

grace notes

November & December 2019

Living with a Generous Spirit

I taught our Golden Rule Daycare kids the parable of the vineyard workers this morning. This is the story where the landowner hires workers at different times during the day, promising to pay the people hired first in the morning a day's wages, and at the end of the day, pays everyone the same, regardless of how long they worked. I thought it would be fun to have the daycare kids act out the story. I had 6 rakes and I hired the kids with the promise that if they worked for me for the day, I would give them 3 stickers. The kids were all eager to volunteer, so I selected my first two, who instantly began vigorously raking the front of our altar space. I explained to the kids who were sitting and watching, that the work is hard and it is hot outside, and I still had plenty of crops in the ground, so I needed to hire more workers. Soon enough



all my rakes were being used and I got to the end of the story. I lined them up- the most recently hired workers in the front, and the first workers in the back. I paid the first kids in line 3 stickers, who received their payment with joy and thanksgiving. When I got to the back of the line- I said, "I just gave everyone else **three** stickers for their work, but you worked much longer and harder how many stickers should I give you?" One little girl with big brown eyes responded quickly: "Two!" I had to laugh. Of course, this hadn't worked the way I planned. "No, you get three too," I told her. Then I asked, "I'm going to give all the kids 3 stickers, even those who didn't work. Is that fair?" The kids were quick to shout out "Yes!" Clearly, the kids missed the punch line. All the daycare workers laughed along with me as I explained to the kids that we have a generous God who gives God's love to us regardless of how hard we work, and what we do. Is God fair? Depends on how you perceive that story, I guess. God is fair enough to love us all and to be generous with all of us. The daycare kids knew this well. They didn't grumble or complain, they were all just grateful for what they had been given and excited that they ALL got three stickers!

Kids know how to live in the kingdom of God better than most adults do. They are less concerned with who did what, for how long, and more concerned with including other people and making sure everyone feels good. Kids understand that everything they have is a gift. After all, they haven't earned anything, but daily they are provided with food, shelter and love (well hopefully). I recognize that some kids don't receive these things, but it is our hope and prayer that every child has this. Now don't get me wrong, I am fully aware that kids are far from perfect. I am raising two daughters. There were plenty of days when my girls were not generous with one another and would have been quick to point out that something wasn't fair. Today, I was pleasantly surprised by the hearts and the kindness of the kids at Golden Rule who showed such a loving generous spirit.

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Grace Lutheran Church Staff

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If you would like to contact any of the Vision Board members, please visit graceandover.org and click on leaders.

Vision Board Members

Johnna Rohmer-Hirt(Pres.)	Alden Riley
Chad Hadler (V.P.)	Carla Renner
Vickie Meade (Secretary)	Ann Lange
Dave Trapp	

PRAYERS

We keep in our prayers the newly baptized:

Eve Josephine Hadler
daughter of Chad & Leah Hadler

We keep in our prayers those in need of healing:

Karen Swedberg, Wes Hiller, David Zupon,
John Malecha, Wayne Welle, Linda Christiansen,
Jack Zirkle, Kathy Lovik, Judi Wold, Sylvia Lindgren

We keep in our hearts and prayers the families with recent loss of:

Teri Mattson, Mike Boie,
Mary Welle's brother Joe,
Jim & Debie Brink's brother-in-law Ron,
Chris Behnke-Nead's grandfather

*To the family of Grace,
I want to take this time to
thank each and everyone for
my yard cleanup. This is the
third year. The good Lord
walks with me every second
of the day, he always sends
his people my way, when I
need them the most. I can't
do much anymore. I appreciate this more than you will
every know. Thank you all for being such God loving
people and doing so much for others all the time. Grace,
and all the people truly spread the Word, and bless
everyone with their thoughtfulness and kindness. God's
blessing to you all now and forever. Thank you! With
Love, Cathy Stoll*



*Thank you so much for the help on 9/28 doing yard
work around the house. You all did a good job!
Arden & Shirley Kirkendall*

Vision Board Messages

Praise the Lord!

I am new to the Vision Board, so writing this article is new to me as well. I am so honored to be a part of this team and ask prayers that we (the congregation) can rejoice in all our blessings of a tremendous new beginning with Pastor Joanna, Maria Markman and all the excited and rejuvenated staff at Grace.

In Psalm 146:2 it states *"I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long"*. To praise the Lord every day, now that is a blessing! Is it possible to praise the Lord always? We all try, we try to see the good God has created every day, but it is sometimes hard. In our days of joyous and difficult times of life, God gives us hope, God provides a peace that passes human understanding, God provides for our needs. So what do we need to do? Praise the Lord!

