



PARISH NEWS

Grace Lutheran Church, Hatfield PA

December 2023

To Glorify God ♦ To Grow in Faith ♦ To Give in Service ♦ Together in Christ

www.gracelutheranhatfield.org Rev. Nancy M. Raabe, Pastor

FROM THE PASTOR: Be Born in Us Today



My favorite feature on the Apple Watch is not the date, nor the notifications of texts or emails I might otherwise miss, or even the outdoor temperature. It is the sunrise and sunset times.

As the breaking or the closing of the day draws nearer, I pay close attention to the appointed minute, based on my geographical location, because I want to be mindful of that sacred moment when night passes into day and day passes into night.

Why is it sacred? Because it offers the opportunity to mark past, present and future – to honor what God has given that day or night, where we find ourselves at this point of transition, and to look ahead at what is to come. “In my end is my beginning,” hymn writer Natalie Sleeth memorably penned, turning around the famous quote from T.S. Eliot.

This struck me all over again late on a recent afternoon as I was driving toward the Pennsylvania Turnpike entrance. A brilliant sunset was in progress. Nearing the traffic light, I spied between the trees the full sun suspended just above the horizon. As I pulled up to the stop I could no longer see it. But two minutes later as I passed onto the on ramp, it was gone. In those 120 seconds that huge fiery orb had sunk out of sight, making for a vivid experience of this transition.

It is much the same as the church marks its experience of time in the turning of one liturgical year to the next. On December 3, as we move into Advent and a new year in the life of the church, we will “Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,” in the words of composer Marty Haugen. Just as with the passing of day to night, this sacred transition opens before us the experience of past, present and future. What spiritual territory have we moved through in the past year? Who have we become and how have we grown in our knowledge of and relationship to the living Christ? And how do we now place our hope in him, and lift that to God, as we continue our participation with God in the great work of reconciliation?

Our charge as faithful disciples is not only to remember but to *recreate*. In making our way through each liturgical year through the lens of one of the gospel writers (we are moving into Year B, the year of Mark and John; Year A is Matthew and Year C is Luke), we are not just hearing about what happened in Jesus’ time, but we are *living* these events, these miracles and healings and trials and temptations. In whatever

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way is unique to each of us, we are making them our own and taking that experience into our communities.

Worship is a continual process of renewal and rebirth. As you are worshipping with us on Christmas Eve and singing the beloved carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem," I invite you to take to heart that phrase in the last stanza: "Be born in us today." Let its truth sweep you up into the sacred and urgent enterprise of the salvation of the world. A blessed Christmas to you all!

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!



Yours in the hope of Christ,

Pastor Nancy Raabe

Please join us in the fellowship hall on **Sunday, December 10** after the 10:30 service for a **congregational meeting** at which we will discuss and approve the 2024 budget.

FROM The Minister of Music:

Away in a manger. The song we all know and love to sing at Christmas was originally thought to be the work of Martin Luther. There was and may still be some controversy over it, but it appears that it is not Luther's work. In 1882 the song appeared in a couple publications calling it "Luther's Cradle Song." It has been set to a couple tunes and while it has a history with Luther and songs he wrote for his own family use, there is evidence it is actually from American origins.

The one thing about music is that we find "music can travel" and "music is understood and felt in many languages." You've probably heard it said that music is the universal language. So at this time of year, consider how many Christmas songs are sung and in many different languages; understood and felt by all who sing.

I wish each person in our congregation and all your families, a very happy and healthy Christmas.

