

Our Purpose?
Bless the World: be God's Grace!



Ministry Announcements for the week of January 03, 2021

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD,
AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD,
AND THE WORD WAS GOD.
~John 1:1

Christians and the Book of Romans Part 3: Life in Christ Bob Haaf

The author of the book of Romans makes straightforward statements about life in Christ.

→ "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God... [Romans 12:1]."

What the author of Romans describes flows out of salvation — it doesn't earn salvation but lives it out.

→ "If God is for us, who is against us?... We are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. [Romans 8:31-39]."



This text gives every reason to be confident, not in ourselves but in our salvation and in the sovereign God who is accomplishing it. These words offer hope and confidence in the midst of a fallen world.

Look in the mirror and, as a Christian, ask yourself two questions:

- Do I see a person who lives this life?
- Do I see a person who helps others at Grace live this life?

Christ in our Home books for January, February and March are finally here!!
They will be in the back of the sanctuary or in the office for you to pick up.

From the Northwestern Ohio Synod

Please join us in 2021, as we read through the entire
New Testament in Chronological Order.

Not Matthew to Revelation, but James to Revelation. You may be surprised to know that many of the New Testament Letters were composed before the Gospels were written.

You can pick up a copy of the schedule of readings in the back of the church on Sundays or if you stop by the office any time during the week.

Watch your mailbox for a survey from the Transition Team!
Please fill in and return as soon as possible.

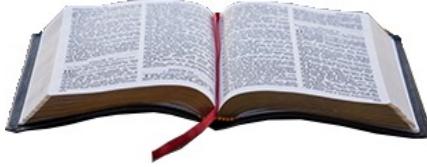
Grace Office hours are
9:00am to Noon - Monday through Friday

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**ZOOM Bible Study
Saturdays @3:00pm**

Beginning on Saturday January 9 we will begin the book of 1Corinthians.
For information send your request to haaf.vgs@gmail.com.



Basil the Blacksmith rose and said,
"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet I am never wiser."

Source: Evangeline by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
[Did you know that "sooth" means "true"]



January Birthdays

- 1 - Kris Gedeon
- 1 - Karol Grisard
- 1 - Jeanie Holzscheiter
- 5 - Turner Sattler
- 8 - Milena Slaybaugh
- 9 - Laurie Drerup
- 9 - Scott McClintic
- 10 - Pat Fietz
- 10 - Brenda Holderman
- 15 - Cindy Redrup
- 17 - Thomas Keister
- 17 - Abby Reeb
- 20 - Gretchen Hiatt
- 24 - Jan Pfund
- 25 - Dennis Lauman
- 26 - Amy Reeb
- 28 - Bob Haaf
- 28 - Elizabeth Kramp
- 30 - Sue Melchert
- 31 - Emma Rinto

December Attendance

	<u>9:30am</u>	<u>11:30am</u>
Dec. 6	35	9
Dec. 13	34	12
Dec. 20	Closed	
Dec. 27	31	12

Christmas Eve

3:00 - 43
10:30 - 29

Tithes and Offerings

Dec. 6	\$3508.00
Dec. 13	\$3946.15
Dec. 20	\$2629.00
Dec. 27	\$5731.32
& Christmas Eve	

Go tell it on the
mountain
that Jesus Christ
is born!!!!

Do You Know the Bible?

Which of the following statements
can be found in the Bible?

1. Anna and Joachim were the parents of the Virgin Mary.
2. Mary's husband, Joseph, was an old widower with sons from a previous marriage.
3. Jesus was born in a cave.
4. In later life, Pontius Pilate and his wife became Christians.
5. Peter was crucified upside down.
6. Paul was beheaded on orders from the Roman Emperor Nero.

Answer on last page

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Feed Your Neighbor Update

by Mary Schneider

For the week of December 17 – December 23, 2020, 34 pounds of food was donated to the Feed Your Neighbor Program. In my next update I will have the total of food donated in 2020 when our food drop-off program began and I know everyone will be astounded with the amount. Grace is truly a generous congregation.

**The collection day will be changed to Mondays
beginning on Monday, January 11.**

Wednesday, January 6, will be our last Wednesday collection day. I am beginning a part time job in January and will be off on Mondays and Tuesdays. Because I believe in the Feed Your Neighbor ministry and enjoy the opportunity to serve in this way, this change is being made. If you would have any questions, please feel free to call me at 419.262.0730.

