

*December 2023*  
**Graceful Greetings**



**DECEMBER 2023 WORSHIP SERVICES**

**The beautiful, hope-filled season of Advent begins on Sunday, December 3.**

Join us in worship for Advent 2023

Sunday, December 3—1st Sunday in Advent  
Sunday, December 10—2nd Sunday in Advent  
Sunday, December 17—3rd Sunday in Advent



**The schedule for December 24 is:**

9:30 am One Service for Advent 4 with Holy Communion  
7:00 pm Family Friendly Worship with Pageant and Holy Communion  
11:00 pm Candlelight Worship with Holy Communion

On December 31 - One Service at 9:30 am; Lessons and Carols

If you are unable to worship with us in person, our worship services can also be found on our website under the “Worship” tab & on our Facebook page or YouTube channel.



**Advent at Grace – Hunger impacts everything.  
When was the last time you ate??**

During Advent, bless someone with the gift of a meal! Participate in our fundraising event on the Sundays in Advent, by purchasing meals for people in need, globally. Our Advent tree will start off bare. As people purchase various stars, one will be hung on the tree. Help decorate our tree by participating! The stars represent money towards meals that can be purchased to pack meals. Our “star” denominations are: \$1; \$5; \$10; \$20 & \$50. Or, consider just making a donation of any amount. The money raised will be used toward the Rise Against Hunger food packing event on April 27...stay tuned for details. Cash or checks accepted. When paying by check, make the check out to Grace Lutheran Church. The memo line *must read* RAH or Rise Against Hunger.

**Recycle for Ronald McDonald House Charities!** Molly Moran is inviting everyone at Grace Lutheran to collect tabs for Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia. The tabs you collect create comfort and hope for families when they need it most. It’s easy, just drink your favorite pull tab canned beverage, save the tabs and bring them in to Grace. There is a bucket in the Welcome Center for you to put them in. I’ll take care of the rest!! Thank you.



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We don't like to wait. We just don't. Whether that is in the check out line, at the traffic light, or for the app to stop spinning, we don't like waiting. It has become, it seems to me, a way of life – going faster and faster and faster– like the driver on the highway (my mother's pet peeve) who speeds up, raises past you, cuts in front of you to take the off ramp. Couldn't they have waited just a moment?



We want to get there sooner. As I look around our neighborhoods, we already see holiday lights and Christmas decorations, and we haven't even gotten to Thanksgiving week. A National Day of Thanksgiving to remember all our many blessings has gotten dislodged by Black Friday shopping (which if you haven't noticed has become more like a month than a day), decorating for Christmas, and Cyber Monday. Ironically, we are in such a hurry not to miss anything, we are missing a great deal. We are moving so fast; we have given away the great gift (yes gift) of waiting.

When we wait, in that moment just before ... (the movie starts, the curtain rises, a loved one speaks) ... we are gifted with a moment when anything is possible.

In Luke 4 we hear Jesus is in the synagogue for worship, as was his custom, when he was handed the scroll from which he read, then he sat down ... "The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him" in anticipation of what was to come, of what might be. Imagine the intense anticipation of what Jesus was about to share.

The season of Advent, the four weeks preceding Christmas Day, is a time of waiting. A time to anticipate the arrival of the Christ child. Don't race to the end of the story. Don't jump ahead and read the last chapter. Slow down just a little, engage the journey more deeply, notice the sights, the sounds, and the smells. Take a breath and wait. In that space of anticipation, we are encountered by the Holy Spirit. In that waiting space our Lord has an opportunity to reach into our chaotic life and touch our us with hope and possibility and joy and peace.

There is more, much, much more to this journey than just the destination.

Peace in Christ <><

*Pastor Wayne*



**Adult Service Project!** Adults, are you interested in building homes for those who have lost theirs due to natural disasters in Tennessee? Alongside St. James Lutheran church in Limerick, Grace would like to take a team in the spring to help Appalachia Service Project with new build projects in Tennessee. If you are interested in this opportunity, please reach out to Kelsey!