Kevin

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS NEWS:

- **Advent Prayer Stations:** Starting on December 3, you are invited to embark on a journey through the six prayer stations in the sanctuary. Each has interactive features intended to draw you personally into the Christmas story. Maps are available on the table with our Advent family resources. If you can't come on Sundays or during church office hours (M-Th, 9-noon), call the office to make arrangements for your visit.
- All ages are invited to our **Advent Family Night** on **December 9** from 5-7:30 p.m. First we'll gather for take-home crafts and ornament decorating, then share a meal and move into the sanctuary to decorate the room and trim the tree!
- Please join us for **The Longest Night** (sometimes known as "Blue Christmas") **at 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 21**, the winter solstice. This reflective service is intended for those dealing with difficult life of health situations to be an alternative to the festivity of typical Christmas celebrations.
- This year, December 24 is both the 4th Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve. Please plan to attend both! In the morning we have **one service only at 9:15 a.m.**, and then **three Christmas Eve services** – full worship with communion at 4 and 9 p.m., and shorter "worship under the stars" at 11 p.m. At the 4 p.m. service our youth will be presenting "A Night in Bethlehem."
- **Sunday, December 31** will be a "carol sing" with **one service only at 9:15 a.m.**



Adopt-A-Family Christmas Project 2023

During this Advent season, please join in the spirit of giving by participating in our *Adopt-A-Family Project*. Most of us are looking forward to family gatherings at this time of the year, but for some families in our community, it is a time of concern about providing daily needs. We can help with some of these concerns by providing them with gifts for each member of their family.

Grace members and friends are invited to provide gifts to families in our area to help them celebrate a traditional family Christmas and to experience sharing gifts with their family. This year we will be sharing our gifts with four families from Stepping Stones.

We hope you will do some Christmas shopping for our families this year. Check out the display in the narthex. Suggested items for each family are available for your choosing. Please sign your name next to the gift(s) that you choose on the list of gifts.

Angel gifts will be collected for the Hatfield Christmas Committee for the food cupboard families as well as our four families. A list of items is included below and will also be available near the display in the narthex. These items cannot be purchased with food stamps and are personal items needed by families that are serviced by our area food cupboards. Your items may be brought to church anytime. We are also collecting warm socks for our friends at Bread Drop. These socks should be inexpensive, warm crew or knee socks.

All gifts for the Adopt-a-Family, Bread Drop Socks, and the Angel Gifts are due by Sunday Dec. 17th.

The Giving in Service Team – Jean Shaffer, Diane Ball, Carol MacDonald, Barb Watts, Kay Deussing, Mary Jane Moyer, Cathy Farrell and Kay Stone

Items for Angel Boxes:

Paper Towels	Toothpaste/toothbrushes
Bathroom Tissue	Shampoo (be sure lids are closed tightly)
Kleenex (tissues)	Deodorant (men and women)
Bar Soap	Razors and Feminine Products



Sweets for Sharing 2023 Calling all Cookie Makers! On December 6th WELCA and the INreach team will once again be putting together Christmas boxes of confections for our homebound and Grace staff. Please consider donating cookies (freshly made or store bought) or individually wrapped candies so that we can continue this much loved tradition. We will be collecting these items through **December 3rd at Grace** and putting them together Wednesday evening Dec. 6th at Peggy & Bruce Schmidt's house. Thank you in advance for your generous offerings! Any questions OR to arrange a pickup or drop off of your donation, please call or email: carol.w.macdonald@gmail.com; 215-872-0472

Soup-A-Thon November 2023 A huge THANK YOU to our amazing Soup Makers who contributed 59 delicious quarts of soup and to those of you who purchased 39 of those quarts! With your help, we were able to make \$273! We will be able to make a generous donation to **Tails of Valor Paws of Honor** plus we have plenty of soup left to share with our homebound members! We are so grateful for all your contributions! Special thanks to **Kay Deussing** who helped with set up AND clean up on top of manning the table for all 3 hours! I SO appreciate all of the communications and clarifications from everyone afterwards, since I was not able to be there to help with the 10:30 distribution.....Carol MacDonald



TICKET SALES BEGIN JANUARY 1st



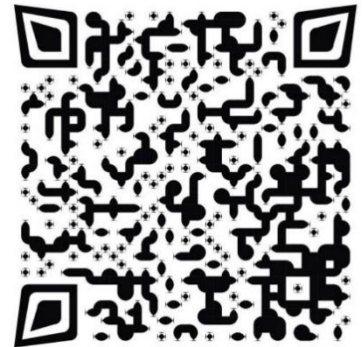
With music and lyrics by George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin, book by Ken Ludwig; Crazy for You is a romantic comedy set in the 1930's and is filled with amazing dance and memorable tunes!

