



# PARISH NEWS

Grace Lutheran Church, Hatfield PA

February 2025

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: True Love and the Christian Life



### Part I: True love

*We love because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19)

Valentine’s Day is on the horizon. Love is in the air. One of my favorite things to do at this time of year is to pour myself a handful of little candy conversation hearts and skim through them looking for cute phrases. My all-time fave so far: “Adorbz.”

Laurel House	3
Sunday School	3
Stepping Stones	3
WELCA	3
“Live Auction”	4
Serving Schedule	5
Calendar	6
Prayer List	7
EEC Food Cupboard	8
Laymen Playmen	9
Rice Bowl	9



Maybe among all the BFFs and TTYLs you’ll even find this old-fashioned one: “True Love.”



On Valentine’s Day this may evoke images of roses and chocolate. But *true* love, that is, love that comes from God, lies at the heart of the Christian life. Without it, as Paul said, we are merely a noisy gong or clanging cymbal (unless you’re in Mahler symphony, in which case your clanging has great purpose).



Consider this: God is love. Love is God’s very essence. Out of God’s love everything was created—planets, stars, galaxies, vast nebulas. Because God’s love is dynamic, not static – and possibly out of loneliness -- God created human beings with whom God would be in relationship. God promised to love us fully and unconditionally, then endowed us with the wondrous capacity to *choose* to receive this love and to *choose* to return it in greater measure. In this endless cycle of giving and receiving, love between creator and creature grows. This is true love, from God’s perspective.



The capacity for free choice is the clearest sign of true love from God’s perspective, because God trusts that we *will* choose to return it. From our perspective, though, this is where our trouble begins. The devil tempts us to deny God’s true love in endless ways, and—imperfect creatures that we are—we keep falling for this trickery. “I will never be good enough to do this.” “I don’t deserve to have that.” “So and so says they want to be my friend, but they must have some ulterior motive, for how could they really want to be with someone who can’t ever seem to get it right?” “Why bother even trying, because I know I’ll fail no matter what?”



We cannot love, truly, until we say “yes” to the love God is pouring down over and through us. That is, until we accept that God truly loves us *just as we are* with the vastness of the love that fuels the entire cosmos. Only that will enable us to embrace the truth of 1 John 4:19.

I agree – it’s a challenge to accept this truth. Nonetheless, try opening your heart to that reality. For, as theologian Joseph Sittler memorably put it, “Unless and until the love with which I love finds its proper object in the love with which I am loved by God, I am a prisoner of love too small for love’s heavenly nature and scope.”

## Part II: The Christian Life

*Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.* (Howard Thurman)

Experiencing God’s true love through Jesus Christ is to be born again into the fullness of life. But this is not just an individual experience; it is one that awaits this church, Grace Lutheran, as the body of Christ with all its variety of gifts.

Howard Thurman (1899-1981) was a profoundly influential mystic, author, educator, and voice of social and racial justice. He has much to tell us about the fullness of life. In what was to be his final commencement address at Boston University, Thurman urged people to discover in themselves what he called “the sound of the genuine” -- that is, to listen through the noise of their own ambitions and worldly desires for the sound of their own uniqueness as a new creation in Christ.

“There is something in every one of you that waits, listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself,” Thurman said. “And if you cannot hear it, you will never find whatever it is for which you are searching, and if you hear it and then do not follow it, it was better that you had never been born.”

This applies to communities as well. It is not enough to go from one month to the next, one year to the next, assuming things will continue exactly as they’ve been – because they won’t. Instead, ask: What is the sound of the genuine for Grace Lutheran Church? What is the distinctive vocation of this gathering of faithful people? How can you, the people of Grace, learn to identify the intersection where your deepest desire meets the world’s deepest need? And if you can name that, is it different from where you were 25 years ago? In that event, does the church need a new mission statement to lead you on?

“New” is the word so far for 2025. The Grace Council now has new officers, a new treasurer and for the first time in years, a youth representative. New ideas are percolating, new initiatives are springing up, new pathways are being laid down. New relationships are forming both inside and outside the church. Where will this take Grace and what part will each of you play? What works and what doesn’t? How can you learn to listen for the sound of the genuine?

