

Rev. Dr. David Wendel Installed as Pastor of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

On Sunday, December 10, 2023 the Rev. Dr. David Wendel was officially installed as the Pastor at Grace Westerville. Bishop Emeritus John Bradosky, Interim Pastor Matt Cox, Director of Youth and Family Ministries Molly King, and Council President Jim Caldwell took part in the installation ceremony. Dr. Wendel comes to Grace after serving 14 years on the staff of the NALC as Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry and Ecumenism.



Grace Council President Jim Caldwell read letters of congratulations to Pastor Wendel and to Grace from NALC Bishop Dan Selbo and former Grace Pastor William Hartfelder. Bishop Emeritus John Bradosky (*pictured behind Molly King in the picture at right*) also read a letter of congratulations.



Pastor Wendel presided over his first Eucharist at Grace during the Service of Installation.

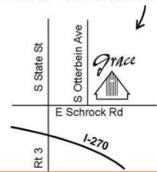


To our guests

WELCOME TO GRACE
WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE

We invite our guests to accept a "Guest Bag" that contains information about Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. The guest bags are located at the Welcome Center, just outside the entrance to the sanctuary. Ask an usher or any member for assistance.

You're invited! Here's how to find us.



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

100 E. Schrock Road, Westerville, OH 43081

Office Hours:

Monday thru Thurs. 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Friday 9 a.m. to Noon

PH: 614-882-3026 • e-mail: office@grace43081.org • Website: www.grace43081.org

Facebook: facebook.com/GraceEvangelicalLutheranWesterville

The Church Office is closed Jan. 1 and 15, 2024

Grace Lutheran has been serving the Westerville community for more than 114 years, supporting local ministries such as the Westerville Area Resource Ministry (W.A.R.M.), Westerville Partnership Habitat for Humanity and the Westerville CROP Walk. Grace also supports Lutheran Social Services programs like Faith Mission and provides weekly space for four AA groups (*Tuesday, Friday & Saturday*). The Red Cross Bloodmobile, Vacation Bible School, the Autism Buddy Camp and Joyful Noise Concerts also are a benefit to the Westerville community.

Grace Staff

David Wendel, Pastor d.wendel@grace43081.org
719-650-8171

Molly King, Director of Youth and Family Ministries
614-581-6675 m.king@grace43081.org

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music@grace43081.org

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719-650-8171 d.wendel@grace43081.org

Members at Large:

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614-818-3975

Ted Ray teray55@msn.com
614-886-8272

Becky Seifert seifertbecky@yahoo.com
614-378-6023

Nelson Grover and Jackie Washburn were elected to council in November, replacing retiring members Julie Young and Andy Laderman. President, VP and Secretary will be voted on at the first council meeting of the year on Tuesday January 23.

Worship Services

Holy Communion

EVERY Sunday Morning

Two Worship Services: 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School

Youth Sunday School classes K-5
9:45 to 10:45 upstairs in the Preschool Room.

Confirmation and High School

9:45 to 10:45. Basement Youth Room

Adult Learning

9:45 a.m. Fellowship Hall

The Nursery

Open Sunday mornings during both services and the Sunday School hour.



North American Lutheran Church (NALC)

The NALC embraces four core values:
Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded and Congregationally Focused.

The NALC is focused on living out Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples in North America and around the globe.

Learn more about Grace and the NALC.

Phone: +1 888 551 7254 •

E-mail: info@thenalc.org Website: thenalc.org

Vision Statement

We envision Grace to be a welcoming Christ-centered community of faith, inviting all, growing in discipleship, sharing in ministries.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to reach out with the love of Jesus to grow disciples and serve our community.



Treasurer's Reports can be requested from either Melissa Hodek at melissa.hodek@gmail.com or from the Church Office.

If you have questions please contact any member of Council.

Offering Envelopes for 2024 are available on a table in the Gathering Space

Service Recording:

The recorded 8:30 am service will be available at noon www.grace43081.org

Loaves and Fishes Café

Stop in between services. There is a sign-up sheet in the café if you are interested in helping. Please call Regina Place, 614-623-1452 or Vanessa Stewart, 614-588-2712 with questions or concerns.

Dear friends in Christ,

I had hoped to write something profound and meaningful for the January "Voice of Grace" newsletter, but after my announcements on Sunday, December 17th, several have suggested that I share my comments more broadly, so I will do so in this communication!

I have regularly shared with congregations and pastors in the NALC that the relationship between pastor and people is not unlike marriage—a covenantal relationship of commitment, love and trust. Also, not unlike marriage or living with roommates, there is some give and take as we get used to one another and realize we each may have our own ways of doing things. For this reason, I thought it helpful to share a bit about a few ways that my worship leadership may be different. Not necessarily right or wrong, but a bit different.

