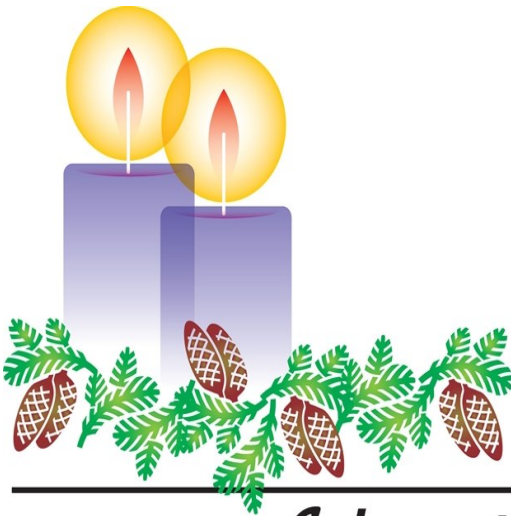


# Good News from Grace

DECEMBER 2021



## SECOND SUNDAY OF *Advent*

### *Our Purpose*

*The purpose of our church is to make a difference by serving others through God's love and our faith.*

#### Dec. 5, 2021 (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent)

**Philippians 1:9-11** –And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

*Love is the theme for the Second Sunday in Advent. When we cultivate love in our lives as steward/disciples, it does overflow and guide our lives on the paths of strength and joy.*

Please contact  
Pastor Cover  
(717-525-4617)  
or  
Pastor Evan  
(717-497-3742)  
or  
Vicar Susan  
(717-497-1013)  
directly if you need  
pastoral assistance.

#### At Home Communion

If you wish for someone to come to your home and provide communion please contact

Pastor Cover  
(717-525-4617)  
Pastor Evan  
(717-497-3742)  
or  
Vicar Susan  
(717-497-1013)

#### Need A Ride?

Contact the church office for a list of members available to help you get where you need to go.

Office Hours:  
Monday - Thursday  
8am - 12 noon  
717-737-0439  
gelc@comcast.net

#### MECHANICSBURG CHOIRS SINGING AT GRACE - DECEMBER 5

On **Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>**, the Mechanicsburg High School Wildcat Singers and the Mechanicsburg Middle School Select Ensemble will be performing a candlelight concert at **7:00pm** in the main sanctuary here at Grace.

This concert is open to the public and is free of charge. Come out to enjoy a quiet evening of beautiful music

to put you in the holiday spirit. This will be the first concert that these students have had in almost 2 years! They are eager to share their musical talents with the community! These ensembles are under the direction of Gordon Kaslusky and Emily Hartman. We look forward to seeing you there.

#### TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: THE BOOK OF ESTHER

##### Biblical Jeopardy

The only book of the Bible that contains one prayer-  
The only book of the Bible with no mention of the temple of church -  
The only book of the Bible that is never quoted anywhere else in the Old or New Testament-  
The only book of the Bible that never mentions God -  
**The answer is the book of Esther.**

So why then are we studying it on Tuesdays in December? Join Pastor Evan Dec. 7, 14, & 21 to find out in-person or via Zoom.

#### ZOOM ADVENT EVENT

Please join Vicar Susan on Zoom for an Advent Event **Sunday, December 12 at 11am.**

During this event you are invited to share a Christmas tradition that you or your family does every year. It could be an activity, a recipe or a Christmas decoration. We'll look at Luke's Christmas story as it compares to our

preparations.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the Zoom information or go to the comment section on the Live Stream site.

*If you wish to participate by phone please contact the church office Monday - Thursday 8am to 12 noon at 717-737-0439 for the information. (Toll charges may apply)*

#### A SANTA MINGLE 2021

The Fellowship & Arts Committee presents: A Santa Mingle 2021.

Join us for an Open House-style event on **Saturday, December 11 from 9am - 11am**



to visit Santa, make crafts and have a hot breakfast and enjoy fellowship at your leisure!

Please sign up [HERE](#) to schedule to eat anytime during either the 9:00am hour or 10:00am hour in the Social Hall or to only see Santa and make some crafts. Santa will be in the library and crafts will be in a room nearby. *Please be sure to indicate the number of children and adults attending.*

For those who only want to do the crafts and see Santa there will be cookies and cocoa available to go.

Parking is available in the lot and enter the church at the Welcome to Grace awning.

If you have any questions or are unable to sign up online contact Hope Pankake at [hopeswenson@gmail.com](mailto:hopeswenson@gmail.com) or 717-448-0739.

