

# The News of Grace

Volume 36, no. 12

December 2013

## Christmas Is For Children

**People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have Him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to Him and said, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” (Luke 18:15-17)**

By the time you receive this newsletter you may have participated in the Thanksgiving Day (which is unfortunate) or the after Thanksgiving Day shopping frenzy in one way or another. You may have shopped on-line or in store, or at least you have made your lists and started locating some of the items you want to give as Christmas gifts. Maybe you have taken your children or grandchildren to see Santa. Some of you have started decorating your house for the season and some of you have put up your Christmas tree. I'm not so popular around the house this time of year because I don't want to put the Christmas tree up too early. We first need to start observing Advent and then we can get on with Christmas and all the trappings involved in making our days merry and bright.

I don't need to remind you how busy this season can get around the house. We call it the Christmas Season because we are focused on the celebration of the event that is put on the calendar for the twenty-fifth. There are many who do not believe in the Christ of Christmas who look ahead nevertheless to the great gift exchange that takes place on that day. Call it winter holiday or whatever you want it has its roots in the celebration of Christmas. (There is some pagan history behind the date of December 25, but I will leave that for another time.) The real exchange that we truly celebrate that day is that the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. The Lord Jesus exchanged the glories of heaven to descend to earth and dwell among us so that He might be our Savior.

Many argue that “Christmas is for children.” The lights and decorations, the toy displays, Santa Claus with his elves and reindeer, the desire to have a white Christmas, the gathering around the Christmas tree

are all things that touch the imaginations of children, young and old alike.

Christmas is definitely for children, God's children! We are all children of God by grace, through His Gospel Means. In Holy Baptism the Lord had His way with us, washed away our sin, gave us the Holy Spirit and the gift of faith by the very power of His Word, and He made us heirs of life everlasting. He promises us that He will never leave us or forsake us. He tenderly invites us to place all of our troubles and cares at His feet and learn from Him. All of this was made possible because of the first Christmas. What do you think of these Christmas gifts?

The coming of the Christ-child in the manger of Bethlehem fulfilled the long awaited hope for a Messiah, a Savior. Of course like some of the gifts we receive that are not what we expected, Jesus had to change the perceptions of the people of His day because He did not meet their expectations. This Messiah was not what the people of His day thought a Messiah should be. His suffering and death for us and for all was an offense to many. The proclamation that our salvation is found in this event is an offense to many people today. Yet it had to be that way so that we might receive the above mentioned gifts.

This Christmas there will be many gifts exchanged. This time next year a lot of those gifts will have been spent, used up, out-grown, and forgotten. People will be left wanting more. God's children know that they already have more, for He has given us the kingdom, and we receive that kingdom just as children receive the gifts they are given at Christmas. That is why the passage from Luke (also found in Matthew and Mark) about Jesus blessing the little children is so special. As God's children we realize that we have been given the greatest gift which we celebrate during this blessed season of Advent and Christmas. There is no other way to receive eternal life than to have it given to us as a gift. Our gift of faith accepts all the gifts that our Lord bestows upon us, His children.

There is a hymn that I remember from my youth that we sang on Christmas Eve. Its verse is something that we should all, as God's children, take to heart during this special time in the Church Year. ***Oh, come, little children, oh come, one and all, To Bethlehem haste, to the manger so small. God's Son for a gift has been sent you this night To be your Redeemer, your Joy and Delight.*** Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me!" This season and every season we are God's little children invited to come and worship Christ, our newborn King!

*Blessed Christmas to all!— Pastor Walter*

## ADVENT EVENING PRAYER SERVICES

### *'Advent Prophecy'*

The theme for our Midweek Advent Evening Prayer Services is "*Advent Prophecy.*" We will consider God's Promise of a Savior, who that Savior would be and where He would be born. Come and worship with us as we prepare to celebrate the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and to hear the Good News of forgiveness that comes through Him.