Designated Parts of the Liturgy

Our Lutheran liturgy has developed over hundreds of years with a proper balance of presiding minister, assisting minister and congregation, so that our worship is an interactive dialog, reflecting God's speaking, pastor/preacher praying and speaking, assistant representing the whole congregation and congregation responding appropriately. I prefer to follow the rubrics (red instructions) in our Lutheran liturgical books, rather than making decisions based on my (or someone else's) opinion or innovation. You may notice slight changes in this regard, but simply follow the indications in the worship folder for "P"-pastor, "A"-assisting minister and "C" for congregation.

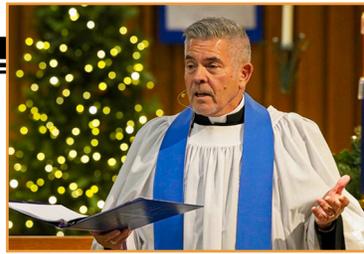
Restoring the Offering Procession

In many congregations, COVID caused a re-thinking of passing offering plates person to person. At the same time, the presentation of the offering plates/baskets and gifts of bread and wine to be used in Holy Communion were not brought forward. Liturgically, the offering procession is a visible reminder that our gifts of money, bread and wine are our response to God's gifts of grace. They are not offerings to the congregation, properly speaking, but an offering to God which He then blesses and returns to us for mission and ministry. Appropriate persons will bring the gifts forward at offering time, usually as we sing the offertory, followed by the offertory prayer. On the first Sunday of the month, we will again have our First Fruits offering basket brought forward, as was the custom in the past.

Full Use of Holy Communion Vestments

The vestments clergy wear each have a special and unique meaning. My practice is to make full use of the vestments which have been in use historically. Pastors wear black, traditionally, symbolizing our sinful humanity. If you didn't realize, we are sinners too! Pastors are not less sinful or more righteous! Black is a reminder and a confession that we are all sinners and no one is righteous, no, not one, as St. Paul writes in Romans 3:10. The white robe (alb) of

A Note from Pastor Wendel



the pastor, assistant or acolytes symbolizes the baptismal garment with which we are clothed, (Galatians 3:27) as Christ's holiness and righteousness covers our sin (the black clergy clothing). What may not be as familiar is the colorful chasuble, which is the wedding garment, worn only at services of Holy Communion (Matthew 22:1-46). It is a festive garment in the color of the season indicating that we are at the marriage feast of the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ and His bride, the Church. At non-communion services, the pastor may wear only the alb and stole (the stole is the "yoke" of Christ, which is the symbol of ordination) or the black cassock, white surplice and stole. Again, whether pastors do or do not wear the chasuble or other vestments isn't right or wrong, but whether one makes full use of vestments or chooses not to.

Clergy Communing First

Martin Luther followed the historic practice of communion first, before communing the congregation. He mentions this in his writing on the Formula Missae. There are several reasons for this practice. First, the presiding minister is a sinner in need of God's grace before presuming to offer grace to the congregation, in the means of grace. By communing first, the pastor then communes the congregation having already received forgiveness. Second, we commune because at the Lord's Supper, Jesus commands, "Do this for the remembrance (anamnesis) of me." The pastor obeys this command immediately, leading the congregation to "do this" also. Finally, communing is an act of public witness and obedience. In the early church, the Roman government tried to suppress the gathering of Christians for the Lord Supper, which took place in an evening gathering. The Roman emperor perceived Christians as disruptive of the Pax Romana, the peace of Rome as the Christians refused to worship all the gods of the empire and especially, the emperor as divine! To receive the Lord's Supper was a public act of defiance of the Roman empire, obeying the Lord's command to "Do this" rather than the emperor's prohibition. God forbid we will ever be in a situation where our government attempts to keep Christians from receiving the Lord's Supper. However, should that come to pass, the pastor should be the first to commune in an act of public witness, before inviting the congregation to do likewise! In our communion, we are not only rejecting political powers and authority, but as we commune, we are publicly rejecting sin, death and the devil! As pastor and shepherd of the congregation, I am willing to be the first to make this public witness!

I hope these explanations are helpful! I trust that the more we understand about our worship as Lutheran Christians, the more meaningful our worship will be!

