GLS Advent service on **December 11th** and have many opportunities to serve. We need parking attendants, greeters, and help serving the meal. If you can help please sign up [here](#) or through the Church Center app.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 2024 Edition



Poinsettia Orders

If you would like to order poinsettias for the holidays, please do so by **December 22nd**. You can order by clicking [here](#), registering through the Church Center app, or by picking up a paper order form at the Welcome Center and placing it in the offering plate or bring it by the church office. Poinsettias can be taken home after the 10:45 AM service on **December 29th**, or you can pick them up anytime after that in the church narthex.

GLS Spirit Night
December 12th

 **All Day**

URBAN
· COOKHOUSE ·

Whitesburg Drive
Location

SAVE
the
DATE

VOTERS' ASSEMBLY MEETING
DECEMBER 15TH @ 12:00 PM

CONGREGATIONAL VOTE ON THE
RECOMMENDATION FROM THE GRACE
LUTHERAN SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
CALL COMMITTEE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 2024 Edition

Youth Christmas Party

The Youth in **grades 7th through 12th** are invited to the Youth Christmas Party. We will meet in the Youth Room from **6:00 PM - 8:00 PM** on **Sunday, December 15th**. We will have Christmas snacks and games. Each person needs to bring a wrapped gift under \$15 to exchange.



Christmas Mission Offering

Every year at Grace, we seek to bless a local mission organization and an international mission organization with a special gift to assist them as they carry out the important work that they do in the name of the Lord. This can be a great way to teach generosity to kids, by teaching/helping them give to the Mission Offering instead of being overly focused on what they will receive.

This year our local mission offering will go to **Huntsville Pregnancy Resource Center**, which empowers women and men to make confident and healthy life choices when facing pregnancy. Our international mission offering will go to **Child Beyond International**. You can give either by cash, check, or by selecting "Christmas Mission Offering" when you [give online](#). Christmas Mission offerings that are not designated either international or local will be split between the two 50/50. Please make your donations by **December 29th**.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 2024 Edition



*Christmas
Potluck Bruch*

Extended Fellowship Hour

DECEMBER 29
9 - 10:30 AM
GRACE FLC GYM

There will be no Sunday school or Bible Study on Dec. 29

Sign up to bring a breakfast finger food in the app or online

Grace LUTHERAN



Thrivent Action Grants

We would like to put together a list of people in our congregation who are able and willing to apply for Thrivent Action Grants. If you have an account with Thrivent, you can apply for 2 grants per year, up to \$250 a piece. These grants help support the various opportunities we have to share God's word with others. If you have not applied for one before, we can help walk you through the process. Please contact Jen Roettjer or Pam Lowe to have your name included on the list.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 2024 Edition

Upcoming LERT Training

A Basic Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) training class will be held at **Grace Lutheran Church** on **January 10th**. Participants will be introduced to the LCMS Disaster Response program, learn the basic nature of disasters, the opportunities to respond to personal needs, and how Lutherans can support families, congregations, and the public as the hands and feet of Jesus during a disaster. For those interested who complete the basic training class, there will be a LERT Chainsaw training class on **January 11th**. Look for more information and a sign-up link in the coming weeks!



Upcoming Discovering Grace Class

Are you thinking about membership at Grace Lutheran or seeking to grow in your discipleship of Jesus? Discovering Grace is a class that is designed for those wanting to learn more about our Church, School, and CDC, and learn more about our discipleship process – WORSHIP | GROW | ENGAGE. The next class will meet **Saturday, January 25th** from **9:00 AM - 12:00 PM** and on **Sunday, January 26th** during the Sunday School/Bible Class hour from **9:30 AM - 10:30 AM**. Register [here](#) or on the Grace Lutheran website.



GraceLand Capital Campaign Update

Thank you to all who have been supporting the GraceLand Capital Campaign since it began in April. During October we collected about **\$10,000.00** which brings the total collected for the first six months of the campaign to almost **\$230,000.00!** The more of the principal of our loan that we pay down during this period puts us in a better position to begin executing the stages of the Master Plan, which the committee will be working on in the months ahead. You can [give online](#) or by check with GraceLand Capital Campaign or GCC in the memo line.

Grace Lutheran Church & School

3321 South Memorial Parkway
Huntsville, AL 35801

Phone: 256-881-0552
Fax: 256-881-0563
E-mail: secretary@gracelutheran-hsv.org

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Sundays

8:00 AM

Blended Worship

1st & 2nd Sundays of the Month

Traditional Worship

3rd & 4th Sundays of the Month

10:45 AM

Contemporary Worship

Every Sunday

Communion

8:00 AM 1st & 3rd Sunday

10:45 AM 2nd & 4th Sunday

Check Us Out Online!
www.gracelutheran-hsv.org

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Associate Pastor.....Pastor Andrew Frerichs
Principal Delaine Schiestel
CDC Director..... Jessica McGuire
Director of Christian Education Jen Roettjer
Business Manager..... Laura Muelling
Properties Manager..... Jack Hengel
Event & Facility Coordinator..... Pam Lowe
Office Manager Kristin Haycock
Receptionist.....Laura Ohme

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