## We hold in prayer especially those in the medical fields

Katie Perella-Carvalhoes, Lauren S., Megan S., Dixie S., Ben S., Katelynn S., Tess J., Kay L., Art L., Addison McInnes, Corky Graf, Ken Graf, Kristin Quesenberry, Maureen Minard, Brad Moore, MD, William Schell, MD, Kirsten Hyatt, MS, Star Peiffer, Patty Rohde, Melanie Augustine, Jenny Castillo, Jill Green, Mary Brown, Kara, Sheri Hartzell, Tracy Hartzell, Josh Barr, Chrystal, Sante, Cindy Frost, Eileen Smith, Sharon Eppley, Kayleigh Titzel, Brendan Bergey, Judith Zeiders, Amy Evans, Laurie Colman, Connie Malmberg, Ashley Morris, Amy Schwab, Beth Gargiulo, Tami Heath, Julie Draper, Deb Fickes, Amanda McNally, Justin Young, Jessica Chestnut, Stephanie Sampson, Samantha & Peter Kang, David Bergquist, MD, Karen Redclift Albidrez, Elizabeth Brickell, and Maura White.

## INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN WORSHIP: WHY WHAT WE CALL GOD AND EACH OTHER MATTERS

Some weeks ago, at the Reformation worship service, our pastors were discussing inclusive language for God and humanity in worship. A few members had questions about this reference, and we did not have a chance to really expand on it right then. Here is a great article by the ELCA about language in worship as it relates to terms for humanity and for God:

In the ELCA social statement *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*, "Inclusive language refers to the inclusion of all genders when referring to humanity or God." For example, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) translation of the Bible used in worship resourced would not use "brethren" to refer to all people of God, nor "mankind." While these classifications of humanity were used in the past, we now understand that using such language is limiting to the diversity of humankind

and has been particularly harmful for women, girls and non-binary individual because they are not included in these descriptions.

Many people have pointed out that inclusive language beyond the avoidance of masculine imagery for all humanity. Inclusive language also incorporates our language for one another in worship. In corporate worship we speak to and about everyone who is gathered, so *siblings*, *siblings in Christ*, *beloved in Christ*, *beloved of God*, or *children of God* is more accurate than either *brothers and sisters or sons and daughters* and allows us to recognize both ourselves and everyone around us, no matter our sex and gender, as part of the assembly.

[Read the rest of the article here.](#)

*If you wish for a paper copy of the complete article please contact the church office.*

## THE MEN'S GROUP JANUARY 2022 MEETING

The Men's Group will meet next at 6:00pm on Thursday, January 20th. *Please note the earlier time to allow the members of choir to participate in our meetings.*

The discussion that night will be on homelessness; a problem affecting nearly 600,000 Americans.

Many homeless live in shelters; either emergency or transitional while others are forced to live in tents. Most of us are unaware of the causes or circumstances that create this problem.

Join us as special presenter, Garri Ann Hearn, a member of our congregation who has worked with the homeless, provides us with an opportunity to learn more about the problem. How agencies help the homeless, and what we, as a church can do to assist.

## ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY (EFP)

The EFP is always looking for new volunteers. We need volunteers to serve clients during pantry operating hours, but also have flexible "off-hour" opportunities for drivers, stockers, bag packers and more. Volunteering at the EFP is a wonderful way to support neighbors in need, while getting to know others who are serving our community. Please visit our [volunteer page](#) for more information.

## We hold in prayer especially this week...

Kay Lee, Yvonne Gettys, Dr. Robert Little, Eileen Moore Hartzell, Gladys Cline, Tommy Dunn, Glenda Rumberger, Patti Reed, John Aldridge, Todd Galle, Diane Brokenshire, Dr. Michael Schreck, Sudy Stoll, Keith Downs, Garry Murray, James Silcox, Vernon Frazier, Dean Jury, the friends & family of Donna Ritter and the friends & family of Don Lenker.

## We hold in ongoing prayer...

Margaret Knupp, Kathryn Tuckey, Pastor Molly Haggerty, Arianna Moyer, Kyle Blose, Gerald & Darlene M, Frank Blizzard, Gerry & Sara Jane Crawford, Mary Louise Shetter, Charlie Buchanan, Dave Buchanan, Joyce Allan, Sis Hoffman, Mary Lee Ryder, Jack Alfano, David Harman III, Howard Lauver, Priscilla Walter, Paulette Lauver, Lesly Richards, Elijah Conroy, Susan Blumberg, Lisa Leen, Eileen McCann, Mary Heverling, Mike Lutz, Destiny Glenn, and Reinhard C.