*In Christ,
Pastor David Wendel*



The highlights of the December Council meeting are as follows:

- Council welcomed Pastor Wendel to his first Grace Council meeting.
- The majority of the meeting centered on planning a February on-site council retreat to allow Pastor Wendel to work with the council and staff on setting goals for the congregation and determining a plan to work toward those goals.
- It was noted that during the recent heavy rains, there was some water leaking from the roof into the sanctuary. This problem will be addressed and hopefully a solution to the problem can be determined ASAP.
- Council thanked Julie Young and Andy Laderman for their service to the congregation during their years serving on council.
- For the month of November, receipts exceeded expenses by \$5,267. For the year, expenses exceeded receipts by \$13,405.

Respectfully submitted by Tami Banks, Secretary



BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

2023 Advent December 3rd through 24th: We completed our lighting of the Advent wreath and joined together in a series of scriptural prophecies, related Advent hymn verses, sermon and Advent Litany of Preparation. We brought Advent to a close with a meaningful service of hope and expectation!



Reception for Pastor Matt and Debbie Cox

Pastor Matt has served Grace as the interim Senior Pastor over the last year and a half during the call process. On December 3rd after both services, a reception was held in Pastor Matt and Debbie's honor. Pictured below is Council President Jim Caldwell presenting them with a token of our appreciation.



A Note of Thanks:

Debbie and I would like to thank the church council, staff, the Kitchen Krew and the congregation for the reception following each service on December 3rd. We were overwhelmed with the many cards, wonderful words and gifts of remembrance. You showered us with your love and thanks.

We are grateful to our Lord for the gift he gave us in being among you for this past year and a half. It has truly been an honor. May the Lord continue to bless, keep, and empower you as you open a new chapter of ministry and mission with Pastor David.

Matt & Debbie

Thank You Pastor Matt

The work you have done for Grace congregation has truly been a blessing.

We are praising God to have been so blessed to have had a shepherd who loves his flock so much.

- **December 3, 2023**
8:30 am Regina, Vaughn, Lauren and Leah Place
11:00 am Maria, Andy, Hannah and Owen Laderman
- **December 10**
10:00 am Michael and Macy Braatz
- **December 17**
8:30 am Larry and Becky Seifert
11:00 am Eric, Cheryl, Andrea and Heather Bush
- **December 24**
10:00 am Jodie, Miguel, and Alaina Arreguin



Altar Guild Meeting Planned! A meeting of the Altar Guild is planned for Saturday February 3, 2024 9:30-11 am in the Loaves & Fishes café. It is a great time for anyone wanting to join in this vital ministry or just interested in knowing more about how we serve our family of Grace to join us - no reservation needed!

I plan to review Captain and Team assignments, review the updates in our procedures, and have Pr Wendel in attendance to elaborate on any changes being made, answer any questions we may have, and encourage us in our ministry. There will be plenty of coffee and bakery goodies as we share this time together. I would encourage any current members to bring a friend who may be interested in serving with you to come check us out! Please contact Vanessa Stewart for more information 614-588-2712.





Grace's Gang

Messages from Molly

Molly King, Director
Youth & Family Ministries
m.king@grace43081.org or
614-882-3026.



Youth and Family Vision Statement:

To nurture Youth and Family
in Christ
through Bible based teaching,
music, activities
and community outreach.



A Prophet Foretold the Messiah A Christmas Pageant

The Actors

Narrators:..... Charlie Nickoli
Emily Odum
Claire Cain
Charlotte Holmes

Prophet Isaiah: Philip Young

Angel Gabriel: Molly Young

Mary: Maddie Nickoli

Joseph: Miguel Arreguin

Angels: Alison Miliner
Macy Braatz
Anna Young
Maggie Hoch

Shepherds: Sam Nickoli
Camden Strete
Benny Hoch
Evan Crain
Gabriel Young

Wisemen: Nate Holmes
Camden Kaczorowski
Hannah Laderman

Barn Animals: Caroline Young
Alaina Arreguin
Stella Blankenship
Owen Laderman

Stagehands: Jack Young, Steve Young

Special Thanks to Co-directors

Jennifer Blankenship and Steve Young

Grace Singers Chancel Choir

Soloists: Addie Gurgiolo, Nick Cosgrove

Trumpet: Samson Gurgiolo

Director, Youth & Family Ministries: Molly King

Director, Music Ministries: Jeff Daubenmire

Organist: Linda Hoch

Costumes: Lois Rumph

Set Design: Sue Mahrt

and to ALL of our Volunteers.

A Prophet Foretold the Messiah Our Youth's Christmas Pageant

11:00 am Worship Service on December 17, 2023



YOU ARE AMAZING! The request was for 75 pairs of socks and the collection was **232!** Thank you to those that donated socks to **Freedom ala Cart** for the Holiday bags.



A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

RESPONSE: "God, surprise me again."