Friday, April 19th 7:30pm
Saturday, April 20th 2:00pm & 7:30pm
Sunday April 21st 2:00pm
Friday, April 26th 7:30pm
Saturday, April 27th 2:00pm & 7:30pm
Sunday April 28th 2:00pm

SHOW LOCATION

Lansdale United Methodist Church
300 N. Broad Street, Lansdale PA 19446

Ticketing Site Active January 1st



Or visit: www.LaymenPlaymen.org

LAYMEN PLAYMEN AUDITIONS FOR 2024 SHOW

Laymen Playmen is proud to present for its 36th production the Broadway musical, **CRAZY FOR YOU** (Music and Lyrics by George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin, Book by Ken Ledwig). Audition information can be found on www.laymenplaymen.org. **Show Dates for 2024 are April 19-21 and April 26-28.**

December Serving Schedule

Date	Altar Guild	Communion Assistant	Lector	Acolyte	Ushers	Coffee Hour
12/03/23 1 st Sunday Advent 8:00 am	W. Walter	B. Schmidt	P. Schmidt	Usher	P. Schmidt & D. Ball	Don Capanear
10:30 am	K. Stone & T. Sarm	C. MacDonald	B. Krout	E. Krout	J. Krout & K. Deussing	
12/10/23 8:00 am	N/A	N/A	Walter Family	Usher	Walter Family	Diane Ball
10:30 am	N/A	N/A	TBD	Usher	M. Slugg & K. Heacock	
12/17/23 8:00 am	W. Walter	D. Kunkel	The Seilers	Usher	The Seilers	Kay Stone
10:30 am	K. Stone & T. Sarm	B. Hess	T. Sarm	Usher	J. Snyder & C. Tula	
12/24/23 4 th Sun. Advent 9:15 am Christmas Eve 4:00 pm	N/A	N/A	TBD	Usher	TBD	N/A
9:00 pm	TBD	TBD	TBD	Usher	TBD	
11:00 pm	E. Woltmann Informal	B. Schmidt Service	TBD	Usher	P. Schmidt	
12/31/23 9:15 am	N/A	N/A	TBD	Usher	TBD	N/A

Council Offering/Lock-up for December is Peggy Schmidt, 8:00am; Jeff Krout, 10:30am.

Live Streaming: Harold Schaefer, Dan & Tami Sarm

2024 Serving Schedule Volunteers: Soon to come....2024 Serving schedule. The 2024 serving schedule will soon be available in the Narthex. Please check Grace Notes.

Sponsors Needed: Sign-up sheets are available for **2024 in the Narthex.**

Altar Flowers \$17/Sunday. Please check the box if you the sponsor want the flowers or if you want them to go to a shut-in. Contact-Kathy Stawasz at kathystawasz@gmail.com or 215.760.6297

Bulletins \$10/Sunday. Contact-Lynn at graceassistant40@gmail.com or 215.855.4676

Eternal Candle \$5/Sunday. Contact-Lynn at graceassistant40@gmail.com or 215.855.4676

WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of serious weather situations, we prefer not to cancel services. **Instead, please use your best judgment about whether to attend** (ushers and worship leaders as well; text Pastor Raabe if you've decided not to come). **Make safety your top priority!**

If even Pastor Raabe cannot make it to church, tune in for worship on our Facebook page at 10 a.m.