God's greatness has not been diluted in any way over the years of time. He is just as great today as He has been in the past. He can lead you out of trouble. He can lead your life so that you find peace and fulfillment. He can lead your children in the right direction that will be pleasing to Him and good for them. He can lead you to happiness. All you need to do is ask God what He wants for your life. God is great!

As I write this, it is snowing on October 12, but the Fall leaves are beautiful out my window! God's glory shines through in all circumstances. Praise the Lord!

May you find the joy in your hearts to celebrate God's blessings,

Ann Lange, Vision Board Member

PRAISE
the LORD



Grace has been richly blessed! So, tell someone! Grace has five preachers currently on staff. That is amazing! And they are all great preachers. Of course we start with our two pastors Joanna Mitchell and Delwayne Hahn. Don't stop there. Debbie Jorgens - Director of Outreach Ministries and Jonathan Orwig - Director of Worship and Music are both wonderful preachers. If you were in church the weekend of October 12 & 13 you had the pleasure of hearing Maria Markman - Director of Children/Family Ministry, preach on Ruth. So, if you invite someone to attend Grace on a Saturday evening or Sunday morning, they are sure to be rejuvenated with an engaging and relevant message.

On Wednesday evening come around and see the compassionate work of Kristi Larson and Tom Baker with our youth. Watching Kristi work with Catechism students is a treat in itself, along with Tom putting his organizational skills into action. Yes, we have been so richly blessed with such a kind and loving staff. Stop into the office and be greeted with huge smiles. Kris Miller, Beth Clarstrom and Kate Morpew keep things running like a well oiled machine. Mark Kempenich and Dan Tkachenko work hard to keep our building looking clean and welcoming. The newest member of the Grace staff is Melita Anderson, the choir accompanist. Her gifts to Grace are a blessing to us all.

I know it is not necessarily the Lutheran way, but we need to start spreading the word that Grace Lutheran is alive and well.

In Peace, Dave Trapp, Vision Board Member

Continued from front cover...



We are entering the month of November and the holiday season. A time where often we give thanks for what we have been given and an opportunity to respond to the needs of others. It is one of the true blessings of this time a year. The holidays can be a stressful time of year as we think about the expectations of what is demanded of us and all the extra things to do. I know many people who throughout the month of November take time each day to give thanks for one thing in their lives. Practicing gratitude is a good practice, not only because it helps us to be grateful, but because it actually transforms our hearts, minds and spirits. Research shows when we practice gratitude we sleep better, have less anxiety, it strengthens our immune systems and helps us have a better attitude about life. Practicing gratitude sounds like a simple thing to do, but it is more than saying: I'm thankful for my family, but instead invites us to be more observant and more specific. For example: I am thankful for my daughter Helena who made dinner for us on Monday night. I am thankful for my parents who are helping drive Lily to her dentist appointment on Thursday morning. These more specific examples allow us to recognize the ways that people care for us and when we name them through a gratitude journal or aloud, our attitude starts to shift. We start to become more

aware of the gifts that we have been given and less concerned with what we don't have. Gratitude can shift our minds from living in the fear of scarcity to being filled with a spirit of abundance. It helps us to live like the daycare kids who look at a basket of stickers and don't worry at all that there are enough for anyone, but instead celebrate that all their friends got stickers today.

I have much to be grateful for in my life, along with my family and the various ways they take care of me. I am grateful for all of you at Grace Lutheran. I am grateful for the following: the warm smiles I receive on Sunday morning, the small gifts and cards that have been dropped off on my desk, for the homes that have opened their doors for our cottage meetings, for the staff who work so hard in order to help people grow in faith and for the gifts you all give to Grace through your time, talent and resources. All of this reminds me that we have a God who has blessed us with our lives and with everything we have. Thank you for being a witness to me of the generous spirit of our loving God.

Blessings, Pastor Joanna

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NEW MEMBER CLASS & RECEPTION

*Class is November 10,
2019, 11:45am to 1:15pm
Receiving of New
Members is Sunday,
Nov. 17*

For anyone interested in becoming a member of Grace or wanting to meet others who are fairly new to the church.

This is a time to ask questions about the church, hear about the history of Grace and connect with other new people like yourselves. Families are welcome. Sign up by calling the church office or registering on Gracelink.

How Can I Help Others Through the Holidays?