When I miss the beauty and the joy of earth's goodness
 When I grow too accustomed to life's busyness
 When the good news of others gets lost in the rush
 When my frailty outruns my strength
 When the hope in my heart fades away
 When the call to serve others loses its flavor
 When I search for the way home to you
 When loneliness pursues me
 When it seems the darkness will never give way to the light
 When the ache of the world wears my compassion thin
 When the troubles of others seem more than I can carry
 When even you seem far away from me



RESPONSE: "Walk closely with me, God."

As I strive to live my life well ...
 As I enjoy the treasures I've found in the field of faith ...
 As I continue to surrender myself to you
 As I journey into the unknown territory of a new year
 As I hurt in the process of loving my enemies
 As I learn to accept my weaknesses and my strengths
 As I open my heart to the messengers you send to me
 As I stay faithful to my relationship with you
 As I give myself to the poor and powerless
 As I keep searching for the truth
 As I try to live in the heart of the scriptures
 As I accept your constant love for me

AMEN

Saturday, January 6 Blue Jackets vs Minnesota Wild



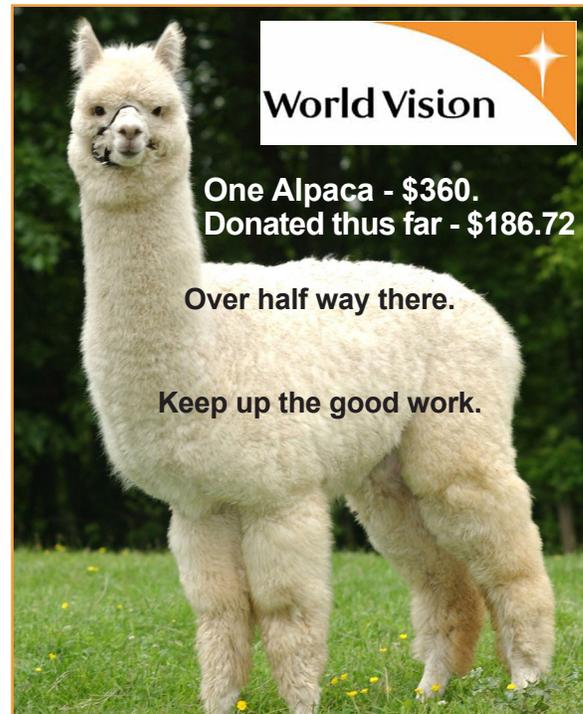
The Puck Drops at 7 p.m.

A Youth and Family group is headed to Nationwide Arena on Saturday, January 6 to see the Blue Jackets take on the Minnesota Wild. We have great seats on the Mezzanine level.

Keep informed of all the outings scheduled for Youth and Family in 2024. Check the weekly bulletins and "**Messages from Molly**" here in the *Voice*. All are welcome.

Molly's Seminary Update:

Winter break is coming to an end with Spring semester starting January 29th. This semester I am going to take two classes. I will be taking a class on "Pauline Epistles" and "Community Building and Outreach." The Pauline Epistles class is about the thirteen books of the New Testament attributed to Paul the Apostle. Both of these classes are once a week on zoom in the evening. The Spring semester ends at the end of May. My plan is to do some independent study classes this Summer to keep things moving along. As you can imagine I am looking forward to getting it done! Please keep me in prayer this semester for strength and guidance to use my time wisely with work and Seminary classes.





from Joanne Figge

The Intercessory Prayer Team is busy! If you are interested in learning about this faithful service to our congregation and community, please contact either Joanne Figge at jcfigge@gmail.com or 614 -207-1061 – or - Donna Dettmann at donnadett@aol.com or 703-447-7760.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR
The first blood drive of 2024 at Grace

Tuesday, January 16

Main Entrance Gathering Space
Noon to 6:00 p.m.

To schedule an appointment visit RedCrossBlood.org, sponsor code: GraceLuthWesterville or call 1-800-RED CROSS

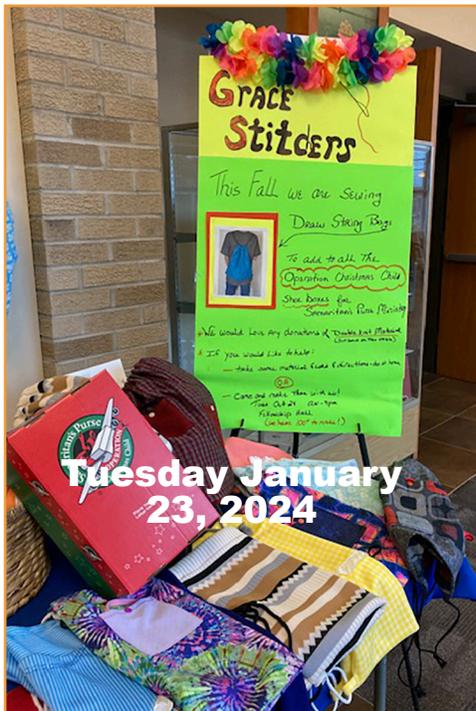
If you last donated on or before November 21, you may be eligible to give.