Behind the scenes at Grace

1. Wow what a beautiful Christmas Eve! The poinsettias, the Christmas tree, the lights and the people – we are thankful to God for letting us join together (inside, parking lot and in our homes) to celebrate Jesus' birth.
2. The music was wonderful and Peter Kramp's singing of the Lord's Prayer was awesome! The choir and Debbie added to the wonderful celebration.
3. Then there was Bob Haaf in the rocking chair with the children's story! How can we not enjoy Bob and his interest in the kids and presenting a special story!
4. Callie and Mallory Moore provided a wonderful duet at the 3:00 service with support from Debby Reeb.
5. Work is continuing behind the scenes on the Web page – the office is getting excited as we will soon get to see a preview.
6. Did you see the Prayer Board out Christmas Eve and this last Sunday? Please add your prayer requests in addition to those that are printed in the bulletin.
7. Don't forget the Food Pantry donations as the need is still really great and this is part of our wonderful outreach. A New Year's plan to donate weekly as you can? Personal Needs is also another of our outreach programs.
8. Thanks to Mary Schneider and Grace Peterson for ushering at the Christmas Eve Services!
9. Don't forget if you do not feel comfortable coming inside for Sunday Service, we are transmitting to the parking lot. If you are in the parking lot and need a bulletin, please flash your headlights and we will bring one out!
10. We were told by someone with experience the answer to what is the highest number of poinsettias we have had in the past has been 125! Wow!
11. **Don't Forget! Grace is not the building of Grace. We need to work together to keep the Grace Family healthy for this exciting new year of opportunities inside and outside ourselves!**

Healthy People! Healthy Parish! (Submitted by the Parish Nurse)

Winter!

Yep, it is here for sure! Although we have not seen a lot of snow and thankfully no ice Grace does have a Winter Weather Policy that was just approved by Church Council in December.

Winter Weather Policy (in a nutshell)

1. Snow Emergency Levels 1 and 2 - Church remains open and services will be held. Other meetings are at the discretion of the group and/or committee. The chairperson of the group or committee will be responsible for notifying their members if the meeting is cancelled. The chairperson will notify the Church Office if their meeting is cancelled as the office may receive phone calls. Office staff will report to church per routine.
2. Snow Emergency Level 3 - automatic cancellation of worship services, committee meetings, meetings by outside groups and /or rentals. The Church Office will be closed.



Please use your judgement in attending events at Level 1 and 2 if the roads are bad or you have some mobility issues it might be wise to be careful and stay at home.

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Mask Stuff!

For right now they are part of us! Wearing them correctly is also key to preventing transmission. They must cover the mouth AND NOSE! Just think if you sneeze or someone nearby sneezes and is carrying the virus? Ugh!

Even with the vaccine the CDC is still recommending that if you receive the 2 doses that you continue to wear your mask and maintain physical distancing until more information is known.

If you are wearing a cloth mask, please wash on a regular basis and or when visibly soiled in hot water and detergent.

Disposable masks should be thrown away when visibly soiled or damaged (straps broken or torn, or just are not staying above your nose). Cut the elastic ear straps from the disposable masks before discarding, as animals can become easily entangled.

Please put the disposable masks in the trash as they are now becoming litter in grocery store and other parking lots.

People are developing skin irritation from the masks. Use gentle cleaners when washing your face. Wash the mask in fragrance free detergents. Limiting makeup to areas beyond the mask (only what we see-great reason to buy eye makeup!) can help. After shave lotions may also irritate the skin.



The New Year!

Healthy stuff is in!

Healthy Holidays start out with you guessed it National Weigh in Day on January 4 and Diet Resolution Week January 1-7 (yes, a whole week to start) and then National Climb Stairs Day on January 9.

We have indulged and enjoyed all the goodies this year - possibly a little more than normal this year (?).

Healthy Eating can be difficult but not totally out of the question. First need to dispose of all the goodies – eat them, give them away, certain things like crackers can be put out for the starlings in small quantities.

Start small – think of the rainbow colors and add one to each of your meals. Citrus is coming in. Apples are still pretty tasty and well-priced. Carrots, butternut and acorn squash are still plentiful and not expensive. Did you know that if you microwave a acorn or butternut squash on high for one minute it makes the tough skin easier (and less dangerous) to cut!

Make it a plan to add one veggie or fruit to each meal for the month of January. Try new ones - check out the other squashes like a sweet dumpling or a delicata. Steam if you can to save all the vitamins.

Canned fruit in its own juice is better than heavy syrup. Canned vegetables are available in low sodium (salt) varieties - just be careful to not add all the salt back when cooking. Frozen vegetables are still relatively cheap and do not have the salt.

Some other good food for a Healthy Diet!!

Oatmeal

January is National Oatmeal Month! No one takes ownership for naming the month, but it has been around for a while.



In the US and Canada oatmeal means any crushed oats, rolled oats or cut oats (often we hear steel cut oats)..