GIFTS of GRACE

for those experiencing homelessness

Please consider joining our outreach efforts this Christmas as we provide "Gifts of Grace" for residents at *Stepping Stone Emergency Housing* in Anoka. ***Beginning the weekend of November 23-24, you're invited to take a reusable Target bag from the narthex, fill it with the items on the list inside, and then return the filled bag to church by Sunday, December 15th. Please note that the list consists of basic-need items (shampoo, deodorant, etc.) that most of us take for granted, but that are very helpful to homeless individuals.***

Stepping Stone Emergency Housing is the only shelter in Anoka County that accepts single adults experiencing homelessness. The facility, located in the Cronin Building (on the former State Hospital grounds), provides emergency housing and support to 66 single men and women, 18 years and older. *Stepping Stone* also provides mentoring and life skills training for the residents as they strive towards self-sufficiency.

Thank you for being a blessing this Christmas to someone experiencing homelessness in our community!



Share God's Grace this Christmas

"ADOPT A FAMILY"

Would you like to share God's grace in a very tangible and REAL way this Christmas? Then please consider 'adopting' a local family who will be truly blessed by your generosity. Through our Faith & Community Partnership with Sand Creek Elementary School, we will connect families from our church with local students and families in need.

Details about 'Adopt a Family':

- * During December, you will be assigned a specific family for which you'll be given the age and gender (but not names) of each family member, along with clothing needs and a wish list for a toy or book.

- * Then you'll shop for your 'adopted' family and bring the gifts to Grace. The school staff will deliver gifts to your 'adopted' family by Christmas. If you're interested in adopting a local family this Christmas, please contact Jan Margotto (763) 434-4617 margotto@msn.com

The Grace Giving Tree

Offering grace upon Grace families in need

The Grace Giving Tree assists families in need, who worship at Grace Lutheran, through donations. It is the intent to help relieve the financial strain of the holidays on families through intentional support, confidentiality, and grace.

If you find you need help during the holidays this year, please contact Annie Fitzl or Pastor Joanna Mitchell for more information. You may also contact us by using thegracegivingtree@gmail.com. Requests are due no later than November 16th, 2019.

The Grace Giving Trees will be set up with ornaments by November 23rd. Gifts need to be back to Grace, unwrapped, by December 11th. Distribution to families will occur on or before Saturday, December 21, 2019. Thank you for supporting families within our Grace Family with bringing joy to all this holiday season.



Children's & Youth Ministries



Kids Night Out @ Grace AND

Children's Christmas Program: "O Come Let Us Adore Him" December 8th at 3:30 p.m.

It is not too late to join us on Wednesdays! Children from Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join in on the fun! We will be practicing for our Children's Christmas Program: "O Come Let Us Adore Him" on Wednesday Nights at KNO. And possibly a few Saturdays. Kids will have the opportunity to be in the Christmas program either in speaking or non-speaking roles. All children at Grace are invited to participate in telling the Christmas story. Information about songs will come home the beginning of November. Children will be practicing songs for the Christmas program on Sunday mornings during Large Group at SONday School.

Dates to remember:

Rehearsal: Sat. December 7, 9-11a.m. All kids will join this rehearsal at 10 am to do a full run through with songs.

Program: Sunday, December 8, 3:30p.m. (Please have children here by 3pm)



Bible Classes



Students 2nd grade through 5th grade are invited November 24th (between worship) for a Bible class with Maria Markman. Together you will explore your new or slightly new Bible. We'll find where things are located, who wrote it, when it was written, why it was written and so much more. And

keep your eye out for more events like this in the coming seasons at Grace! Register your child today on GraceLink.

NO SONday School

December 1, 22, 29

NO Kids Night Out (KNO)

November 27 & December 25

Nursery Information

It is so important to me, Pastor Joanna, and all of the staff at Grace that children and their families be welcome in worship. When children and youth are in and involved in worship, together as a community, we nurture a sense of life-long discipleship and energize the whole congregation. Children are always welcomed in church in the fullness of who they are giggling, fidgeting, sleeping, and wondering. But we also recognize that having children in worship can be difficult for families, and as a result we are committed to offering **Nursery Room Care** for those who might need it. We are rolling out a new program, the nursery will be available and staffed by trained High School volunteers at both the 8:45 and 10:30 services on Sundays. This allows our parents to be in worship and our High School youth to earn money toward their summer mission trips. For more information contact

First Communion Class November 2nd, 9-11am



Pastor Joanna and Maria Markman teach students in 3rd grade and up about the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Children are then invited to receive their First Communion during worship on November 2nd at the 5:00pm service, or November 3rd at the 8:45 or 10:30 service. Bring a Bible, a parent, and a smile! Register through GraceLink or at graceandover.org.