### ADVENT SERVICES

**December 4<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 p.m.**

"Promise" – Genesis 3:15

**December 11<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 p.m.**

"Person" – Isaiah 7:14

**December 18<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 p.m.**

"Place" – Micah 5:2

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### ADVENT SUPPERS

**ADVENT SUPPERS** will be served before the Advent Services at **5:30 p.m.** each week in Parker Hall. The following menus will be served with salad and dessert.

**December 4**

Spaghetti  
Served by ACTS

**December 11**

Chili  
Served by JOY Club

**December 18**

Soup  
Served by Board of Parish Fellowship

## Director of Parish Music

Greetings in the name of our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!

A new church is once again fast approaching, with Advent beginning on December 1<sup>st</sup>. This month we will look at “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People” (LSB 347).

The text is by Johann Olearius (1611-1684), a Lutheran pastor and professor at the university of Wittenburg. He compiled *Geistliche Singe-Kunst*, which was a very important German hymnal in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The tune, FREU DICH SEHR, comes from the *Trente quatre Pseaumes de David* (Thirty-Four Psalms of David) which was discussed in last month’s article.

The hymn text is based on Isaiah 40:1-8. Here is stanza one:

*“Comfort, comfort ye My people, Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God; “Comfort those who sit in darkness, Mourning ‘neath their sorrows’ load. Speak ye to Jerusalem Of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her sins I cover And her warfare now is over.”* All humanity waits in the darkness, burdened by sin, and fearful of what is to come. Into this world, God’s voice cries out “Comfort, comfort ye My people.” Into the darkness, God’s voice speaks of the Light of the world, who is to come, and who will remove the load of sin and death, and bring peace between God and man. Indeed, “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Stanza Two: *Yea, her sins our God will pardon, Blotting our each dark misdeed; All that well deserved His anger He no more will see or heed. She hath suffered many a day, Now her griefs have passed away; God will change her pining sadness Into ever-springing gladness.* All our sins will be wiped away so that God, who has every right to be angry with us, will remember them no more? Sounds too good to be true. But it is true, on account of Christ. Thanks be to God! Grief is gone, sorrow remembered no more, and eternal gladness take their place. All of this is true now, because God says it, and yet the world waits for God to fulfill His promise.

Stanza Three: *Hark, the herald's voice is crying In the desert far and near, Calling sinners to repentance, Since the Kingdom now is here. O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way; Let the valleys rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.* St. John the Baptizer cries out, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Law calls us to repentance, for through this gift of God we are brought low, in preparation for the Gospel, which lifts us from the ashes, proclaiming that our sins are covered.

Stanza Four: *Make ye straight what long was crooked; Make the rougher places plain. Let your hearts be true and humble, As befits His holy reign. For the glory of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed abroad, And all flesh shall see the token That His Word is never broken.* The Savior is coming soon, and the world prepares to receive Him who made the world. Christ is coming, in fulfillment of all of God's promises, beginning with the first Gospel given in the Garden of Eden. Christ is the one to crush the head of the serpent, the one to destroy sin, death, and the devil. This Advent season, we once again prepare to receive God's only Son, Jesus Christ, as he descends to us to be our Savior.

*Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

*Peace in Christ,  
Nathan Beethe  
Director of Parish Music*

## POINSETTIAS

We will be decorating the chancel area of our sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas. If you would like to order one, please fill out the form that is in the back of the newsletter.

