

Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn

493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
www.graceglenellyn.org
Return Service Requested

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod - ELCA

MONTH OF JANUARY 2021
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Grace To You is the monthly newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn.

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FROM THE PASTOR

I'm not usually one for New Year's resolutions. To be perfectly honest, I got tired of setting myself up for one more thing I wouldn't get right. But this year I found myself making a list without even realizing I was doing it.

Maybe it's because 2020 was...well, 2020. Along with everyone else I find myself *really* hoping 2021 will be different. Then I realized that the "different" needs to be as much about me as it is about "out there." Here are a few of the things I've been mulling over:

- Think carefully about picking up anything I laid down last year. How many of those meetings and commitments were useful? How many were useful but don't really need anywhere from 1 to 3 hours drive time? What can I stop, and what can I do differently?
- Resisting the culture of complaint. I've talked (complained??) about this before. If there's a tornado or a devastating ice storm or a killer heat wave, that merits some comment. But if it's winter and I like summer better, maybe that's not so much a reason to dump negativity into the space around me as it is a challenge to find beauty where I'm not looking for it.
- Don't let busy-ness keep me from my neighbors. Throughout the pandemic, my neighbor across the street and I texted regularly: "I'm heading to the store. Do you need anything?" Most often the answer was "No, but thanks!"—but when I did need an onion it was awesome! We both felt like there was one more person who was watching out for us, and it felt wonderful every time. Connection doesn't always need a lot of time.
- Take good enough care of myself that I have greater emotional bandwidth to be kind to others. I went for

a blood draw last year when COVID was spiking, and I could see the stress in every single healthcare worker I was in contact with. And I was struck (and saddened and appalled) by how *grateful* they were for very basic courtesy and patience. Truth is, we pretty much swim in stress a lot of the time and don't even see it—but the folks around us definitely feel it. (See "Culture of Complaint," above.)

- Take that emotional bandwidth and use it to learn more about the people around me, including the people I don't know or understand. Also use it to learn more about where my choices and actions are creating harm I haven't been recognizing. Also use it to learn more about how God's forgiveness should be giving me the guts to be honest about this.

When we Christians talk about the inbreaking of the Reign of God, we need to remember that it involves big things—like transforming unjust and oppressive systems that we tend to create even when we're trying to do something good—and small things. God is still calling us to make 2021 different in some big ways, like learning to acknowledge how and where human institutions have created harm—intentionally or not. (When will we understand that acknowledging our mistakes isn't just "being wrong"—it's actually liberating us for something better?) We're going to have more strength to work on the big picture if we also take better care of the "small spaces" in our lives.

But we also need to remember not to stop with transforming the small choices we make. All of that simply helps prepare us for the larger work God has for us, for Grace, in 2021 and beyond. Being a people of kindness and compassion, yes. But also being a people of healing, justice and transformation. I think 2021 is going to be a good year.

Pastor Melody

GRACE TO YOU

Proclaim, Build, and Serve





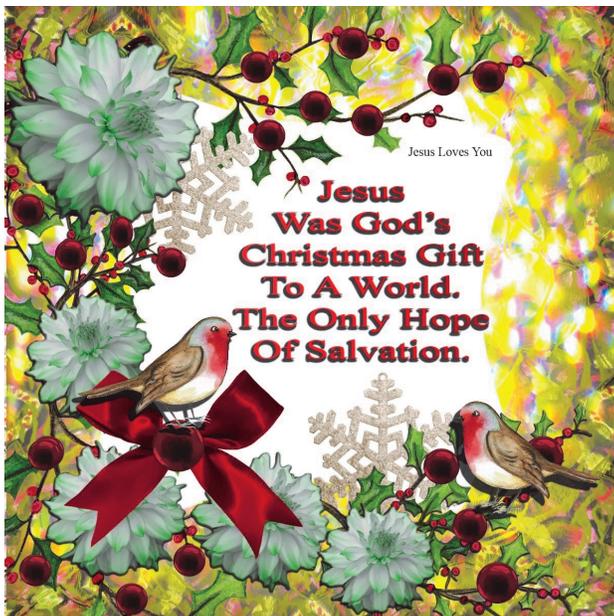
**ALL-CHURCH CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE!
VIA ZOOM AT 4:00 P.M.**

Even though we'll be worshipping together online, we will still have some special surprises to make your Christmas Eve worship special! Join us for another **All Church Zoom Service on Christmas Eve at 4:00pm** — complete with communion and candle-lighting. We will be sending out the link for this service through *News From Grace*, Grace's weekly e-blast.

Mark your calendar, keep your eye out for more info, and plan to help us receive our King on Christmas Eve!

CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The church offices will be closed
December 25th through January 3rd



**HOUSE CHURCH WORSHIP VIA PHONE OR ZOOM
EVERY SUNDAY MORNING AT 9:30AM!**

We would be so blessed to have you join us. Register online for a House Church at graceglenellyn.org (on the main page Announcements).

YEAR-END FINANCIAL RECAP

Thank you for being a faithful member of our church community. By giving to Grace you are showing that our church has a meaningful place in your heart. Donating to Grace allows us to preach the gospel, make disciples, and support others in our community who need help. Your donations are assisting with resources in high demand including the local food pantry, PADS, and the Senior Center.

We at Grace want to let you know about our current finances. **As of the end of November Grace is running a deficit of \$16,972. With God's blessing, Grace was able to receive financial assistance through the Payroll Protection Loan program, preventing the deficit from being much more serious.** If you are able, please consider making a special Christmas/ Year-end charitable donation to the church to help offset the deficit for 2020. Contributions can be made through Grace's website or mailed to the church office. We earnestly appreciate your ongoing support and want to let you know we are here for you. If there is anything Grace can do for you and your family, please do not hesitate to reach out. You are a loved and respected member of our church family. With your help we are making a difference in our church and in our community.

GRACE LUTHERAN'S CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY MINISTRY

WE WILL TAKE A BREAK FROM LESSONS IN JANUARY DUE TO MRS. FICARELLA BEING ON MATERNITY LEAVE. LESSONS WILL BEGIN AGAIN IN FEBRUARY 2021.

Virtual Little Lights: For a family with Babies – Toddler age 2:

No lessons in January, lessons will resume in February.

Virtual Spark: Preschool-Kindergarten:

No lessons in January, lessons will resume in February.

Non-Virtual Shine: 1st-5th Grade:

There will be no Virtual Shine lessons again until February. All lessons will follow the Lectionary Calendar for this year. This means your children will be studying the same Gospel and readings as you do that week in Worship!

Confirmation is up and running on Zoom!

We have planned a schedule that allows our group to connect weekly, alternating Wednesdays and Sundays. Zoom link is emailed out weekly. It is not too late to join Confirmation! Email Pastor Melody Eastman with any questions meastman@graceglenellyn.org. The dates to meet are listed below.

Sunday Morning 1-hour Gospel Study @ 11:00am with Dominic LoGalbo

The Gospel Study is a combined study with Confirmation Students. Come join us for great discussion and ways to apply these lessons to our lives. January 10 & 24 are the upcoming dates. Email Dominic LoGalbo dlogalbo@sbcglobal.net with any questions!

Wednesday Evening 1-hour Confirmation Discussion @7:30pm with Pastor Melody

January 20; February 3

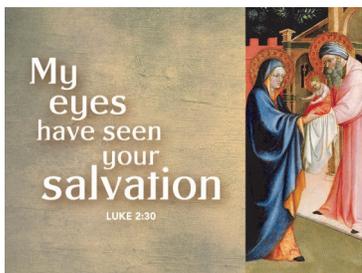
Friends are ALWAYS welcome to join in our Virtual Programming!

Peace Be Upon You Grace Family and Friends.

Becky Ficarella, Ministry Associate

bficarella@graceglenellyn.org





CHRISTMAS 1 WORSHIP SERVICE

The First Sunday of Christmas, **December 27**, is a **SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS** from the Metro-

politan Chicago Synod. Login details will be provided as they become available.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING COMING IN JANUARY

We will have our **annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 31**. During this meeting we will elect new board members and vote on the 2021 budget. Due to the current pandemic situation, we will hold this meeting via Zoom. We will also have a **“virtual” Coffee with Council via Zoom on a Sunday in January to review and discuss the 2021 budget**. We will send out Zoom information and additional details in January. If you would like to join either of these sessions but are not comfortable with Zoom or have questions/comments, please contact Jon Milleville for help via email at jmilleville@comcast.net. Zoom does not require a computer as you can join by dialing in on a telephone.

We are in need of one new Council Member for a term starting in February of 2021. If you would be interested or have questions, please contact Jon Milleville.

NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday, November 22, we were blessed to welcome into membership at Grace Lutheran Sigrid Elliott and Karin Slenczka. Sigrid and Karen have been worshipping

with us since April of 2019 and are active in our congregation. Both are super excited about officially being members of Grace now!!



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2021

With a grateful heart for God’s boundless generosity and as an expression of my Christian stewardship, I/we make this commitment to Christ’s church and this congregation.