Give in January to automatically be entered for a chance to win a trip for you and a guest to **Super Bowl LVIII** in Las Vegas. Includes travel, hotel, \$1,000 gift card, pre-game activities and more! Terms apply; visit RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl



We are excited that Grace Supper Club is back

this month after our hiatus in December. Supper Club has a reservation at **Lucky House Chinese Restaurant** on Thursday, January 18 at 6:15 p.m. Lucky House is located at 56 East Schrock Road, Westerville 43081. A sign up sheet is at the Welcome Center Desk. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!** Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. Any questions, please see either Bev Grubb - mgrubb1148@gmail.com or Tami Stone - stone8059@sbcglobal.net.



Tuesday January 23, 2024

The Grace Stitches

from Vanessa Stewart

The Stitches will have our first meeting in 2024 planned for Tuesday January 23, 2024 1-3 pm in the Fishes & Loaves Cafe. After taking a summer break, we reconnected in October to make 50+ drawstring bags for **Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes**. Our January meeting will focus on what projects and opportunities we feel God is calling us to as a group and as individuals.

Molly has again invited the Grace Stitches to join the youth group during the Sunday School hour on January 14th, to make blankets for **My Very Own Blanket**. Last year we had a great time working together on completing blankets to be given to children entering into foster care. It was a blessing to think we could be used to give comfort and write words of encouragement with blankets in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ.

You do not have to be a sewer to join our group! We primarily complete projects at home unless we schedule a 'sew-in' afternoon at the church. At our meetings we share and explore sewing opportunities as our ministry and we encourage anyone to join us who would like to participate in the non-sewing activities and to pray for the ministry.



For more information please contact Vanessa Stewart 614-588-2712.

REPORTS FROM OUR SERVICE PERSONNEL

Rick Arreguin and his unit continue to remain safe on their current mission in the Middle East. They have been on phone meetings with the unit that will be replacing them in the coming months and preparations have begun for the Transfer of Authority, which will signal their time to return home! Many of them have been enjoying baking cakes, brownies, and cookies thanks to your generosity. The group in Jordan had a cookie decorating contest in December, including Rick making his cookies with Alaina and Miguel in mind. Please continue to keep him and his unit in your prayers.



Continue to pray for all our military personnel and first responders.

Ed. Note: Is a member of your family serving in the Armed Forces? You are invited to share family service personnel stories by sending them to: seatom5853@gmail.com.

Yarn Matters

from Jodi Arreguin

New Year, New Hobby!

Join the Yarn Matters group in Rose Garden 1 on Tuesday, January 23rd, 2024 at 6:30.



We will be happy to teach and chat! Materials available for your use.

We meet on the 4th Tuesday of every month. Only in November will we meet on the 3rd Tuesday. We do not meet in December.

We hope you'll consider starting your New Year with a new hobby and join us to chat and work with yarn! Call Jodi Arreguin 614-946-3344 if you have questions.

ADULT BIBLE STUDIES



SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS (Fellowship Hall)

"That the World May Know" – As Christians, we're called to proclaim God's name in all the earth, but how do we do that amid false gospels? In Volume 15 discover how Paul spread the good news of Christ to Philippi, a Roman colony that worshipped false gods. This volume will ask us to answer a couple of important questions, like where does our citizenship reside? Are we citizens of the worldly or the Heavenly kingdom?



Also, what message are we conveying to the world? Renowned teacher and historian Ray Vander Laan guides you through the lands of the Bible. In each lesson, Vander Laan illuminates the historical, geographical, and cultural context of the sacred Scriptures. Filmed on location in the Middle East, the film series will transform your understanding of God and challenge you to be a true follower of Jesus.

This session will begin on January 7th and is facilitated by Bill Kulju. This class meets in the fellowship hall between services beginning at 9:45 am.

RUTH CIRCLE (Rose Garden 1)



Ruth Circle will meet on Monday, Jan. 8th at 1:00 in Rose Garden Room # 1. Joanne Figge will lead the lesson on "Laying down the Law," the first lesson in our new books. Charlotte Schaller will provide light refreshments. All ladies of the church are welcome to attend. Please join us. If you have questions, call Dorothea Fuhrman at 614-205-8111.