Not only will these new ideas carry you into the future, they will help forge a dynamic new personality and a new vocation for Grace Lutheran Church. “If the conditions for growth and development are met, then growth and development flow automatically,” Howard Thurman said elsewhere. “This is the kind of responsive, dynamic, living, throbbing universe that honors the mind and the spirit which, together, can say one thing—and be that.”



Yours in the hope of Christ,

*Pastor Nenny Raabe*



## Laurel House Valentine's Day Project 2025

The *Giving in Service Team* invites you to support our 2025 Valentine's Day Project. Laurel House provides shelter, care and counseling for abused women and children of Montgomery County. We will be collecting funds to purchase gift cards from the Boy Scouts (BSA Scouting Troops 51 and 511) which in turn helps the scouts. You may give any amount toward the purchase of \$25 gift cards which give parents the ability to buy gifts for their children, as well as other essential, basic needs.

Check out the display in the narthex. Place your donation in the white envelope – cash or a check made out to Grace Lutheran Church (memo: Laurel House). Put your envelope in the box.

**What is Laurel House?** Laurel House is a comprehensive domestic violence agency, providing supportive and preventative services throughout Montgomery County. Through the help of local churches and community groups, the women and children are provided with the funds to shop for personal care items and other necessities for daily life.



### SUNDAY SCHOOL AND YOUTH GROUP UPDATE

Hello all teens and their families. Youth group will meet on Sunday, Feb. 9 at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a brown bag lunch, we will have lunch together and a short devotion. We will then be writing letters/Valentines to the troops. Nonperishable treats are welcome also. Hope to see you there!

Annette Dittman, Director of Youth Ministries

### STEPPING STONES

Come to your fellow man, lend him a helping hand, and put a little love in your heart! Welcome to February where it's nothing but love at Stepping Stones! Our 2025 is off to a great start and we are so looking forward to all we have in store! From Groundhog's Day to Slumber Party Day, Tie Dye Thursday to Valentine's Parties; our month is going to be busy for a short one! Stepping Stones will be closed on 2/17 for President's Day and we are getting all prepped for our Spring Picture Day on 2/26. We're always up to something so be sure to check in on us with our Facebook page and Instagram. We can't wait to share with you!

Jessica Moran, Director

### WELCA

Ladies, our next meeting will be February 5th at 10am, weather permitting. I hope everyone made it through our January snowstorm with no trouble. Please take care, Barb

**Sweets for Sharing 12/2024** - This is an overdue THANK YOU to everyone who supplied all the cookies and candy we needed to share sweets and cards to members of Grace!!! Despite the nasty, rainy weather, WELCA & INreach team members came together to have a fun, productive evening at the Schmidt's house. When all was said and done, we made up 23 beautiful packages and still had an additional 6 or 7 for Soup Supper attendees! All deliveries were done quickly and Bruce kindly dropped off a large number of packages/boxes at Grace for handing out to staff at Grace & Stepping Stones. Again, thank you to all who took the time to send cards to our homebound and/or supplied the sweets for this wonderful "Peggy Schmidt created" event!

**Angel Box Donations**- A very big, belated, THANK YOU to everyone who supported our Angel Box collection for 2024! Your donations provided personal care and paper products for the Adopt-A-Families and the two Hatfield food cupboards. All are very grateful for your support!

### Midwinter Live Auction



: Hopefully you have heard by now that the new Fellowship Committee – in charge of planning fun events for our Grace members – is hosting a live auction at Grace on Saturday, February 15, with all proceeds going to Grace ministries. Doors open at 5:30 PM and the bidding starts at 6:00. Even if you think you may not want to buy anything, there will be food for sale (at very reasonable prices!) to satisfy and warm you up; we'd like to make a bit of extra money for Grace by having you purchase some of these items for your supper! We will have home-made soup, chili, and desserts, as well as hot dogs and warm drinks.

The items for bidding are being collected as I write and are being posted on an ongoing basis on our website – look for the auction tab for a current list: [Grace Auction 2025 - Grace Lutheran Hatfield](#) ! So far, we have several hand-stitched quilts, some beautiful artwork, summer passes to the Hatfield Aquatic Center, visitor passes for the Eastern State Penitentiary (a historic site), and many more and varied items. Things are sure to go at bargain prices.