With 2020 being such a chaotic and unnerving year it’s easy to overlook things in life. So we are giving you a gentle reminder that Grace still needs pledge cards returned. Please fill in your pledge amount for 2021 to help Grace Church continue its mission of Proclaim, Build and Serve to our community. Return the commitment card at your earliest convenience and at the latest by mid-January. The returned commitment card will help Grace form a financial perspective on what services can be provided to our members and the community in 2021.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness, volunteerism and support of Grace in these trying times.

In Christ your Grace Finance Team

Commitment Card Example

Church is: \$___ per week or \$___ per month or \$___ per year
Mortgage Reduction is: \$___ per week or \$___ per month or \$___ per year
OR ___ I/We will give as we are able but prefer not to disclose an amount at this time.

ELIMINATE THE COMMA! MORTGAGE REDUCTION CAMPAIGN UPDATE

With grateful thanks to Grace members and friends who have contributed to this campaign, and the matching funds provided by Grace, we were able to make a \$75,000 buy-down payment on our mortgage this past April. **This lowered our monthly payment from \$7,993 to \$7,434 resulting in \$559 savings per month or \$6,708 per year! But we did not eliminate the comma!** Our wish to make another \$75,000 buy-down payment at the end of 2020 so please consider a special gift to this fund in December. Please indicate it is for the Mortgage Reduction Fund. Any amounts given will get us closer to being able to make this buy-down in December and another reduction in our monthly mortgage payment. Let's get this comma eliminated in 2020! Thank you.

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1/12 Mark & Cyndy Drager (41)

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/1 JoAnn Griffin	1/22 Lenore Dean (91)
1/4 Beatrice Stange (90)	1/23 Kim Darlin
1/5 Donna Jacobo	1/23 Sydney Hamilton
1/7 Andrew Swiston	1/24 Daniel Langner
1/9 Rob Granner	1/24 Donald Linnane
1/9 Abigail Nelson	1/25 Judy Simon
1/9 Lillian Nelson	1/26 Brad Baxa
1/11 Donna Loftus	1/26 Meredith Doyle
1/13 Tim Kelly	1/28 Katie Inzinga
1/15 Howard Bruning (93)	1/29 Jacob Plant
1/16 Cyndy Drager	1/29 Natalie Yount
1/16 Derek Zimmer	1/30 Karen Roete
1/21 Robert Margetts	

AMAZONSMILE

Grace received a check for \$41.38 from AmazonSmile for activity between July 1 and September 30, 2020. Surely we can do better than that! Here's How!

Sign up for AmazonSmile and pick *Grace Lutheran Church* as your Charity of Choice: Remember to shop at AmazonSmile when making purchases online. In order to browse or shop at AmazonSmile, customers must first select a charitable organization. Here is the link for Grace Lutheran:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-2496438>

When you sign on, you will see "Supporting Grace Lutheran Church" in the upper left hand corner. Then just shop as you normally do. There is no cost to Grace or to you, the customer. The shopping experience is identical to Amazon.com with the added benefit that the Amazon-Smile Foundation will donate a percentage of your purchase amount to Grace.

GLEN ELLYN FOOD PANTRY

Purchase a brick for the walkway of our new home for yourself or as a special gift for a loved one. Each brick will be etched with the name of an individual or organization of your choosing. Purchases of bricks in December will go toward a \$30,000 Match promised by a generous donor. <https://www.thatsmybrick.com/gefp>

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania Avenue
 Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
 Office: 630.469.1555
 Emergency Pastoral Contact: 630.674.2887
 Email: info@graceglenellyn.org

www.graceglenellyn.org

Every Member: Minister & Missionary!

Melody Eastman, Pastor
 Becky Ficarella, Ministry Associate
 Carole LoGalbo, M.S., LCPC Parish Counselor
 Barbara Sudds, Office Manager
 Bradford Thompson, Minister of Music

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30am - 3:00pm
 Tuesday and Thursday 1:00pm - 3:00pm

PRAYER REQUESTS

Helen Sladek, Pr. Melody Eastman, Dorothy Tracy, Sigrid Elliott, Elizabeth Amber, Chris Danly, and those infected with the Covid-19 virus for healing and strength.

Congratulations to Mario and Becky Ficarella and big brother Enzo on the birth of Fiona Skye.

Prayers for our Homebound Members:

Anita Blakemore, Evelyn Elson, Carol Peterson, Norma Petersen, Dorothy Stein

NOSES AND NUMBERS

DATE	ATTENDANCE		OFFERING
	SUNDAY	WEDNESDAY	
11/1	60	0	\$ 9,005
11/8	40	0	\$11,300
11/15	43	0	\$ 5,325
11/22	39	0	\$ 1,025
11/29	29	11	\$ 6,360



Grace's income, minus the PPP Gov't Aid Loan, through November 2020 is \$331,549 while expenses incurred during the same period are \$404,748.