The cost is \$13.50. Please make your check payable to Grace Lutheran Church and send it to the Church Office. **The deadline to order is Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.**

## THOSE WHO SERVE in DECEMBER

### ACOLYTE/CRUCIFER SCHEDULE

**8:15 a.m.** Worship Service – Lily Woodyard

**10:45 a.m.** Worship Services – Claire Hammond

**December 4<sup>th</sup>** - Advent Evening Prayer Service – Bailey Cannon

**December 11<sup>th</sup>** - Advent Evening Prayer Service – Ethan Andrews

**December 18<sup>th</sup>** – Advent Evening Prayer Service – Ginger Litwa

**December 24<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve**

**Crucifer:** Mason Andrews - **Acolyte:** Kaylee Hammond

**December 25<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m. – Christmas Day** – Maxwell Baker

**December 31<sup>st</sup> - 7:00 p.m. - New Year's Eve**

**Crucifer:** Maxwell Baker - **Acolyte:** Lily Woodyard

*If you are unable to serve please ask someone to fill in for you and then call the church office.*

### USHERS' SCHEDULE

**8:15 a.m.** Worship Services – Roy Bullard's team

Roy Andrews, John Ketcher, Gary Proud

**10:45 a.m.** Worship Services – Gervais LeBlanc's team

Jeff Ralston, Jacob Ralston, Paul Krueger

**December 4<sup>th</sup> – Advent Service 1** – Tim Loyd's team

**December 11<sup>th</sup> – Advent Service 2** – Tim Sweeney's team

**December 18<sup>th</sup> – Advent Service 3** – Gary Goldsby's team

**December 15<sup>th</sup> – Children's Service** – Dave Roberts' team

**December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Service** – Combined Ushering Team

**December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day Svc.** – Dennis Fastenau's team

**December 31<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Eve Service** – Roy Bullard's team

### CANTORS' SCHEDULE

**8:15 a.m.** Worship Service – Joel Junkans

**10:45 a.m.** Worship Service – Kurt Shrader

## **THOSE WHO SERVE in DECEMBER**

### **COMMUNION ASSISTANTS**

**December 1<sup>st</sup>** – 10:45 Service – Frank Royster

**December 8<sup>th</sup>** – 8:15 Service – Gary Proud

**December 15<sup>th</sup>** – 10:45 Service – Kurt Shrader

**December 22<sup>nd</sup>** – 8:15 Service – Kurt Shrader

**December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day** – 9:00 a.m. Service – Greg Warren

**December 31<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Eve** – 7:00 p.m. – Dave Graf

### **GREETERS' SCHEDULE**

#### **8:15 a.m. Worship Services**

**December 1<sup>st</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>** – Janet Killough

**December 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Debbie Penny

#### **10:45 a.m. Worship Services**

**December 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>** – Chris and Betty Pils

**December 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Terry, Tammy and Cole Hill

**December 29<sup>th</sup>** – Gervais and Sharon LeBlanc

**All Advent Services** – Debbie Penny

**December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve** - Janet Killough, Pat Funk

Robert and Carole Nichols

**December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day** – Janet Killough

**December 31<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Eve** - Janet Killough

### **ALTAR GUILD SCHEDULE**

**8:15 a.m. Service** – to be individually assigned

**10:45 a.m. Service** – Ginny Ralston

**Advent Evening Prayer Services -**

Suzanne Raddle and Wilma Richter

**December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day** – Pat Funk

**December 31<sup>st</sup> – New Years Eve** –

Suzanne Raddle and Wilma Richter

*If you are unable to serve please ask someone to substitute and then call the church.*

## STEWARDSHIP BUDGET RE-CAP

2013 budget \$514,660  
which is an average weekly  
General Fund contribution requirement of \$9,897

|                                                |              |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Average weekly contribution through week 46    | \$9,494.41   |
| Budgeted needs through week 46                 | \$455,262.00 |
| Contributions to General Fund from all sources | \$436,742.67 |

## GRACE FAMILY NEWS AND NOTES

### WELCOME...

Ms. Anna Lane was received into communicant membership of our Grace congregation on November 10<sup>th</sup> by Adult Confirmation. Please welcome Anna to our Grace Family.

### CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY...

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of Mrs. Miranda Elling, mother of Nancy Wade, who passed away on Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, in New York. Please keep Jim and Nancy and their family in your prayers.