KATHARINE CIRCLE (Rose Garden 2&3)



Katharine Circle will meet Tuesday, January 2, at the church at 1:00 p.m. We are doing a study on "God's Reluctant Leaders." During this year we are focusing on Jonah, Gideon, and Moses. Carolyn Rearick will lead session 5 this month entitled: "Asking for a Sign". All women are invited to join us. Please contact Dorothy Crain with any questions - 614-264-5304.

THE WOMEN'S WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY (Fellowship Hall)

Our next Bible study, which will begin on January 10, 2024, is from RightNowMedia. We will be studying The Gospel of John: Part 1 by Dr. Tony Evans. Description: Where do you turn when the world around you grows dark? In this study of the Gospel of John, Dr. Evans encourages us to turn to Christ by reminding us of the two purposes for this beloved disciples book- that we would believe in Jesus and find life in his name. Despite what our culture may argue, there is only one hope that is truly trustworthy and that is our Savior, Jesus Christ. If you don't already have a RightNow Media account contact Molly King, m.king@grace43081.org. The women's Bible study meets in Fellowship Hall every Wednesday Morning at 10:30 a.m. Contact Molly with queries.

The Scioto Brass and Percussion Company presented its Christmas concert

"It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!!"

to a packed house at Grace on Sunday Afternoon, December 10, 2023.



"It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!!"



The Scioto Brass features 35 gifted Musicians under the direction of Dr. Christopher Hoch.

Joyful Noise Concerts are presented by Grace throughout the year.

Music Notes

By Jeff Daubenmire,
Director of Music Ministries
music@grace43081.org



The Grace Music Ministry had some very meaningful moments in worship during Advent with marvelous anthems by the Chancel Choir, wonderful singing by our Youth, pieces featuring bells and other instrumental offerings, and organ and piano duets. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day included a myriad of carols and special music offerings providing a fitting celebration of this beautiful season.

The new year promises to include more of what the Grace Music Ministry has been developing. Look for more great anthems by our Youth and Chancel Choirs, special offerings by the many talented musicians in our congregation, and some unique, community based Joyful Noise concerts. We continue to be grateful for the generous acknowledgment and appreciation by so many for those who work to make the Grace Music Ministry vibrant and engaging.



1st Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023

PRELUDE

"The King Shall Come" "Fling Wide the Door"

Linda Hoch - Organ

SPECIAL MUSIC

8:30 *"The Advent of Our God"*

Martha Crist - Piano, Linda Hoch - Organ

11:00 *"People, Look East"*

Grace Singers Chancel Choir

COMMUNION MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

"Il est ne le divin enfant"

Maria Laderman and Robin Buser - flute duet

POSTLUDE

"Wake, Awake! The Night Is Flying"

Linda Hoch - Organ



3rd Sunday of Advent - Youth Christmas Program at 11:00 December 17, 2023

PRELUDE

"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

11:00 Selections by

the Sunday School pre-school class.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"O Holy Night" Nick Cosgrove - Tenor,
Grace Singers Chancel Choir

COMMUNION MUSIC

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

"Creator of the Stars of Night"

Jeff Daubenmire - Piano, Linda Hoch - Organ

POSTLUDE

*"Awake! Awake, and Greet the
New Morn"*

Linda Hoch, Organ



2nd Sunday of Advent - Installation December 10, 2023

PRELUDE

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

"O Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry"

Linda Hoch, organ

INTROIT

"Advent Hope" Grace Ringers Bell Choir

SPECIAL MUSIC

"The Yearning" Grace Singers Chancel Choir

COMMUNION MUSIC

"Communion Prelude for Flute and Organ"

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Maria Laderman - Flute, Linda Hoch - Organ

POSTLUDE

"Prepare the Royal Highway"

Linda Hoch, Organ



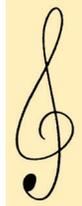
Grace Chancel Choir rehearsals are 7:00-8:15 PM on Wednesdays. Contact Jeff Daubenmire with questions or interest in singing.

Grace Youth Choir rehearsals are Sundays 9:30-9:45 AM. Contact Jeff Daubenmire, Director of Music Ministries.

Grace Ringers Bell Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays, 6:15-7PM. Contact Maria Laderman with questions or interest in ringing.