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**Magic Memories Early Learning Schools**—We are dedicated to providing:  
A loving, caring and stimulating environment to support & guide your child.  
Safety, healthy meals & loving staff in a warm, trusting & home-like setting.  
Emotional security, self-esteem & social development of the children.  
Contact us at [enroll@magicmemories.org](mailto:enroll@magicmemories.org), 610-400-8587 or [magicmemories.org](http://magicmemories.org)





### ***From the Deacon's Desk: Advent Devotions***

Advent begins this year on Sunday, December 3rd. It's one of my favorite times of the year. I love the feeling of preparation and anticipation (as well as our gorgeous blue Advent paraments). I also always wonder what Mary was thinking and feeling as she prepared for her baby to come. In Advent we don't just look to the coming child, but we look ahead to the return of Christ. And we listen to the words of John the Baptist who prepares us for the coming Kingdom of God.

Advent is also a time that many make the commitment to read devotions for the season. So, I wanted to offer some suggestions for those of you who are looking to expand your prayer life during this month before Christmas. I hope you find one or more of them uplifting for you.

You can find my Advent Devotions (as well as other weekly devotions) at:  
<http://allisonwilcox.com/>

The ELCA and Episcopal Church here in the US and in Canada have issued a joint Advent calendar you can find here: <https://download.elca.org/ELCA Resource Repository/Advent Devotions.pdf>

ELCA World Hunger has a couple of ways you can add to your Advent spiritual journey. They have an Advent calendar and a devotional booklet – both of which are available either to download or in a hard copy at: <https://www.elca.org/hungeradvent>

Both of the ELCA's resources are weekly. If you are looking for a daily devotional for Advent, Luther Seminary has one you can find here (note that it is available to download in either regular or large print): <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/advent-devotional/>

If you'd like to order a book rather than use an online source, Augsburg Fortress has one you can purchase at: <https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category/286215/Advent-Reflections>

AdventWord is a ministry of the Episcopal Church. It offers a daily calendar with a word prompt to guide your devotional time. On their site you can sign up to receive daily meditations from them. This is a new one for me. I'll be trying it out this year! <https://adventword.org/resources/>

In addition to these options, I invite you to join me for the three Thursdays in Advent (12/7, 12/14, and 12/21) at on Facebook Live for a brief time of meditation and scripture. I hope you find one (or more) of these to be faith inspiring for you during this Advent season.

Peace on the journey, Deacon Allison

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### **Order your poinsettias to beautify the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve**

— Complete a form found in the Narthex or at the 6th Ave. entrance or you may call the church office. This year we are offering red or white blooms in a 4 1/2" pot, at a cost of \$6.00 each. The deadline for ordering poinsettias is Sunday, 12/10; No exceptions. If paying by check, please make a separate check payable to "Grace Lutheran Church" and clearly mark the memo for poinsettias. Make sure to indicate if you would like to take your plant(s) with you or not.



**Our Prayer List Coordinator is Becky Leonard.** Becky helps keep our church family connected & growing, through her willingness to take your prayer requests. Please contact Becky or send any prayer requests to her at [bellpn@aol.com](mailto:bellpn@aol.com) or you can call the church office at 610-948-3684 and leave a message. Thanks for sharing your joys & concerns and praying for others.

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## YOUTH NEWS



**G.R.A.C.E. Place at 9:30am!** G.R.A.C.E. Place programming is for preschool through 6th graders and will be the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month, 9:30 - 10:15am. December programming will be on December 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17th!

**Calling all Young Adults!** Join Kelsey Wednesday nights in November, at 7pm online, via Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com/egw-vnvg-nxy>) for a Bible Study!

**Parents are invited to attend a monthly small group held by Kelsey, in the Prayer Croner Room, at 9:30am.** Dates below: Dec. 10th, Jan. 21st, Feb. 25th, April 14th, May 19th, and June 9th.

**High Schoolers:** 2nd & 4th Sunday's, you're invited to meet in the high school room for fellowship and food! The 1st & 3rd Sunday's, they are invited to assist in a G.R.A.C.E. Place classroom. AND, on Dec. 3rd at 5pm they are invited to High School Youth Group in the social hall!

**Tuscarora Youth Retreat** (6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders) is coming up March 15<sup>th</sup> - 17th! Registration will be due end of January! \$150 per person!