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of Mr. Arthur Langlais who died on November 8<sup>th</sup> at Good Shepherd Nursing Center. Arthur is the grandfather of Shawn Langlais and father-in-law of Donna Langlais. Please keep the Langlais family in your prayers.

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of Rev. James Meimerstorf who died on November 17<sup>th</sup> in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Rev. Meimerstorf is the nephew of Mildred Burgess. Please keep Mildred and her family in your prayers.

## **CONGRATULATIONS and GOD'S BLESSINGS...**

Congratulations to Ashley Hicks and Mark Weinhold who were married on November 9<sup>th</sup> here at Grace. Ashley is the daughter of Jeff and Lisa Hicks and granddaughter of Carroll and Doris Holzhauser.

Congratulations to Rev. Michael and Sandi Middaugh on the birth of their daughter, Scarlett Isabel Villarreal Middaugh, on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Scarlett's grandparents are Riley and Randy Middaugh. Congratulations and God's blessings to Michael and Sandi!!

Congratulations to Nathan and Crissy Beethe on the birth of their son Evan Andrew Beethe on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Evan has two excited sisters, Emily and Molly. God's blessings to the Beethe family.

## **THANK YOU...**

Thank you to all of my Grace family and friends for your thoughts and prayers while my sister Polly was sick and then following her death. We appreciate you remembering our family with your prayers, cards, and memorial gifts to the church *God bless, Judy and Jim Keppel*

Dear Grace Family – A great big thank you for the cards, well wishes and prayers; especially the prayers. Your love and care make everything easier. Thanks again from Warren and Judy Rivers.

Our thanks to Andrea Faulkner for using her gifts and talents to coordinate and oversee the work being done in the choir room and classroom downstairs in the church. She has spent many hours coordinating with contractors to waterproof, plaster, paint, and install tile, carpet, and cabinets/closets in these two rooms and the surrounding area. The rooms are beautiful...very warm and welcoming! We also appreciate her family, David, Lauren and Matthew, for their understanding and patience as Andrea coordinated this project for our Grace congregation.

Thank you to Robert Nichols for using his gifts and talents for the installation of the door access security system that is now in place and activated for both upstairs and downstairs in Parker Hall. Our facilities for the ECDC children and staff are now secured during the ECDC hours of operation. Also our thanks to Carole Nichols for always being there to assist Robert with pulling wires and installing and testing equipment. Robert and Carole have worked tirelessly for many afternoons, evenings and weekends to make this happen in the most efficient way.

## 30 Years of Grace

As fall moves into winter things are happening faster than I can comprehend: loss of a loved one, loss of a job, 3 new beautiful grandchildren. Thankfully, amidst all this change there are also constants: faith, family and the fellowship of believers known as Grace Lutheran Church. As I think about why I am here and what is happening in my life I am always struck by the difference between God's needs and my needs. Does he need my worship? Does he need my offerings? Does he need my fellowship? Does he need me in church at all?

God instituted corporate worship because he knew that his believers would need encouragement as they faced the trials of this world. Christians encourage one another in faith and support one another when there are difficult times. When our load gets too heavy and a brother lifts us up, we see God at work in our world. When we raise our voices in corporate worship and are strengthened in our faith we see God at work in our world. He does not need our worship but we sure need the blessings of worship: faith and family. What about offerings? God does not need them since he already owns the whole world. Why should we give? Faith without service is dead, by giving we grow in faith. When we give we show that our love for God is greater than our love for money. When we give and help others we get much more in return. Open hand, open heart. Closed fist closed heart. We cannot give of ourselves with a closed fist.

I would like to thank everyone who prayed, sent cards and gave, when my Mother died. She will be missed and remembered.

I would also like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the fall craft show a success. We are a fellowship of believers, willing to step up when we are called, a witness to the world.

God blessed me when he placed me here. I will always be grateful.