WELCA (Women of the ELCA)

Welca Ladies, I really can't believe how quickly December came upon us and our meeting is just a little different this month. We will meet at the church at 11:15 am on December 6th and then we will be going to Red Lobster 🦞 for lunch; Dutch treat. I hope to see you for our special lunch, and if anyone else would like to join us please just meet at Grace at 11:15 am. Thank you. Take care, Barb

Stepping Stones News

As 2023 comes to a close we wanted to take a moment and thank every one of you who has assisted and/or participated in our program in any way. Your fundraiser dollars, assistance with special events, working with us through many committees (shout out to the property team!), and even things like helping our needier families with coats and school supplies; we are so blessed to have you as part of our mission. Thank you, Grace members, from all of us at Stepping Stones and thank you from me personally for everything you do and continue to do for our children.

Please keep an eye out for the Stepping Stones tree lighting on Facebook live on December 1st (time TBD) and all our special Christmas spirit days like Christmas Hat/Headband Day, Christmas Card Day, Ugly Sweater Day, and what would Christmas be without a visit from Santa? Don't forget Stepping Stones is closed from 12/25-1/1/2024 and will re-open on 1/2/2024. Have a very Merry Christmas!

Miss Jessica

PRAYER LIST

Please let Pastor Raabe know if you would like someone added to this list, or if someone you have added is no longer in need of urgent prayers.

In Need of Ongoing Prayers: Liz Bauer, Suzanne Colville, Marilyn Forst, Bob Kaler, Peggy Long, Hazel Mascaro, Gerry Mason (Richard Badman's son), Pam Matolicz, Bob Rufe (Mary Jane Moyer's brother), Joyce Salter, Nancy Sellers, Bailey Vinson (Liz Bauer's great-granddaughter), Nancy Dustman (Joyce Salter's sister), John Weierman.

In Current Need of Prayers: Cassi Lambert, Kristopher Yoder, Lisa Kane, Vickie West, Sandy Klinger, Dean Moore, Peg Malloy, Daniel Hopwood (Tom Hopwood's son), Laurie Ronan (the MacDonalds' neighbor), Jan Madigan (Sue Wieland's niece), John Renick, Lou Farrell, Joan Wright & Alicia Hollingsworth (friends of Linda Renick), Diane Pierson, Robert Naragon (friend of Frank & Kay Stone), Joanne Moyer, Sheran Shenk (friend of Bruce & Peggy Schmidt), the family of Liz Eliff and the Laymen Playmen family, Helen Chappie (Liz Bauer's sister), Allie Moyer (Mary Jane Moyer's granddaughter), Angelina Trotter, Alice Ciarrocca (friend of Karen Heacock & Phyllis McKeefrey), Loretta Seiler & Linda Conrad (Ken's stepmother & her daughter), Anita Spisak (Ken's mom), Chuck Slugg, Christopher Humlhanz (Jaime Snyder's cousin), Betty Poling (June Detweiler's sister), Jane Lankford (friend of Peggy & Bruce Schmidt), Joan Roeder, Sally Muntz, Lynn Pribbernow, Maya Kleinheidt.

For all who grieve, including the family & friends of: Hesh Lipton, Galen Hosgood (Jaime Snyder's grandfather), Sandra Wood (friend of Andrea Roney), Helen Godshall, Jack Quigg (Frick/Clegg family), Dan Black (Laymen Playmen), Kiffy Bergey (longtime Hatfield resident).

For those in active duty military service: Robert McNulty, Marines, Jessica Murphy, Air Force; Matthew Smyrl, Army; Nathaniel Smyrl, PA Army National Guard; Eric Gutsche (Janice Swartz's grandson).

For active military deployed overseas: Kyle Murphy, Air Force



EEC Food Cupboard

A message from Janet Hague: In October, the Emmanuel food cupboard welcomed 88 separate families! Thanks to local Scouts, mid-November brought generous donations of food. You, our sisters and brothers at Grace, are *SO* faithful with your giving throughout the year; we can't thank you enough! **For December, we ask you to focus on items for the "Angel Boxes"** that allow us to give personal care, cleaning, and household products to the families. These are much sought-after by our shoppers, because they can NOT get these things with SNAP (food stamps) and donations in this area have been lagging lately. Thank you for all you do!