Advent Wreath Making December 1st 5:00-7:00pm

Join us in the fellowship hall for this fun advent event. It will be a potluck event so think of all the yummy dishes you might bring! We create our advent wreaths and then end the evening singing Christmas carols together.

Children's & Youth Ministries



High School Christmas Party Friday December 13th 8-11pm

Join us for the High School Christmas Party! Games, night games around church, Christmas Challenge and tons of Holiday Cheer. All 9th-12th grade students are welcome to join us. Friends are always welcome! Head to the youth ministry Facebook Page for more information!

Middle School Christmas Party Friday December 6th 7-9pm

Games! White Elephant Gift Exchange! Snacks! And More! All 6th-8th grade students are welcome to join us for the annual Middle School Christmas Party. Sign up online, cost \$5 and a white elephant gift. Friends are welcome to join us!

No Wednesday Programming

November 27
December 25th
January 1st

High School Supper Club November 5th and December 3rd 5:30-7pm

9th – 12th grade students are invited to join us to cook dinner together (and then eat!) Please bring \$5 to off set the cost of food. RSVP to Kristi by the day before.



Green Ribbon Group November 5th and December 3rd 7:30pm

For parents who have children (through college age) who struggle with mental health. (Including but certainly not limited to anxiety, depression, bi polar, eating disorders, behavioral issues, RAD, etc.) **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** We meet the first Tuesday of each month at Grace Lutheran Church. The group is open to all parents inside and outside of Grace, so please invite anyone in need of support. The group is meant for support and solidarity. While we may not have answers or solutions we can be there for one another to listen. For more information please contact Kristi Larson at Kristil@graceandover.org. If your child struggles with mental health and you are unable to join us but are still in need of support, please contact Kristi.



Golden Rule is Now Hiring!

Golden Rule is well into the new school year and the students are learning a lot and having a blast! It's wonderful to see all the smiling little faces every day. We opened a new full time preschool classroom last January and it has been very successful. We have two preschool rooms and two toddler rooms. We will celebrate Thanksgiving and then start preparations for our annual Christmas program.

Golden Rule has an amazing staff who love to teach and care for children. If you or someone you know loves working with children, too, we currently have one full-time and one part-time position open in our preschool program. Also an assistant teacher position to help out in all rooms. Please call Sandy Schmoll at 763-421-1996. or email sandys@graceandover.org

Grace Happenings



Love of Grace Bazaar

Saturday, November 9

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Proceeds are used to buy children's Bibles for our Grace kids, to help support *Robin's Nest* (a program which teaches women in Haiti how to sew), and also to support *The Sheridan Story* program at Sand Creek Elementary School. (*The Sheridan Story* provides food for children in need to take home each Friday so they will not go hungry over the weekend.)

We are in need of volunteers to help in the kitchen area and with donated goods. Please sign up to help by following the link graceandover.org/events/love-of-grace-bazaar you will be then directed to a signup genius.

Support the Bazaar by stopping in on November 9th to shop and enjoy lunch!



HOST WEEK

November 24-December 1

Grace hosts Family Promise guests providing safe shelter and warm hospitality to the homeless. Will you please join us in this hands-on ministry of sharing God's grace in our local community? You will strengthen lives and build community in very tangible ways – through cooking a meal, driving the van, sleeping overnight for security, or chatting with guests!

For more information, please contact Alden Riley, the Family Promise Ministry Team Leader, at aldenandjudy@comcast.net or at 763 412-9489

Reflections from Debbie Jorgens

A number of years ago, I took the Children's Choir that I was directing at the time on a weekend retreat. We rehearsed for our upcoming musical, explored the beautiful outdoors, played a variety of games, enjoyed the meals that had been prepared for us, worshiped and prayed together.

At the end of the retreat, just before heading home, the children, chaperones, and I formed a circle and one by one prayed aloud, "Thank you, God, for _____." They thanked God for nature, time with friends, music, the Church, good food, and their families. Then it was Erika's turn. "Thank you, God, for..." She paused, and then as though her heart was bursting, she exclaimed, "...for *everything*!" For Erika, it was as though naming *one* thing for which she was thankful was simply not possible. Her heart was just too full.

Far too often, despite my best efforts, I take God's gifts for granted. But there are also moments when I am made keenly aware of God's *abundant* grace in my life and I feel as though my heart will burst. And then it dawns on me: my gratitude isn't *meant* to be contained! As Jack, another child in my choir pointed out, "We're supposed to make our thankfulness come alive!"