## We also hold our shut-ins in prayer:

Delores Miller, Jim Stoll, Louis Lore, John Hench, Shirley Hughes, John Shuey, Betty Bennett, and Dick Cromer.

## In our military:

Corey Latsha, Alex Robison, Larry G. Lackey and Gabriel Bailey.

*If you have family members or friends on the prayer list please notify the church office (717-737-0439 or [gelc@comcast.net](mailto:gelc@comcast.net)) each month with updates. Your input helps us maintain the prayer list since we are not aware of the changes in the health status of those on the list.*

## Music This Week

"Every Valley"

John Ness Beck

Chancel Choir

"Savior of the Nations Come"

Cathy Moglebust

Bell Choir



### GYG Schedule

#### December

- 5 5:00 - 7:30pm  
GYG Night
- 11 9:00am - 11:00am  
Santa Mingle
- 12 5:00 - 7:30pm  
GYG Night
- 19 4:00 - 7:30pm  
Cookie Bake & Caroling

#### January

- 7-9 Winterfest at  
Wyndham Lancaster  
Resort
- 23 5:00 - 7:30pm  
GYG Night
- 30 Parent's Day Out

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the full 2021 - 2022 GYG Schedule.

### JYG Schedule

#### December

- 5 10:30am - 12:00pm  
JYG
- 11 9:00am - 11:00am  
Santa Mingle
- 19 10:30 - 11:00am  
Large Group Sunday  
School

#### January

- 7-9 Winter Retreat at  
Camp Kirchenwald
- 16 10:30am - 11:00am  
Large Group Sunday  
School

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the September 2021 - January 2022 complete schedule.



Designed for adults ages 18 and older

## Holiday Music at The Library

McCormick Riverfront Library  
Drop in for some holiday tunes!



Learn more about the unique renovation and preservation project that will join McCormick Riverfront Library with the adjacent home of its founder, Sara Haldeman Haly.



thirdintheburg.org

**Friday 5:30 PM**  
**December 17**

No registration necessary.



### WREATH, POINSETTIA & ELCA GOOD GIFT SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

There are (20) red poinsettias still available at \$12.00 each. (Can be taken home after the last Christmas Eve Service).

The wreath sponsorship started on **November 29**. The wreaths are \$ 20.00 each (Note: *they are 18-inch this year, thus the increased cost*). We have (1) wreath remaining for sponsorship.

You can also sponsor one of four choices from the ELCA Good Gifts:

- ♦ A Chick at \$10.00.
- ♦ A Piglet at \$ 30.00.
- ♦ A Goat at \$ 50.00.
- ♦ God's Global Barnyard allows you to give any amount you wish.

All sponsorships can be paid by mailing in or dropping off payment or by paying online by selecting ELCA Good Gifts from the online giving portal or mobile app.

Please make sure to include with any sponsorship contribution what you are sponsoring - chick, piglet, goat or God's Global Barnyard - well as the dedication you would like to have included in the Christmas Eve newsletter.

All sponsorships must be received by **Friday, December 17** to be included.

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE SCHEDULE

Celebrate the season on Christmas Eve with us this year! Every service has something special to offer as we herald Christ's birth. All our services will offer Holy Communion and the singing of Silent Night with candle-lighting. The 4pm service will not offer a sermon -- instead we have a different way of retelling the Christmas story. *All services will be available via Live Stream.*

- 4pm Kids Pageant**  
**7pm Jazz/Swing Christmas**  
**9pm Choir & Bells Traditional Service\***

*\*This year our "Special Music" before the late service is our advertised start time. In years past, visitors have missed the note about prior special music. By advertising the time at 9pm, everyone gets to enjoy the extended prelude and worship service!*



**The Church Office  
will be closing at 11am on  
Wednesday,  
December 22.**

**The Church office will be  
CLOSED for the Christmas  
Holiday on  
Monday, December 27.**

### 'IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS'

*Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you." -Luke 6:38*  
Why is it so hard to find that all-too-elusive "perfect gift" for the loved ones in your life? For many of us, it's because they already have everything they need and most of what they want.

It sometimes feels impossible to find a gift that won't be banished to that closet for unwanted, unneeded, and unused presents -- alongside the loud ties, the strong perfumes, the unread books, and the garish sweaters. When it comes to gift-giving, it's often said, "It's the thought that counts." If that's true, why do we still put so much emphasis on the gift?