Household & Personal Care*: Shampoo & Conditioner (please tighten lids), Toothpaste & toothbrushes, Razors & shaving cream, Body Wash or soap, Deodorant, All purpose cleaner (like Lysol or Fantastic), Dishwashing Liquid, Toilet Paper, Paper towels, Tissues

Gift Cards: Grocery gift cards are always welcome too, especially ALDI & Giant!
Your non-perishable donations can be placed in our narthex bins by the conference room.

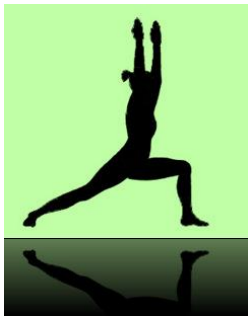
Upcoming distribution dates & times:

Tuesdays 5:30 - 6:30 pm: Dec 5 & 19

Tuesdays 1 - 2 pm: Dec 20 & 26

The food cupboard is open to all Hatfield borough residents, so please reach out if you, or someone you know, would benefit from receiving supplemental food/household items. Messages for Janet Hague can be left at 215-855-2540; foodcupboard@yahoo.com.

You can also call/email Carol MacDonald @215-872-0472; pcmacdonald125@gmail.com



YOGA (Hatha) CLASS is in full swing; invite your friends!

The class meets in our fellowship hall every Wednesday through December 13 from 6:15-7:15 pm. Ages 18 and up: All levels are welcome! The goal is to work on strength and flexibility gradually while gaining an ability to focus on breath and awareness. COST: \$7/class (Make checks payable to: Grace Lutheran Church) All proceeds benefit the "Sanctuary Village" project in Philadelphia. Invite your friends!

View our website by scanning this code:



Hatfield Community Christmas Tree Lighting and Special Events

Hosted by Grace Lutheran Church and Cub Pack 510

Saturday, December 2nd

**Events Start at Grace Lutheran Church
40 N. Main Street, Hatfield**



**Something for Everyone!
Join the fun in this Cherished
Hatfield Tradition!**



**5:00 – Enjoy the Fun with a Hot Dog Meal, Hot
Drinks by Philly Espresso, and Games and Crafts!**



**6:00 – Walk down to the Railroad Plaza for
caroling and the arrival of Santa Claus!**



**6:30 – Lighting of the Hatfield
Community Christmas Tree!**

Note: In the event of inclement weather, we will virtually watch the tree lighting from the Social Room at Grace Lutheran Church



Grace Lutheran Church
Rev Nancy M Raabe, Pastor
40 North Main Street
Hatfield PA 19440-2905

GraceLutheranHatfield.org
Facebook.com/GraceLutheranHatfield
Office Phone 215.855.4676

Lynn Fasick, Office Administrator
Kevin Freaney, Minister of Music

Stepping Stones 215.368.2052
Jessica Moran, Director

Dec 2nd	Hatfield Christmas Celebration Fun starts at Grace with food, and crafts 6:00pm Railroad Square for Caroling 6:30pm Santa & Tree Lighting at Railroad Square
Dec 9th	Advent Family Night
Dec 10th	Congregational Budget Meeting
Dec. 17th	Financial Team Meeting
Dec 21st	Longest Night Service
Dec 24th	9:15am Worship—Advent 4 AND 4:00pm Christmas Eve Worship 9:00pm Christmas Eve Worship 11:00pm “Worship Under the Stars”
Dec 25th	CHRISTMAS DAY Office & Stepping Stones Closed all week
Dec 31st	9:15am Carol Sing (one worship service only)
Jan 1st	NEW YEAR’S DAY Office & Stepping Stones Closed

Grace Lutheran Church
40 N. Main St.
Hatfield, PA 19440-2905