PHOTOS BY ERIC BUSH



**The Nativity of Our Lord
December 24, 2023 5:00 pm**

PRELUDE

"Divinum Mysterium" "Sussex Carol"
"A Carol Fantasy"
Linda Hoch, Organ

**Gathering Music Selections
by Youth of Grace**

"Angels We Have Heard on High"
Miguel Arreguin, voice

"Go Tell It On the Mountain"
Emily Odum, piano

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"
Maggie Hoch, Piano with Christopher Hoch

"Away in a Manger", "I Saw Three Ships"
Benny and Maggie Hoch - Piano Duet

"Angels We Have Heard on High"
Benny and Christopher Hoch - Piano Duet

"Joy to the World"
Benny Hoch, percussion,
Sammy Gurgiolo, trumpet

SPECIAL MUSIC

"O, Holy Night" Addie Gurgiolo, voice

COMMUNION MUSIC

"The First Nowell"

"O Jesu Sweet, O Jesu Mild"

"Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mild"

Martha Crist - Piano, Linda Hoch - Organ

POSTLUDE

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"
Jeff Daubenmire - Piano, Linda Hoch - Organ

**Nativity of Our Lord
December 25, 2023
10:00 am
PRELUDE**

"Five Hymns for Christmas Day"
Jeff Daubenmire, piano

SPECIAL MUSIC

"The First Noel" Jeff Daubenmire

COMMUNION MUSIC

"Away in a Manger" "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"
Andrea Bush, violin

POSTLUDE

"Joy to the World"
Jeff Daubenmire, piano

**The Nativity of Our Lord
December 24, 2023 8:00 pm**

PRELUDE

"Carol Prelude on O Little Town of Bethlehem"
"Away in a Manger" "Once in Royal David's City"

"Still, Still, Still" "Divinum Mysterium"
"The Sussex Carol" "A Carol Fantasy"

Linda Hoch- Organ

"The Yearning"
Grace Chancel Choir

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Rejoice! Christ Is Born!"
Grace Singers Chancel Choir

COMMUNION MUSIC

"The First Nowell"

"O Jesu Sweet, O Jesu Mild"

"Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mild"

Martha Crist - Piano, Linda Hoch - Organ

POSTLUDE

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"
Jeff Daubenmire - Piano, Linda Hoch - Organ

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The 13th Annual Progressive Christmas Concert

from Joanne Figge
Special thanks to Jeff Daubemire and Chris Hoch!

On December 8, 2023, the Annual Progressive Christmas Concert was held at three uptown

churches. The Voices of Grace, Linda Hoch, Maria Laderman and Martha Crist participated. The concert and the Soup 4 Shelter dinner with pottery bowls from Columbus Academy's students, earned Westerville Habitat Partnership (WHP) 17,785! That's a record high. This year's total given by WHP to Delaware & Union County Habitat for Humanity is \$37,200! Thank you all so much for participating!

Westerville Grace Dartball arrived at the holiday break with a record of 23-22 which is good enough for second place in the division (3 games behind Grove City with a record of 26-19). Fred always says, "You just need to be about .500 at the holidays," so mission accomplished! 7 weeks, or 21 games, of the regular season remain. Statistical leaders include Chris with 221 at bats, Robert with 32 singles and a .398 batting average, Gregg with 22 doubles, Natalie with 6 triples, Dan with 19 home runs and 26 runs, and Vaughn with 32 RBI. A balanced offense to say the least! We look forward to ending the season strong, and enjoying ourselves in the postseason tournament. Happy New Year! - Robert Bassett



Arts and Environment Nativity Fair

December 3rd and 10th



The Art and Environment Team was delighted with the success of the Nativity display it sponsored in early Advent. The congregation contributed a total of 32 different interpretations of the birth of Christ. They varied in size from barely two inches tall to figures measuring 16". Many lands were represented: Israel, Peru, Germany and the Philippines. The materials included paper, wood, fabric, glass, ceramic, resin and plastic. Some were mass produced and others were crafted by hand.

Several had been handed down from previous generations.

Each set evoked memories of the people, place and time of their origin. Visitors were touched by the stories they read which prompted memories of their own.

We are reminded that around the world all Christians celebrate the coming of our promised Savior who comes to save us all.

Our thanks to all who participated and visited our display.
-Sue Maht



Our First Fruits

You will be enriched in every way for all generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God through us.
-2 Cor 9:11

WARM's Value:

We recognize God through our work.
We believe in the dignity of each individual.
We work to help people become self-sufficient.
We strive to be exemplary stewards of resources with a vision for the future.

RECEIPTS FOR WARM

Since the last Voice report, new receipts for WARM were \$1,665, for a total of \$13,901 donated to WARM in 2023 so far, generously exceeding the annual congregational pledge of \$10,000.