This year focus on the thoughts behind your Christmas gifts. Thoughts in keeping with the season. Thoughts of meeting real needs and giving where it will be much appreciated. With so many disadvantaged people in the world, at least some of our Christmas budget would be well spent helping our needy neighbors.

If you are buying for a loved one who has everything, consider instead giving a monetary donation in their honor to a worthy charity that helps the poor. Some charities, such as Heifer International and ELCA Good Gifts, let you buy a specific

*Continued on page 4*



## DECEMBER 21: HOMELESSNESS REMEMBRANCE DAY

In honor of Homelessness Remembrance Day, you are invited to join the Lower Susquehanna Synod Homelessness & Affordable Housing Task Force and other advocates, volunteers, and craftspeople on December 21, the longest night of the year, to raise awareness about homelessness and pay tribute to those who have died while living on the streets in Cumberland County. **This Homeless Remembrance Blanket Project** will cover Veterans Memorial Courtyard at the Square in Carlisle with approximately 200 blankets on **Tuesday, December 21, beginning at 5:00pm**. They are looking for many hands to help connect the hundreds of blankets that will cover the square.

The evening also includes a candlelight vigil in remembrance of those who have died from homelessness, soup and bread give away, and opportunities to receive your donations of hats, gloves, and feminine hygiene products. Additionally, a public reading of author Pat LaMarche's children's books on homelessness will be offered and representatives from organizations serving those experiencing homelessness will also be onsite. For more information, [access the Facebook event here.](#)



## ADVENT: A SEASON FOR WAITING AND PREPARING

BY LINDA POST BUSHOFSKY

DECEMBER: Slowing the pace and actively waiting.

I used to be rather impatient with all kinds of things. I must have been about 15 when I learned to make chocolate pudding from scratch in a home economics class. At school I dutifully followed the teacher's instructions to first sift the cocoa before measuring to eliminate any lumps. Later that same week I decided to make some pudding for my family. Wanting to shorten up the time it took to make the pudding, I simply measured out the cocoa and didn't bother to sift it. The telltale lumps in the pudding I served, full of dry cocoa, were witness to my impatience.

As I've aged, I've learned to be more patient, mostly through trial and error, especially in parenting. Like me with the cocoa, though, a lot of us aren't too patient when it comes to observing Advent. We want to celebrate Christmas throughout the whole month of December. After all, by then Christmas decorations have been up for weeks. Radio stations devoted to Christmas music started up as soon as Halloween was over.

Why not deck the halls, wrap some presents, and sing some carols in the weeks leading up to Christmas day? Let's get to the good stuff, may seem to say, so that by the time December 25 rolls around, we can be done with Christmas and on to celebrating the new year!

I'm forever indebted to an illustration Gertud Mueller Nelson uses in explaining Advent traditions in her book *To Dance With God*. Nelson tells of pre-Christian people in Europe who, as the nights grew longer and the weather turned colder, took a wheel

off their wagon and brought it into their home. The wheel was festooned with evergreens as a reminder that life would come again in the spring. Candles were added to the wheel for added light in the darkening days of winter. Taking the wheel off also symbolized stepping back from their means of commerce and entering into a fallow, dormant season.

Nelson goes on to ask the provocative question that continued to haunt me each year – how would your Advent be different if you took a wheel off your car? What if you slowed down the pace of December and leaned into an active dormancy? What if you observed the season of Advent and began your Christmas celebrations on December 24, fully celebrating the 12 days of Christmas? The answers to these questions really suggest not only how your Advent would be different but also how your celebration of Christmas would be different.

Advent is a holy time, a time of incubation when we are made hale, healthy, and whole. At the same time, Advent is not a time for idle waiting, watching, and wondering. No, Advent is a time for active preparation. We take efforts to realign ourselves with God. We focus more intently on prayer, devotion, service.

Last year, during pandemic shutdowns, we had an opportunity to metaphorically take off the wheel and experience a different kind of Advent. Was Advent different for you in 2020? Will it be different this year?

May you find a space for quiet contemplation and conversation with God this season of holy mystery.

## 'It's The Thought that Counts' *continued from page 3*

item – such as a goat or pig for a family, or a water well for a village – to help people in the developing world. Make the gift in your loved one's name or honor, and then describe it in a card attached to a low-cost "token" gift, such as a small box of chocolates or a bottle of wine. The better part of your gift will go to someone who truly needs it, and your loved one will share the joy of loving and helping your neighbors in need.

Just remember, 'It's the thought that counts!'

