



January 2021

Graceful Greetings



JANUARY 2021 WORSHIP SERVICES

If you prefer to worship online, our services can be found on our website under the “Worship” tab & on our Facebook page or YouTube channel.



- Sun., Jan. 3—2nd Sunday of Christmas
- Sun., Jan. 10—Baptism of Our Lord Sunday
- Sun., Jan. 17—2nd Sunday of Epiphany
- Sun., Jan. 24—3rd Sunday of Epiphany
- Sun., Jan. 31—4th Sunday of Epiphany

Worship update:

Grace continues to pray for the day when our sanctuary is open for in-person worship! We pay close attention to the number of local cases and hospitalizations, and to the guidance given by the CDC, state of PA & Montgomery County. This guidance comes as a *recommendation* based upon what is considered safe; it is the choice of each church to comply or not.

The council addresses the situation each month at our meetings. If the situation should begin to significantly change prior to a meeting, we will happily call a meeting to discuss reopening plans. Remember, we are not “shut down” or “closed”. The people of Grace are worshipping online (and reaching new people that way!), and we are doing ministry in our community and world.

What can you do? Pray for the well-being of our world. Take precautions to keep one another safe (for you, for them, and for the overwhelmed staffs in hospitals). Get the vaccine when it becomes available. Be kind and patient and loving to each other – these are difficult times. The people of God can make them easier by imitating the love of Christ.

Stay well and continue to trust in the goodness of our God!



Please join us for our Annual Meeting! It will be held on Sunday, February 7th via zoom, (a link will be sent via email, in advance). Your input is important as we discuss ministries, mission, vision, budgets, and more. Reports will be available on our website on January 24th. If you do NOT have access to email and wish to receive a hard copy, you will need to notify the church office. Those copies may be picked up at the office on Sunday, January 24th, from 10am-11am.

Did you missed one of Grace’s Christmas services?

You can still access it by going to our website at www.gracelutheranroyersford.com

and clicking on our “worship archives” menu, under the “worship” tab or going to our YouTube channel at [gracelutheranroyersford!](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



Pastor's Points:

What should we say about 2020? There were many challenges as we all figured out new ways to work, go to school, maintain relationships, shop and dine, and so much more. Many said “good bye” to loved ones in heartbreaking ways. We struggled through deep political divisions and became more acutely aware of long-lasting social injustices. This has been hard.

Through it all, God has given us reassurance that we're not alone in this. Those glimpses of holiness have come through the many ways people have shown love, care, generosity, kindness, etc. to each other. These aren't accidental – this is God's grace breaking through our fears, sorrow & anger to offer hope. I am grateful to all who were a reflection of God to me this past year.

2021? Oh, gosh, I don't know. But I absolutely trust in our Lord and I feel hopeful! I leave you with this prayer from the Lutheran Book of Worship. *Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out, with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*



From The Deacon's Desk: The Year of Mark

This Advent we began the Liturgical Year that centers on Mark as the gospel text. I will admit up front that Mark is my favorite gospel (and no, it isn't just because it's the shortest!) I love the structure and story of Mark. I love the characters in Mark. I love how active and mysterious and human the Jesus in Mark is. I love the theme of servanthood. I love how bumbling the disciples are!

This year I'll be diving into Mark with both bible study groups and in my devotions. I challenge you to read along with us. To begin, try to read Mark in one sitting. It is a story that's richest when read at once. And it really isn't very long! But if you can't do that, read what you can and then follow along with the devotions. OR even better, come to one of our Zoom bible study groups on either Monday nights or Thursday mornings. In the meantime, here's a link to a great introductory video about the gospel. <https://bibleproject.com/explore/mark/>

Reflections for the New Year 2021 - Stewardship Committee

Our Consecration Sunday theme revealed our Abrahamic roots that hold the blessing of oneness with God. Jesus calls us to abide like him in our spiritual nature where God's spirit & our spirit are in open communication and we can receive the gifts of His spirit (1Corinthians 2:14-16).

At the start of a new year, many of us re-evaluate aspects of our lifestyle and choose healthier patterns of behavior for ourselves. It's a time of resolutions and recommitment. Building on our theme “blessed to be a blessing”, the new year offers opportunities to “live into” our spiritual identity in Christ. First, we receive the blessing and then live into the transforming power. Christ is the union of human & divine. We are called to follow that path.

In October 2020 we pledged our financial support to continue to participate in God's mission through Grace Church. But 1Peter 4:10 tells us WE can become the tithe—sharing the talents and gifts that are uniquely ours. It's the natural abundance that flows from the blessing. Whatever our skills or talent, God is the source. We have been fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). We have been blessed with these gifts to participate in the joy of honoring God and blessing others. Abundance is meant to be shared.