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

On Saturday, November 23, we in the Grace community will have an opportunity to collectively "make our thankfulness come alive" by packing meals together at **Feed My Starving Children**. We have reserved 184 spaces for you, your families, and anyone else who can join you! **There are four shifts to choose from: 9AM, 11AM, 1PM, and 3PM.**

We can fill all 184 spaces on November 23rd with your help! Sign up in the narthex, on the blue sheet in the bulletin, or directly on the FMSC website (fmsc.org) under Grace Lutheran Church. Together, we can express our gratitude to God by feeding God's hungry children!

Ministry News



Women's Retreat 2020

Ladies – Please join us for our Women's Retreat Feb 7-9, 2020 at Luther Point Bible Camp. We are so excited to have a Guest Speaker this year! She will be helping us with Stress Management and How to Simplify our Lives. ***Simplify + Surrender = Peace.*** Space is limited so Register Today and Save \$ too!

REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW!

Date: Friday, February 7– Sunday, February 9
Time: Arrive at camp between 6-8 pm Friday
 Depart at Noon Sunday
 Carpooling available
Place: Luther Point Bible Camp in Grantsburg, WI
Price: Early Bird Special:
 Register by December 31 = \$75
 January 1 - January 31 = \$90
 includes All meals and lodging
 Contact Stacy Surratt with any questions at
stacysurratt@yahoo.com

[Register on GraceLink](#)



Ladies, mark your calendars for the next
 Mugs, Muffins & More
 on March 28, 2020 9:30-11:30 am



Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, December 8

9:00am-12:30pm

Pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee will be served in the Grace Fellowship Hall. Come out and enjoy some delicious food while supporting our local Boy Scouts. Freewill donation is appreciated.



Women's Opportunities

W.O.W - Wednesdays at 9:30am
 Bible Study on Mondays at 6:30pm
 Ruth Circle - 2nd Wednesdays at 12:30pm
 Quilters - Wednesdays at 9:00am
 Grace Quilters 2 - Last Mondays at 6:30pm
 Girls Night Out - 1st Thursdays 5:30-7:30pm
 at Davanni's (18+)

Men's Opportunities

BWW Connection - 1st Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm
 Men's Gab & Grub - 3rd Sat. at Baker's Square 8am
 Bible Studies on Mon. 6:30am or Sat. 8am

GRACE4RAKAI

Grace4Rakai Weekend! November 9-10

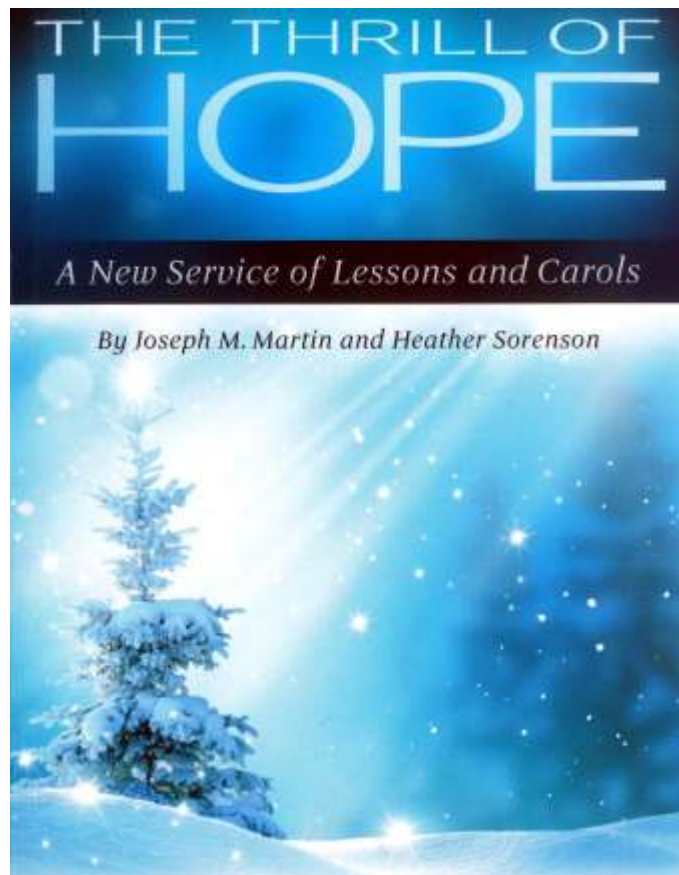
We're excited to provide an update on the amazing ways God is using the people of Grace to make a difference for the community of Rakai, Uganda! Scott Christensen, co-lead of the Grace4Rakai Team, will be speaking at the 5:00 service on Saturday, Nov. 9th and Ann Hill will be speaking at both services on Sunday morning, Nov. 10th. Ann is the founder of *African Children Today*, a Twin Cities nonprofit established to support the people of Rakai.