**Soda Pop Can Tab Collection for Ronald McDonald House!** A youth, Molly Moran, is collecting pop can tabs through December! You can drop yours off in the bucket in the Welcome Center!


### **ELCA Youth Gathering Fundraisers in December:**

**Gift Wrapping:** Not great at gift wrapping or have limited time? Let the Youth and Young adults attending the ELCA Youth and Young Adult Gathering 2024 help! Let them wrap your presents for you from 9-10:15am Sundays in December: December 3rd, 10th, and 17<sup>th</sup> in the Welcome Center! \$5 for small gifts (under 12x12) and \$10 for large gifts (over 12x12)!

**Photos with Santa:** You, your family, your kids, and your pets are invited to photos with Santa on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 12-3pm at Grace Lutheran Church! \$10 per family! *Photos will be delivered electronically either via email or text message.*



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

 **Calling All Counters**—we are in need of 2-4 volunteers to help assist in counting money from the weekly collection. This task typically takes less than an hour following the late service. You will be asked to help in a 5-6 week rotating schedule so looking at 10-11 times each year. Following Covid we lost several teams and would really appreciate the help to lessen the burden on all. Please contact Phyllis at the church office with your desire to help or contact Kurt Meyers. Thank You!

OFFERING  
COUNTERS

**Help Wanted** - We're looking for 5-6 volunteers to join our Altar Teams. The goal is to add another volunteer to each of the 6 teams. This will add much needed flexibility which will help to cover vacations, absences & holidays. The tasks are easy, the commitment minimal, but the final results are pretty rewarding. If you're interested, please contact Joy Fraunfelter or the church office.



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## Check Out These Ways to Support Your Faith Journey



### ***Adult Faith Formation Opportunities—Sunday Mornings at 9:15am***

**Weekly** - Richard Harshaw's group continues to meet in the Choir Room (L04)

**On the first Sunday of the month**, alternate programming will be offered in place of the book group in the parlor. Join Pastor Wayne for the following next session:  
Christmas around the world on 12/3

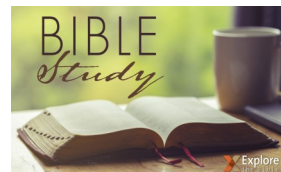
Topic TBD – 1/7 (let Deacon Allison know if there's something you'd like as a topic).

**On the 2nd, 3rd, 4th & occasionally 5th, Sundays of the month**, a book discussion group will meet in the Parlor, led by Judy Stryker. The group will be reading "*Holy Envy*", by Barbara Brown Taylor. The author is an Episcopal priest who is teaching a college class about other people and their religious traditions. Through those religions, we learn to accept others and reevaluate our own thoughts about God.

**Morning Grace Daily Devotions** may be found at [allisonwilcox.com](http://allisonwilcox.com). Sign up there to have these devotions delivered directly to your email box Mondays through Fridays.

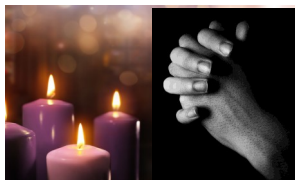
### **The Gospel of Matthew Bible Study meets Monday evenings at 7:00pm via Zoom and Thursday mornings at 10:00am in the parlor (room L05).**

It's never too late to join us as we share in God's word. Let Deacon Allison know if you'd like a link to the Monday Zoom.



Note that we will be off during the week between Christmas & New Year's Eve, as well as the New Year's week: (12/25 & 12/28 and 1/1 and 1/4)

**Interested in joining Grace?** Please contact Deacon Allison at [deaconallison12@gmail.com](mailto:deaconallison12@gmail.com), to learn more about membership at Grace. Our next information class will begin soon.



**Advent Prayer Time on Facebook Live**—Join Deacon Allison at noon on Thursdays 12/7, 12/14, and 12/21 for an Advent meditation time on Facebook Live. This will be a brief midweek opportunity for prayer and scripture to help reset your week in this busy season.

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

**Website:** [www.gracelutheranroyersford.com](http://www.gracelutheranroyersford.com)

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

**Facebook search:** Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

**Email:** [gracelutrnrn@verizon.net](mailto:gracelutrnrn@verizon.net)

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

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

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