Copyright © 2021, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for [www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org). He blogs at [www.thestewardshipguy.com](http://www.thestewardshipguy.com)

## Youth Food Cards

Support the Youth Ministry at Grace by purchasing gift cards from Karns, Weis or Giant in the dollar amounts of \$25, \$50 or \$100.

These cards are available at the office service window Monday - Thursday from 8am to 12noon. Contact Chris at 717-737-0439.

Checks should be made payable to GELC with Youth Food Card on the memo line.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Grief Support Group

Meets the **second Thursday of the month at 11:00am** and will try to meet in person as much as possible. Reading material is provided. For more information contact Pastor Cover 717-525-4617 [pastorcover.gelc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorcover.gelc@gmail.com)

### Tuesday Bible Study: 1:00pm & 7:00pm

Join us Tuesdays, December 7, 14 & 21 either in-person at 1pm (*Participants are required to be masked, especially those not vaccinated*) or via Zoom at 7pm to find out why the book of Esther is so unique.

Contact Pastor Evan at [pastorevan47@gmail.com](mailto:pastorevan47@gmail.com) or 717-497-3742 for login information.

### Revelations Bible Study

Please join Vicar Susan for a 6 week study of the book of Revelations.

**It will meet on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 from January 4, 2022 through February 8, 2022 via Zoom.**

The Zoom credentials are [HERE](#) or contact the office if wishing to participate via phone (Toll charges may apply).

### Book Club

#### **No Book Club in December.**

The next book club meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 18 at 7pm via Zoom**. The book club will be reading "The Henna Artist" by Alka Joshi.

Contact Pastor Cover at [pastorcover.gelc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorcover.gelc@gmail.com) for login information.

### Men of Grace

The Men of Grace will **not meet in December**. They will resume meeting on the **third Thursday of the month at 6:00pm via zoom** in January 2022.

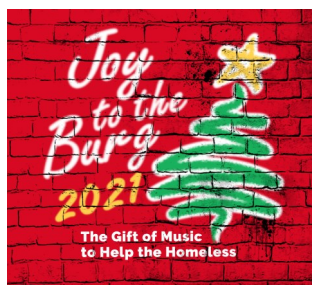
For more information or login instructions please contact Matt Hearn 717-350-1048 or Rick Keen 717-657-5563.

### Sabbath Wine & Cheese

#### **No Wine & Cheese on Saturday, December 25.**

Wine & Cheese will resume in January on the **4th Saturday of the month at 5:15pm** as long as someone sponsors it.

Sponsorship sign-ups are by the elevator. If no one has signed up for sponsorship one week prior the Wine & Cheese will be cancelled.



Local musicians have united again in 2021 to create the third annual Joy to the Burg Christmas album to benefit people experiencing homelessness. Albums are on sale now and proceeds will support the homelessness programs of Christian Churches United (CCU) in Harrisburg.

Thanks to generous sponsors ALL the costs associated with producing the CD have been covered. Therefore, 100% of all album sales goes directly to the homelessness outreach efforts of expanding winter walk-in shelters for both men & women in Harrisburg as well as helping those on the street get into long-term housing.

Albums are available at Karns or at [www.joyToTheBurg.com](http://www.joyToTheBurg.com)



## This Week at Grace...

There are no Altar Flowers for **Sunday, December 5**.

The Bulletin & Mailing Sponsorship for **Sunday, December 5** is given by Mary Louise Shetter in memory of her mother, Helen L. Simmons.

The Sanctuary Lamp Sponsorship for **December** is given by Diane Brokenshire in loving memory of her parents.

The Special Benevolence Offering for **December is ELCA Good Gifts**. To contribute please list the amount on your offering envelope next to Special Offering Ministry and list *ELCA Good Gifts along with which designation (Chick, Piglet, Goat or Global Barnyard* under comments.

### Sponsorship Opportunities

The 2022 Sponsorship dates are now available. You can sign up on the bulletin board near the elevator or [CLICK HERE](#) to see available dates. Contact Diane at 717-737-0439 x 15 or [deppengelc@gmail.com](mailto:deppengelc@gmail.com) to reserve a date before sending in payment if unable to sign-up at the church.

**Good News from Grace** articles are due by **12 noon on Tuesdays**. Email to [deppengelc@gmail.com](mailto:deppengelc@gmail.com)

### Join us for Worship!

Saturdays at 6:00PM  
Sundays at 9:30AM  
or  
[via Live Stream](#)

### Sunday School

Sundays September to May



## Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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