Randy Middaugh  
Chairman, Grace Lutheran Church

**SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE**  
**COFFEE HOST SIGN UP**

**Volunteers Needed to Serve** - Please take a minute and sign up for the Sunday on which you wish to serve. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the Parlor.

The schedule for **December, 2013** is:

|                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| December 1 <sup>st</sup>  | Board of Parish Fellowship         |
| December 8 <sup>th</sup>  | _____                              |
| December 15 <sup>th</sup> | JOY Club Cookie Walk – Parker Hall |
| December 22 <sup>nd</sup> | _____                              |
| December 29 <sup>th</sup> | _____                              |

The schedule for **January, 2014** is:

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| January 5 <sup>th</sup>  | _____ |
| January 12 <sup>th</sup> | _____ |
| January 19 <sup>th</sup> | _____ |
| January 26 <sup>th</sup> | _____ |

**Thanks!! We appreciate your help!**

# ***Christmas Brunch***

**December 7th - 11:00 a.m.**

The LWML Evening Guild is hosting a ***Christmas Brunch*** on **Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**, at 11:00 a.m. in Parker Hall. We will enjoy a delicious Christmas brunch and some great fellowship, and then if you wish, you'll be ready for an afternoon of shopping.

Call Nancy Finkbeiner at 562-0846 or Pat Funk at 663-3631 or 231-2225 to make your reservations.

**BLESSED CHRISTMAS!!**

## **DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)**

Grace continues to support the foster care program in the East Office of DCFS. Some of the items they need for the children coming into their office include:

- breakfast type foods (pop tarts, breakfast bars)
- peanut butter crackers
- microwaveable pasta meals
- diapers of various sizes
- toothpaste and toothbrushes
- soap

If you can help provide any of these items, please bring them to the church and place them in the box for DCFS which is in the church breezeway.

For more information, contact Pat Funk.

## **DECORATING THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS**

We will decorate the trees in the sanctuary for Christmas on **Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.** This is a great opportunity to volunteer your time and to enjoy the fellowship together!!

Remember our trees are now pre-lit so decorating will be much easier!!! Join us on December 8<sup>th</sup> – call the church office if you have questions.

### **ACTS “EPIPHANY” DINNER**

**January 5<sup>th</sup>**

**5:30 p.m.**

**The Butcher Shop Steakhouse**

**10825 Hermitage Rd, Little Rock, AR 72211**

Arrive at 5:30 p.m. for visiting and at 6:00 p.m. we will begin placing dinner orders. Mark your calendar and make plans to attend. Call Sammye Sue Harrill if you have questions.

## **Children’s Christmas Service**

**Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**

**3:00 p.m.**

The children will practice during the Sunday School opening each Sunday morning. Please have your children downstairs by 9:45 a.m. for practice.

There will also be a practice on December 8<sup>th</sup> around 12:00 p.m. following the 10:45 service and on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 a.m. The Children’s Christmas Program will be Sunday afternoon, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m.

**THE GREAT COOKIE WALK**  
Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>  
Between Services in Parker Hall

**What is it?** Purchase a bag to fill with an assortment of cookies.  
Proceeds benefit Grace Families with special Christmas needs.

Each year the fundraiser raises over \$700, through your generosity.

Help the effort by baking batches of your favorite cookies  
to donate to the event.

Bring them to church by end of first service that morning.  
The JOY Club will set out the amazing selection of treats  
for your choosing.

Purchase a bag and fill it with an assortment of wonderful  
homemade cookies.

Take home and enjoy, if you can wait that long!!!

If you have questions, contact Bev Sanders at 425-8806 or  
225-6390 or Riley Middaugh at 240-4035.

**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF CARE VAN**

**OUR THANKS** to everyone who donated items for the School Kits for  
the *Lutheran World Relief Care Van*.

**WE DID IT!!!** - With your help, LWML was able to assemble 60 school  
kits to be sent to Lutheran World Relief for distribution to children in  
need. A big thank you to all who made this possible by donating  
supplies, sewing and assembling backpacks, filling backpacks with  
supplies and boxing them for distribution.