If you cannot attend, please consider donating an item or asking a business you patronize to make a donation. We will collect items for bidding through February 7. Be sure and spread the word and invite friends and family! Admission is free so if nothing else, it will be an opportunity to get out of the house and socialize!

Hope to see you there.

Cathy Farrell, Fellowship Committee chair

## February 2025 Serving Schedule

Date	Altar Guild	Communion Assistant	Lector	Acolyte	Ushers	Coffee Hour
<b>2/02/25</b> <b>8:00 am</b> <b>10:30 am</b> <b>(Scout Sunday)</b>	J. Detweiler M.J. Moyer & B. Hess	B. Schmidt	P. Schmidt	Usher Usher	P. Schmidt & D. Ball	TBD
<b>2/09/25</b> <b>8:00 am</b> <b>10:30 am</b>	J. Detweiler M.J. Moyer & B. Hess	G. Lockner J. Kaler	D. Kunkel J. Kaler	Usher L. Kaler	D. Kunkel & R. Smyrl The MacDonalds	TBD
<b>2/16/25</b> <b>8:00 am</b> <b>10:30 am</b>	J. Detweiler M.J. Moyer & B. Hess	K. Seiler L. Boyer	K. Seiler The Sluggs	Usher Usher	K. Seiler & D. Capanear The Sluggs	TBD
<b>2/23/25</b> <b>8:00 am</b> <b>10:30 am</b>	J. Detweiler M.J. Moyer & B. Hess	B. Schmidt C. MacDonald	D. Kunkel C. MacDonald	Usher Usher	P. Schmidt & D. Kunkel L. Boyer & K. Deussing	TBD

**Council Offering/Lock-up for February 2025 is: 8:00 am, TBD; 10:30 am, TBD**

**Live Streaming: Harold Schaefer, Dan & Tami Sarm**

### Bits and Bobs

- **Please Note:** We are returning to collecting the offering during the service as we did before 2020. Our ushers will collect the offering during the choir anthem. Choir members may give their offering to an usher before the service begins.
- **Do you watch our livestream, live?** If so please chat with us in the comment bar. It's easy to do and nice for others watching to let them know you are there. They want to hear your voice!
- **Prayer request cards** are in the narthex. Drop them in the offering plate to be added to our prayer list.
- **Sunday School and Children's Messages** will now be offered by our Director of Youth Ministry, Annette Dittman, at the 10:30 service only. She and Darrin will still be attending at 8 a.m. (their preferred service) but can enjoy worship during that time. Annette encourages parents to bring children to the 10:30 so they may enjoy each other's company in Sunday School. "The more we get together...the happier we'll be!"

## February 2025 Calendar

- The Jesus Love Church (formerly Central Philadelphia) will be worshipping on Sundays at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary and Friday night worship at 8:00 pm.
- Tues. are Bread Drop Sandwich Days. Donations are accepted from 8am-7pm.
- Wednesdays at 6:15 pm is Yoga in Fellowship Hall

Sat Feb 1, 2025	5:00pm	North Penn Theater Guild Fundraiser
<b>Sun Feb 2, 2025</b>	<b>8:00am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
Tues Feb 4, 2025	7:00pm	Stitchers
Wed Feb 5, 2025	10:00am	WELCA
Thurs Feb 6, 2025	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper
<b>Sun Feb 9, 2025</b>	<b>8:00am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
Tues Feb 11, 2025	7:00pm	Worship & Music Team Meeting
	7:00pm	Property Team Meeting
Thurs Feb 13, 2025	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper
	7:00pm	Stepping Stones Committee Meeting, via Zoom
Sat Feb 15, 2025	6:00pm	Mid-Winter Live Auction
<b>Sun Feb 16, 2025</b>	<b>8:00am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
Mon Feb 17, 2025		<b>Stepping Stones CLOSED for President's Day</b>
Tues Feb 18, 2025	7:00pm	Council Meeting, Zoom option
Thurs Feb 20, 2025	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper
<b>Sun Feb 23, 2025</b>	<b>8:00am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Worship (Sunday School)</b>
Thurs Feb 27, 2025	5:30pm	Thursday Soup Supper

### THURSDAY SOUP SUPPERS

If you haven't experienced our Soup Suppers yet, we warmly invite you to attend. We regularly welcome members from the neighborhood along with members of Grace; there is always someone new each week. Soups are freshly made, and the bread is also fresh from Hearth Bakery. Stop in at 5:30 any Thursday to experience new community being formed. Make new friends and spread the word. Postcards to share are in the narthex.