In 1Corinthians 12, Paul compares the body of Christ to a human body. Each of us unique but together we make the body complete—whole. What is your unique talent or skill that you offer to the body—to the world? Jesus has given us the basics in order to participate in the mind of God—to love the Lord and to love others as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40). And when we steward our talents to honor God and bless others, we are doing just that. New Years' blessings to all.

Check Out These Other Great Ways to Stay Connected

Conversation & Community (formerly Pub Theology) -

We've changed the name but the idea is the same! Pub Theology is now "Conversation & Community" to better give everyone an idea as to what we are all about. It is a time to gather in conversation with others from the congregation (and any friends we bring along), to build relationship even when we can't be together in a physical space. We will discuss events & topics relevant to our faith or to things going on in the world around us. **Our next Zoom gathering will be on Thurs., January 21st at 7:30pm.** Contact Deacon Allison at deaconallison12@gmail.com if you'd like a link or to be on a list of ongoing participants. (note: C&C is also making the change of moving to the third Thursday of the month. So, mark your calendars)!



Deacon Allison's Zoom Bible Study—Our Zoom Bible Studies continue at 7:30pm on Monday evenings and at 10:00am on Thursday mornings. Beginning January 4th & 7th, both groups will begin a study on the Gospel of Mark, as we enter the year of Mark in our lectionary. We'd love you to join us at one of these times! Contact deaconallison12@gmail.com for more information about this or our current studies.

Coffee Hour with Deacon Allison on Sundays at noon. Missing seeing your Grace friends? You don't have to! Join this zoom meeting just to chat and check in with one another. You'll be glad you did! Call church office for zoom link.



2 Facebook Live Opportunities —Join Deacon Allison on Fridays at 10:00am for a deeper dive into one of the week's devotionals. See our Facebook page for more details. Also, either Pastor Kraiss or Deacon Allison will lead Facebook Live prayer time on Sunday mornings at 11:00am.

Daily Devotions written by Deacon Allison. These are a beautiful and faithful way to begin your day with God. Find them on the Grace fb page, or go to <https://gracemorningdevotion.blogspot.com/>.



Mothers and Cake! Please accept your invitation to join in conversation with a warm and caring group of mothers full of life and faith on Sunday mornings at 9:30. This group of moms gathers by Zoom to spend some time encouraging & being encouraged. For information & the zoom link, please contact Jan Slack at mjkk13539@comcast.net.

Stay "connected" wherever you go! We're all over social media!!

Website: www.gracelutheranroyersford.com

YouTube Channel: [gracelutheranroyersford](https://www.youtube.com/gracelutheranroyersford)

Facebook search: Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Email: gracelutr@verizon.net

Instagram search: [grace.lutheran.royersford](https://www.instagram.com/grace.lutheran.royersford)

Twitter search: [@gracelutheran12](https://twitter.com/gracelutheran12)

After many years of faithful, dedicated service, Ken Slack retired on December 31st, as our Property Manager. We wish Ken & Jan the best as they prepare for this next time of life. Join us for a zoom **Retirement party for Ken on Sun., January 17th at noon.** Zoom link will be sent in an email in advance.



YOUTH NEWS

Facebook & Instagram Live Posts:

Watch for Kelsey on Facebook & Instagram, doing live posts Wednesdays around 4PM for a more family focused post & Thursdays for a sing-a-long song!

G.R.A.C.E. Place Newsletters: We are going to continue online G.R.A.C.E. Place for January as weekly newsletters. They will be sent via email, so please let Kelsey know if you do not receive a newsletter! These newsletters will contain activities for youth and families with topics such as physical health & bullying. These topics will include faith formation pieces.

Along with these newsletters, we'll also have zoom check-in on Sunday's at 9:00am with Kelsey, for all ages & once a month at the beginning of every month, Kelsey will be at Grace with a supply bag for the month that can include supplies for any activities in the newsletters or supplies to create a sacred space in your home! The newsletters & the emails will remind you of these dates! You can stop by the church parking lot at 9:00am for a bag or just to say hello (all while being safe with masks & social distancing). **So, the schedule of events looks like this: Jan. 10th you can come to church to pick-up any supplies for all January newsletters at 9:00am.**

Jan. 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st, join Kelsey on zoom for a check-in at 9:00am.

High School: ESCAPE ROOM! Join Kelsey for an online escape room on Sunday, January 17th, at 8pm, via zoom! Email Kelsey for the zoom link!