Thank you to those who helped Pastor Walter load the *LWR Care Van*  
with 234 boxes totaling 5,284 pounds from 16 congregations in  
Arkansas. Grace is blessed with a gracious congregation who made this  
all possible.

Thank you again for your generosity.

*Ginny Ralston for the LWML.*

## NOON DEVOTIONS WITH PASTOR

Noon Devotions with Pastor is **Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**, at **12:00 noon in Parker Hall**. Bring a sandwich and join us for Bible study and fellowship. Drinks, chips, and dessert are provided. **Bring a friend and join us ...this is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship!!**

### FELLOWSHIP CLUB

**Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**12:00 noon**

The Fellowship Club will meet on **Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>** at **12:00 noon** in Parker Hall for their Christmas dinner. Join us for fun, food, and Christmas carols!! Call the church office if you need more information.

## *One Night in Bethlehem*

**Christ Lutheran School**  
**315 South Hughes**

**Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**

Join us at Christ Lutheran Church and School on **Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**, to celebrate the birth of our Savior! Our program for Christmas is entitled, ***“One Night in Bethlehem.”*** There will be two services in the sanctuary on **December 19<sup>th</sup>**: **One during chapel at 8:30 a.m., and an evening service at 6:30 p.m.** You are invited to both services, and are encouraged to bring family and friends as we join together to hear the Christmas Gospel!  
*In Christ,*

*Paul Walter*

## BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND GOD'S BLESSINGS to

### Grace Family Members in the month of December:

- 3 – Tommy Borchert, Carol Jones, Beth Paulson
- 4 – Heidi Litwa, Tallulah Ray
- 5 – Caleb Bryant, Kyla Wilbert
- 6 – Lindsey Long, Joshua Ralston
- 7 – Michael Hawkins
- 9 – Bette Bogart, Kim Woodyard
- 11 – Lance Whitney
- 12 – Carryl Blackburn, Linda Royster
- 14 – David Cannon
- 15 – Justine Baker, Sam Cate
- 16 – Emma Jane Ohnemus
- 19 – Gervais LeBlanc, Mark Peterson
- 26 – Robert Bemberg, Sr., Mary Ann Dyer, Andrea Faulkner,  
Gary Goldsby, Cole Hill
- 27 – Mona DeMilt, Zachary de Anda
- 28 – Marietta Gutierrez, Beverly Sanders
- 29 – Krista Stein
- 30 – Boone Bryant

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to these couples in December:

- 1 – Betty and Chris Pils
- 7 – Suzanne and David Raddle
- 17 – Jaycie and Hunter Goodwin
- 19 – Sammye and Raymond Harrill, Betty and Ray Wagoner
- 20 – Susan and Edwin Mahnken
- 21 – Linda and Stephen Douglas
- 25 – Sherry and Rudy Bischof
- 30 – Wilma and Robert Richter
- 31 – Paulette and Gary Goldsby

*We apologize if we have missed your birthday or anniversary; please let us know in the church office so we can update our records. Thank you!!*

## BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES AT GRACE

Our nursery, downstairs in the church, is also available to take care of the infants and toddlers during Sunday School/Bible Class time.

**ADULT BIBLE CLASS** - Pastor Walter's Bible Class meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in Parker Hall. Pastor is leading a study of "*The Augsburg Confession and Its Apology*" – **The Lutheran Confessions Series**. The class will continue with Session 10 "*The Holy Supper of Our Lord.*" Come and review what we believe, teach and confess as Lutheran Christians.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES** for children ages 3 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade are held in the lower level of the Family Life Center. Parents are invited to join us for the opening service at 9:45 each Sunday. Contact Colleen Moorman or Nathan Beethe. LCEF K.I.D.S. Saving Stamps are available from Ame Andrews during Sunday School opening time.