## Prayer List

The full list is now published Parish News, while the list in Grace Notes (weekly newsletter) includes prayers only for Grace members and immediate family rather than including extended family and friends. Please submit requests to Lynn Fasick at [graceassistant40@gmail.com](mailto:graceassistant40@gmail.com), specify whether the need is “ongoing” or “current,

and notify her if and when the name may be removed from the list. Thank you!

### PRAYER LIST

**Please let Pastor Raabe or Lynn 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, Bob Kaler, Peggy Long, Hazel Mascaro, Jerry Mascaro, Bob Rufe (Mary Jane Moyer’s brother), Joyce Salter, Nancy Sellers, Bailey Vinson (Liz Bauer’s great-granddaughter), Nancy Dustman (Joyce Salter’s sister).

**In Current Need of Prayers:** Kristopher Yoder, Lisa Kane, Vickie West, Sandy Klinger, Peg Malloy, Daniel Hopwood (Tom Hopwood’s son), John Renick, Joanne Moyer, Sheran Shenk (friend of Bruce & Peggy Schmidt), Angelina (Mascaro) Trotter, Alice Ciarrocca (friend of Karen Heacock & Phyllis McKeefrey), Anita Spisak (Ken Seiler’s mom), Christopher Humlhanz (Jaime Snyder’s cousin), Betty Poling (June Detweiler’s sister), Regi Gambino (friend of Lynn Plawa-Oxenford), Annette Beyer (friend of the Reillys), Joan Fonseca (B. Schmidt’s cousin), Pat Ferkitich (friend of Nancy Sellers), Bob Rocheleau (Bruce Schmidt’s brother-in-law), Atticus Jones (Lynn & Mike Plawa-Oxenford’s nephew), Connie Plawa (Lynn’s sister-in-law), Priscilla (Shaffer) Hollerbach, John & Bonnie Stangl, Milford Lyndaker (friend of Karen Seiler) Jordyn Goldstein (teacher, Stepping Stones), Chelsea Mascaro (Hazel & Jerry’s granddaughter), Cheryl Nicholas (Tom Salter’s niece), Kathryn Shelly (Will Shaffer’s mother-in-law), Tony Miller (Pastor Raabe’s cousin), Lisa Ronan (MacDonald’s neighbor), the Horowitz Family (good friends of Mary Jane Moyer).



**For all who grieve, including the family & friends of:** Dan Black (Laymen Playmen), Roger Smith (friend of the Shaffer family), Buzz Benson (Karen Seiler’s uncle), Al Riley (Bruce Schmidt’s cousin), Goodloe Sutler (friend of Peggy Schmidt), Jan Madigan (Sue Wieland’s niece), Sally Muntz, Gerry Mason (Richard Badman’s son).

**For those in active duty military service:** Jessica Murphy, Air Force; Matthew Smyrl, PA Army National Guard; Cole Dempsey, Air Force (Laura Kratz’s grandson).

**For active military deployed overseas:** Kyle Murphy, Air Force; Eric Gutsche, Army (Janice Swartz’s grandson), Nathaniel Smyrl, PA Army National Guard.



### GRACE RECYCLES:

Please flatten all cardboard boxes before putting them in the recycling bin. Also, all plastic, cans, bottles, jars should be rinsed and placed loosely (**not in trash bags**) in the bin. This will allow the maximum amount of material to be placed in the bin between monthly pickups. Thank you !

**Please Note:** If anyone knows a person or organization that would be interested in using our **Fellowship Hall** space for an event (non-members are asked for a facility use donation), please have them contact the church office for more information or see **“Use our facility”** on the home page of our website.



