

December 2023

Hello, all!

**Sooo much is going on in the life of Grace these days! Here are some of the highlights:**

•**Saturday, December 2nd at 4pm:** I’m putting on a **Christmas concert!** Ideally, I and a couple of my friends.  Our annual concert in Alabama has been met with such success that we’ve decided to try it here! Tickets can be purchased through the website or through the church office. Bring the whole family and all your friends! We’d love a packed house.

On that note (ha-ha…) …in December Grace will welcome the newest member of its a musical family: a **1957 Baldwin concert grand piano!** This new-to-us instrument will nestle right up front in the sanctuary and will be used for concerts, recitals, Sunday services, you name it! We’re ecstatic to soon have TWO concert grand (9’) pianos in our sanctuary. This is something I’ve never seen before in ANY church. Can anyone say “dueling pianos”? More to come on that!

•**Wednesday, December 13th: Cocoa and Carols!!!** So, if you open google maps in your phone and search Grace Lutheran Glen Ellyn, you’ll notice that a variety of photos pop up. Check out the photo of the sanctuary for Cocoa and Carols. As I’m writing this, the photo has 33,503 views. Yes, you read that correctly. 33 THOUSAND views. Needless to say, this is one of the highlights of our year, so throw on some comfy pj’s and please join us for some sangin’!!!

•**Sunday, December 17th at 10am:** please join us for our final **Do-it-Yourself Nativity!** There’ll be costumes and stars and crystal bells and Christmas favorites and treats after the service! Come one and all and let’s have some fun :)

**Things to look for in 2024:**

•We’d like to begin offering an **evening prayer service** of some kind, possibly on Sunday evenings. It’s occurred to some of us that so many people work 9-5’s the whole weeklong, and when Sunday morning rolls around, it can be difficult to drag one’s self out of bed and get to church (as a textbook nightowl, I can attest to this lol). For so many younger people, Sunday evening brings with it the impending dread of Monday morning… the weekly work cycle starting all over again (some call this “the Sunday Scaries”). Holding a cozy candlelit service (say around 7:30pm or so) may be a great way to offer grounding and fellowship to millennials, gen Z’er’s, and nightowls who otherwise may not have this in their lives.  More to come on that! *Continued on Back Page*

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**Some other services we’re toying with the idea of trying out:**

•**a Taizé service!** These types of meditative/chant services have seen WILD success from here to Chicago and all over the world.

•**a dinner church service:** this trend is taking the coasts by storm and it’s only a matter of time before we see these popping up all over Chicagoland. It might not hurt to get in on the ground floor and be the first in the area to offer this. If you’re curious about what this model looks like, talk to me or Karin Slenzka!

•**hymns and hops:** basically, people come together for a pint/glass of wine and sing old favorites!!!

We don’t want to spread ourselves too thin, but we do want to consider all options. Grace is already home to four different worship communities, making it truly a House of Prayer. A genuine Community Center. Think of what this models for future generations—the ability to overcome millennia-old boundaries and coexist in peace.  Supporting our brothers and sisters of other faith traditions accepts the reality that God shows up everywhere for everyone, even if that doesn’t always look exactly the same. A 6 to me may look like a 9 to you…

My vision for Grace is a place where all are welcome, where hate has no home, and where truth, charity, compassion, wisdom, and Love know no bounds.

🙏🏼And finally, it’s with mixed emotions that we bid a fond farewell to our Pastor of 8+ years. Pastor Melody and I started our service here at Grace one week apart, in August/September of 2015.  We’re so excited for her to begin the next step of her journey, but it’s still hard to say goodbye to this beautiful chapter in Grace’s herstory. Do me a favor. When you see Pastor Melody, thank her for her nearly 40 years of faithful ministry. Ask her how she is. Have a real conversation with her and for Isaac’s sake share a laugh. Recall a fond memory and send her off with your love and appreciation. Grace is grateful.

That’s all for now, my friends! Thank you all for being lovely.

Peace be with you, and rock on!!!

Bradford Thompson

Minister of Music/Children’s Ministry Coordinator

**Ginny’s Freecycle Table – Donations Wanted**

***YES, in GOOD condition, please!***

**Household items, small home décor**

**Children & adult clothing (no stains)**

**Holiday supplies - ornaments, décor, wrapping paper, tape, etc.**

**Toys!**

**Scarves, hats, gloves, coats, boots, shoes**

**Books**

**Blankets, sheets, towels, table linens**

**Arts & Crafts supplies**

**Kid’s sports equipment**

***NO THANKS!!!!!***

**NO FURNITURE!**

**NO Kitchen items w/baked on crud or rust**

**NO Electronics, unless part of a kids' toy**

**NO Large picture frames/mirrors**

**NO Cassette & VHS tapes**

**NO Open cosmetics**

**NO Christmas lights**

A white and pink invitation with flowers

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A poster with a red mug with marshmallows and a candy cane

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