**JUNIOR YOUTH** class meets at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday in their classroom downstairs in the church. Joel Junkans leads the class each Sunday morning. **SENIOR YOUTH** class meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in their classroom downstairs in the church. Dave Roberts leads the class each Sunday morning.

**YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY** group meets every other Monday at 7:00 p.m. Their next meeting is December 9<sup>th</sup> and then they will break until after Christmas. Contact Vicar David Witte at [drwitte@gmail.com](mailto:drwitte@gmail.com) for more details.

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY** class meets each Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. at St. Vincent Hospital in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor conference room (off the main elevator). Pastor Walter leads this Bible Study. All men of Grace are encouraged to attend.

**TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS** meets each Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. in the downstairs classroom in the church. They are studying *God's Word for Today* on the book of *Joshua*. Contact Joan Ann Olsen for more information.

**WITTENBURG CAFÉ BIBLE STUDY** meets the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Parlor. The next meeting is December 12<sup>th</sup>. Contact Mark Peterson for more information.



# ECDC News & Notes

Where did November go? Seems I was just inviting you to our upcoming Stone Soup Feast – and now it's another page in our ECDC memory book! As usual the kids had so much fun preparing the veggies and helping make the soup, then the pumpkin pies! They could hardly wait until lunchtime so they could eat THEIR Stone Soup – it's amazing what kids will eat when they have had a hand in making it. They also showed off their Pilgrim and Indian attire to Moms & Dads, Grandmas, & Grandpas. It was a great, fun, thank-full day!

Of course we have all the media telling us what lies just around the corner – like we need hype to get excited about Christmas – not! We'll first celebrate Advent on our countdown to Christmas and learn how God sent us a special gift – His very own Son! Our ECDC Advent traditions are a popular addition to our morning routine. This is such a fun time with the kids (of all ages☺) - eyes glisten, joy bubbles, anticipation almost becomes too much! As you hear a child tell, in their own words, the story of Jesus being born in a manger, the angels proclaiming the good news, and the shepherds coming to worship – you can't help but feel the awesome power of God's love for each and every one of us kids!!



And once again we want YOU to know you are invited to what we call the “world's best shortest” Christmas program – as the ECDC kids share the Christmas story and their Christmas joy with on Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:30a.m. in Parker Hall. Our Junior and Senior classes will tell the real Christmas Story, followed by all the kids sharing the story in song. And the tradition wouldn't be complete without the wonderful reception – again this year lunch – following the program hosted by the Board of Christian Education.

More tradition – yes, we will have our ECDC Wish Lists posted on each classroom door and another on the bridge for those of you who don't make it downstairs often. If you wish, take an ornament, make the purchase, and return the item to ECDC (or if you prefer, make a monetary donation for the item and we'll pick it up). Another wonderful tradition of our Grace family supporting this weekday ministry of our congregation!

I'm excited to share some great news - ECDC was recently able to purchase 8 Apple iPads for use in the classroom by teachers and children alike! We are very blessed to have been able to add these to our teaching tools and look forward to all they can help us do to enhance learning and productivity!!

Until next month, have a blessed Christ-filled holiday season — *Colleen*

## ***POINSETTIA ORDER***

We will be decorating the chancel area of our sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas. If you would like to order one, please fill out this form and attach your check for \$13.50, made payable to Grace Lutheran Church. Please send your order to the church office. DEADLINE TO ORDER IS DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>.

I wish to order \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia(s) at \$13.50 each =  
Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My poinsettia is given in memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

OR

My poinsettia is given in honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print Your Name)

*Join us for Worship*

*at*

*Grace Lutheran Church*

*Advent Midweek*

*Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>*

*7:00 p.m.*

*~~~~~*

*Christmas Eve*

*7:00 p.m.*

*~~~~~*

*Christmas Day*

*9:00 a.m.*

*~~~~~*

*New Year's Eve*

*7:00 p.m.*