## EEC FOOD CUPBOARD

A message from Janet Hague: "As a recap of 2024, we distributed almost 70,000 pounds of food and essential household items to the 80-90 Hatfield borough families that visit the food pantry each month. This is only possible with the help of donations from individuals, civic & church groups, local businesses, Philabundance, AND over two dozen volunteers from the community and local churches." Your generous giving is so beneficial to your neighbors in Hatfield. Thanks for spreading some joy during these cold dark days of winter!

### Current Needs:

**Food items:** Chunky Soup (especially low salt), Flour, Sugar, Coffee, Ketchup, Mustard, Beef Stew (canned), Spam, Spaghetti Sauce

**Household & Personal Care\*:** 13-gal Kitchen Trash bags

**Gift Cards:** Grocery gift cards are always welcome and very helpful, especially ALDI & Giant!

Your non-perishable donations can be placed in our Grace narthex bins by the conference room and they will be brought to the EEC when bins are full.

### Upcoming distribution dates & times:

Tuesdays 5:30 - 6:30 pm: Feb 4 & 18

Tuesdays 1 - 2 pm: Feb 11 & 25

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](mailto:foodcupboard@yahoo.com).



**THE BREAD DROP schedule for February 2025 is:** 2/4/25 Emily Woltmann; 2/11/25 Karen Seiler; 2/18/25 Laura Kratz; 2/25/25 Jean Delmuto

### Use of Fellowship Hall

This is a reminder that Stepping Stones uses Fellowship Hall at various times throughout their day. Stepping Stones is in session from 7:30-5:30 Monday to Friday. Access during those times **must** be coordinated with the Stepping Stones Director, Jessica Moran. Any planned activities should also be scheduled through the church office, by contacting Lynn Fasick. Thank you for your cooperation.





**37<sup>th</sup> Production**

March 21, 22, 23  
& 28, 29, 30 - 2025



Lyrics by Tim Rice  
Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING  
TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT  
is presented by arrangement with  
Concord Theatricals on behalf of  
The Really Useful Group.  
www.concordtheatricals.com

The Laymen Playmen, Inc. proudly present their 37<sup>th</sup> production of  
**Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.**

It will be produced on March 21,22,23,28,29, and 30, 2025. The show  
location is Lansdale United Methodist Church,  
300 N Broad St., Lansdale, PA 19446.

The musical written by Andrew Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice is based on  
the Biblical story of Joseph from the Book of Genesis. He is the favorite  
son of Jacob and is given a coat of many colors by his father. Joseph’s  
brothers become jealous and the story follows Joseph and his many  
adventures.

Tickets go on sale January 1, 2025.

**Detailed information regarding the show may be found on:**

**[www.laymenplaymen.org](http://www.laymenplaymen.org)**

Any questions call 215-368-9484

**YOGA continues every Wednesday at 6:15 pm.**



Yoga is for all levels. This will be suitable for those with some yoga experience but also for anyone with little to none, as options will be offered for the various poses. The goal is to work on strength and flexibility gradually while gaining an ability to focus on breath and awareness.

WHERE: Grace Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall; COST: \$7/class (checks can be made payable to Grace Lutheran Church);

Contact: Kathy Stawasz with any questions (215.760.6297)

**Mark your calendars for the Lenten Season**

**March 5<sup>th</sup>** – Ash Wednesday, services at 12 noon and 7:30 p.m.

**Wednesdays in Lent at 7:30 p.m.:** Worship with the churches of Hatfield (schedule TBA)

**March 9<sup>th</sup>** – First Sunday in Lent – The Rice Bowl project begins.

During the Lenten Season our **Rice Bowl** project helps others in need of food and other necessities. Each Sunday during Lent a special offering will be collected during worship services for the Rice Bowl. **In your offering envelope box, special envelopes are provided for each of the six Sundays in Lent.**

*The Giving in Service Team*

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

GraceLutheranHatfield.org

Office Phone 215.855.4676

Lynn Fasick, Office Administrator

[Graceassistant40@gmail.com](mailto:Graceassistant40@gmail.com)

Annette Dittman, Director of Youth  
Ministries

Susanna Faust, Minister of Music

Stepping Stones 215.368.2052

Jessica Moran, Director



**February 1st**      **North Penn Theater Guild Fundraiser**

**February 15<sup>th</sup>**      **Mid-Winter Live Auction**

*View our website by scanning this code*



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