You'll be hearing about the ACT Junior School and plans for a new Solar Power Energy system to provide much needed electricity for the school and other projects. We will also be lifting up the needs for a new School Bus, the scholarship fund to support older students sponsored by Grace, and of course, new sponsors to support younger students.

Ann Hill will be leaving for Rakai right after worship on Nov. 10th. She will be taking **72 quilts** (lovingly made by the Grace Quilters!) with her as well as a collection of greeting cards from Grace sponsors to their sponsored children. Sponsors can drop off a card to their sponsored child at the Welcome Center through the end of October.

Come and hear more about the work we're doing in Rakai on Nov. 9th & 10th!

**We invite you to the Fellowship Hall
on Sunday morning from
10:00-10:20am to enjoy coffee and
treats and a brief Q&A with Ann Hill.**



GRACE MUSICIANS CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Saturday Dec 14th 5pm

Sunday, Dec 15th 8:45am & 10:30am

Join the Grace Music Dept. as we present selections from "The Thrill of Hope" by Joseph M. Martin and Heather Sorenson.

This is an invitation to all singers (experienced and not experienced) to join us for the Advent and Christmas season.

The Grace Choir meets from 6:45-8:15pm on Wednesday evenings (we will start with the Advent music at the beginning of rehearsal) with **extra rehearsals on Saturday, 11/23 & 12/7 from 9-11am.**

If you have questions please feel free to contact Jonathan at jonathano@graceandover.org. Come and lift your voices as we prepare a place in our hearts for the Prince of Peace!

Finances as of October 21

YTD Noisy Offering = \$10,608.79
 YTD Benevolence paid = \$ 44,697.68
 YTD Principal Mortgage Paid = \$68,850.50
 Remaining Principal = \$589,457.97

YTD Comparison

	2019*	2018*
General Offerings	\$526,590.29	\$521,913.44
Other Receipts	\$78,954.26	\$101,506.73
Total Receipts	\$605,544.55	\$623,420.17
Total Expenses	\$615,207.51	\$655,100.75
YTD Rec/Exp	(\$9,662.96)	(\$31,680.58)

*Please note, 2018 includes the entire month of October in receipts and expenses. 2019 includes only through the 21st. There is one more week of offering and not all expenses are reflected.

if you would like a copy of the current financial report, please contact Kate or Beth



GraceLink

If you are wondering where your giving is for the year, please log in to

GraceLink. Find Giving on the tool bar. Then select My Giving History.

Giving Online at GraceLink helps the congregant to give consistently and helps the church with cash flow. If you have been thinking about setting up reoccurring gifts, it is really simple. Have your credit card or checking information handy.

1. Log into GraceLink. If do not have a Login you will need to create one.
2. Click on *Giving* on the tool bar.
3. Determine the total amount you want to give and the fund you wish to support.
4. If you want to give to more than one fund, click on add more to the right of the memo.
5. Select how often you would like to give, monthly or even weekly.
6. Finish filling out your bank information and your address.
7. And follow the prompts to finish.

If you have questions, feel free to call the church office or email Kate or Beth.



THANKSGIVING EVE WORSHIP & PIE SOCIAL Wednesday, November 27 7:00 pm

Our Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service is a wonderful time to reflect on the many blessings we have received as a nation, a church and a family. We hope you will join us as we Worship and give thanks to God, then enjoy a time of fellowship with our Grace family and friends, and have some great pies too.

Nursery will be open and available.



**Like Grace on Facebook
 Follow GraceAndover on Twitter**

Download the Churchlife App to stay connected to Grace congregation members. Use your Gracelink credentials when signing on.



Scan the QR Code for a direct link to Giving Online



Grace Lutheran Church

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(763) 421-6520

A Ministry of Grace in the heart of Andover and beyond!

www.graceandover.org

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Join us for Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve, December 24th

2:00pm - Family Christmas Service

4:00pm - Family Candlelight Service

7:00 pm - Contemporary Candlelight Service

10:00pm - Traditional Candlelight Service

Nursery available at 2pm, 4pm & 7pm

Christmas Day, December 25

10:00am - Christmas Quiet Communion