More oatmeal is eaten in the month of January than any other time of the year but just not for breakfast. If you guessed the other favorite way is in a cookie – you won.

Oatmeal cooked in water or milk is often referred to as a porridge. Way back it was often called a “gruel”.

Research has shown that eating oatmeal can contribute to good heart health. The soluble fiber in oatmeal can help lower cholesterol and may also reduce blood pressure.

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Adding healthy stuff like fresh fruit -apples, berries is great, and you get a double dose of healthy food. Other fruit like raisins, dried apples, and nuts also add health benefits but in moderation.

Another great way to eat oatmeal is baked. It can be prepared and kept in the frig and then warmed up or eaten cold. Anyone interested in a recipe -they will be available on Parish Nurse Office door or give the office a call and we will send.

What Got Left Out of the Sermon – an occasional piece

~by Pastor Howard

(Sounds preposterous, doesn't it? Sometimes it seems as if the preacher's aim is to drone on as long as he possibly can. Can he really be cutting things out, to keep the sermon from getting too long?)

He can. He does. And, since you can't hit "Fast Forward" during a sermon, something omitted from the sermon for the First Sunday of Christmas is printed here, where you can scroll right past it if you choose. The text we read was Luke 2.22-40.)

Two people recognized and greeted Jesus in the Temple when he was a month old. I talked about Simeon. I didn't mention Anna. How interesting that, even as we're celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Lutherans' beginning to ordain women, a male pastor has nothing to say about a woman who shows up in the Gospel for the Day, a woman who is identified in the Gospel as a prophet, no less! Hmm ...

In at least two ways, Anna is different from Simeon, according to Luke. The first is that she got there on her own. Actually, Luke says, "She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day." That may be a little bit of an exaggeration. Did she *never* go home and sleep? Did she *never* eat anything? Seems unlikely. Luke is emphasizing her devotion to God: to her, nothing matters *except* God, and what God is doing in the world, and what she knows, when she sees Jesus, God is about to do in the world. Luke says Simeon got a nudge from the Holy Spirit, and went to the Temple to see Jesus. Anna didn't need a nudge. She was already there.

The second way she was different is that she started spreading the word about what God was doing in the world. She wanted other people to know. For Simeon, there was great personal fulfillment, which is in no way a bad thing. For Anna, though, the personal was not enough. The news, for her, was far too good not to be shared. For Simeon, it's private. For Anna, it's public.

Simeon and Anna show us two sides of being people of God. Simeon shows the personal connection. Anna shows the urgency to share the connection. Something like "What can I give him, poor as I am?" and "Go, tell it on the mountain!"

There's a similar pairing with the Magi and the shepherds. The Magi worshiped, gave their gifts, and then went home, and there's no indication that they said anything to anyone about the One they'd seen. The shepherds, though, "made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them." Again, two sides: private, and public.

I think God's people need both sides. Which is more important? Well, without personal faith, we have nothing to offer publicly. Without the public expression, how can we be loving our neighbors?

What do you think?

Life ..

Instructions for living a life: Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it. *(Mary Oliver)*

To serve is beautiful, but only if it is done with joy and whole heart and free mind.
(Pearl Buck)

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant.
(Robert Louis Stevenson)

Life is short! Live it up, smile, be thankful and loving!

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Two services on Sunday morning here at Grace!

Come join us!
9:30 In the sanctuary
11:30 In the chapel
Observing Covid precautions
Masks required - physical distancing
Music and song and praise!
We will continue to meet during the level red alert, following the safety guidelines.



GRACE CHURCH COUNCIL

David Charvat
Elise Lohmann
Cindy Wood
Dan Holzscheiter
David O'Brien
Kim Kondalski
Fritz Gooch
Mary Schneider
Katie Sattler
Greg Schafer
Rick Sharp

Council President
Treasurer
Secretary
VP of Admin
VP of Ministries



Please check out our Grace Website for the latest information and updates.
<http://www.gracelutherantoledo.org/>

If you would like something in the newsletter, please email to the office no later than Monday. It fills up fast and we have a limit to how many pages can be mailed (mailing is Tuesday morning). Thank you!

FOLKS TO CONTACT HERE AT GRACE

Council President	David Charvat
Grace Office	Cathy Holewinski
Custodial	Joe Zawierucha
Parish Nurse	Gretchen Hiatt
Worship	
Children's Choir Director	Nancy Stepleton
Choir	Peter Kramp
Organist	Debby Reeb
Praise Team Leader	Dale Walberg
Youth Ministry Advisors	Debbie Fallon, Wendy McCall
Pastor	Pr. Howard Abts

Answer to Bible Quiz - none of them!

THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE
LET US REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT!
PSALM 118:24