**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Grace Lutheran Youth Group
"Like" us to see recent news & events**

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Thank you to all of you who purchased ELCA Good Gifts during Advent!! Your purchases are greatly appreciated. Even in this time of dismay, several of you found it in your hearts to contribute to this great cause. Thank you! For those of you who shared your contributions with us, Gracers gave a total of **\$710.00** to ELCA Good Gifts. Thank you for making a difference in people's lives.



Social Ministry



How serious is human trafficking in our area? Join the Royersford Churches in Action for a zoom presentation by Clare Henderson of Mission Kids to better understand this problem. Learn how to identify the signs and which children are at greatest risk. This event will be at 6:30pm on Sunday, January 17th. More details to come...

Grace's "Green" Good News

A new column written by Rose Hlavac (Kelsey's mom)

Farm Trash to Table

In January, 2020 [US News & World Report](#) posted an article summarizing research by Penn State, that more than two-thirds of US households wastes 20 -50% of their food, averaging about \$1,866 per year! Higher income households that ate healthier including more fruits and vegetables wasted more food on average. And when you throw out those rotten leftovers, you aren't just wasting that food, but all the resources that went into it including land, water, energy, seeds, soil, and all the transportation fuels that went into delivering it.

But there are simple ways you can **Reuse** some of your food "trash" to make some homemade broth that has less sodium and more vitamins than what you buy in the store; and you can **Reduce** your water usage and eliminate purchasing a container of broth that then needs to be **Recycled**.

Broth is a base for so many things including soups, stews, gravies, and reheating leftover stir fries to name a few.

Keep a freezer bag handy to toss in your **veggie scraps**. Cores of onions, garlic clove ends, basil stems, the end of that celery stalk, asparagus ends, cabbage cores and those tough outer leaves, carrot ends and peelings, broccoli and cauliflower stalks. You get the gist, hard vegetables without a lot of water (e.g., no lettuce). When the bag is full, empty it into a stock pot and with some water and a few bay leaves and an hour later you have sodium free healthy veggie stock! Compost those veggies for a true zero waste option that fed you twice!

Steam your veggies? Don't toss out that vitamin enriched water. Keep a plastic container in the freezer with **leftover water from veggies** you've steamed. No need to separate by vegetable type. Use this as a starter for the veggie stock above instead of turning on that faucet.

Save that **water from boiling your potatoes**. The great starches make a great base for soups and stews serving as a natural thickener. Toss in some potato peel veggie scraps you froze and get a nice dark broth for stew. Mashed potatoes or potato salad today, awesome beef stew tomorrow.

After **roasting meat, pour the broth** from the bottom of the pan into a cup or bowl. Let cool, refrigerate, skim the fat off the top after it cools, and you will have an amazing bone broth. Bone broth is so much healthier than stock you can buy at the store. You'll see that when it's cold, a great bone broth looks like jello.

After roasting meat, **save the bones**. Keep a freezer bag for each flavor of bones (chicken, beef, pork, ham and yes, even shrimp shells) to make some of the best bone broth! After boiling the bones for stock, simply let it cool, refrigerate and skim the fat off the top before using. But don't throw out that fat!

Not in the mood to make soup with all that stock, or don't need all of it now? Freeze it! Consider 1-2 cup portions so you can toss it into a pot to use instead of water when you make rice. Need just a little for your favorite recipe? Freeze the stock in ice cube trays, remove when frozen and store cubes in freezer bags. The best thing about freezing your homemade stock is you can use it in any recipe that calls for water without turning on the faucet. Grab just what you need.

Fun Family Activity: That **fat you took off your broth**, let's use it to feed the birds! Keep a container of fat in your freezer too. You can even add fat you trimmed from your meat before seasoning. Use only beef and pork fat. Before the holidays, melt down the fat, add old fashioned oats, sunflower seeds, peanut butter chopped raisins or cranberries (it's a great use for those dried out raisins in the cupboard). For a mold, I use plastic suet containers I saved, but you can simply press the suet into a chunk and put it on a log out back, or put a string through it before freezing to hang from a tree. The kids can even make them into fun shapes like bells to hang in the trees. I like to give some away to the homebound members of our church for Christmas so they can enjoy watching the birds in the winter. Just don't put out the suet too early, it needs to be cold out so the fat doesn't spoil.

Once you get started turning your "garbage" into fresh healthy meals, it is amazing the new things you will think of. This year, for the first time before throwing out some **corn cobs** I decided to use them to make a corn veggie stock. I have a nice plastic container of that stock in my garage freezer waiting for me to make some incredible chicken corn soup this winter!