-Debbie Yoho, Financial Manager

*Make Checks Payable to: Grace Lutheran Church, memo notation for WARM. Blessings to all who are making WARM a part of your regular tithes and offerings.
Your generosity is a wonderful example of Grace's concern for others.*

WARM is serving 61% more clients than they did during the height of the pandemic. Additionally, their **Share a Bac a PAC** program is serving 47% more children in Westerville city schools than this time last year. It's obvious that our community members need our help." Financial donations are put to good use as well as food and hygiene items that are included in our monthly First Fruits lists. Make sure you continue to collect plastic bags and feel free to drop them off at WARM anytime between 9:00AM and 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. We will be asking children to take items from the cart to the basket under the altar on First Fruit Sunday. Ushers and Community assistants will be able to help them. - Karen Bale

If you have questions about Grace's First Fruits Ministry, please call Karen Bale at 614-506-3331.

Donate Time to W.A.R.M.

Grace's contributions to the Westerville Area Resource Ministry were outstanding again in 2023. W.A.R.M. is one of our biggest financial missions. The financial and food/hygiene gifts are wonderful and most appreciated. W.A.R.M. also has opportunities for members to donate time as well. Individuals or groups can work in the warehouse or directly with recipients. Church-held group events are always welcome and successful. These events are held on Thursday and Friday from 10-12 a.m. or 1-3 p.m. as well as Saturday mornings 10-12. If any of our Grace ministries would like to schedule a project sometime in 2024, see Joanne Figge. Service projects are led by W.A.R.M.'s Service Project Coordinator, Andy Hicks. They welcome our help. -Joanne Figge

NALC Disaster Response leader, Mary Bates, has called out for Walmart gift cards to help those whose homes/businesses were devastated by the tornadoes in Tennessee in November. If you wish to donate a card drop it off in the office or in Molly King's mailbox outside the offices by January 7th.



Disaster Response

Cut out and collect these items for the **JANUARY** First Fruits

Grocery Carts

Any of these items are greatly appreciated. Thank you again for your support of WARM and the Westerville Community

- Body Lotion, Body Wash
- Cereal
- Coffee - decaffeinated
- Conditioner
- Dishwasher Detergent
- Disinfectant Wipes
- Fabric Softener
- Fruit Juices (esp. Apple)
- Sugar, Granulated, Jell-O, Sugar Free
- Canned Mushrooms
- Pears
- Pizza Sauce, Tomatoes, Stewed
- Razors, Shampoo
- Shaving Cream, Soap, Hand/Soft

Thank you!

Place ONLY non-perishable items into grocery carts.
W.A.R.M. cannot accept food past its expiration date. Any fresh produce, baked goods and dairy products take directly to WARM. 150 Heatherdown Dr. Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

You donated 163 Toys to the Salvation Army Angel Tree Toy Drive



Thanks to All!



REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Karen Vann, Diane Boone, Betty Lou Milin
Janis Boughton, Grace Sima, Rod Rice,
Don Slemmer, Jan Perry, John Moffett,
Rick Arreguin, Bob Bower, Clarence Clapham,
Janice Hardick, Joan Hassler,
the family of Rodney Smith



ANNIVERSARIES

JANUARY

7- ANDE & TSUGU UCUBAGABRIEL..... 50
31-PATRICIA & DAVID PATTERSON..... 59

FEBRUARY

3- BARBARA & GEORGE GIRARD 61
14- MARY LOU & GARRY BRIGHT 48



BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY

1- JAN AGLER
1- DAVID DOLL
4- LONDON BLANKENSHIP
7- LINDA SEAMON
9- SHIRLEY MOLENO
11- LISA KUCHAR
11- HEATHER SINGLETON
11- JON SWEET
13- LINDA FICHTELMAN
13- LARRY GEHLHAR
13- SAMUEL NICKOLI
14- CHARLOTTE SCHALLER
14- BECKY SEIFERT
15- ABIGAIL REYNOLDS
16- PATRICIA PATTERSON
17- NELSON MILES
19- JOHN NAVE
20- ROGER WELLS



21- ELI DETEMPLE
21- AMY QUINN
25- MIKE KING
28- JACOB WASHBURN
28- RYAN WASHBURN
29- TOM SEAMON
30- JASON REARICK
FEBRUARY
3- BARBARA GIRARD
3- HEIDI GORGAS
3- WILL HARTFELDER JR.
3- BRANDON NICKOLI
6- CHERYL DOBROKA
6- SHIRLEY HODEK
6- CHRISTINE KOTIK

Thank you so much to our church family for providing meals the past few months. We are tremendously grateful for this showing of care and support which has helped us navigate the holidays while Rick is away.

-With love, Jodie, Miguel, and Alaina Arreguin

DEATH

Rodney (Rod) A. Smith

Born: March 24, 1939

Died in Christ: December 10, 2023

A funeral service was held at Grace on
Friday, December 22, 2023

Do you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. -Romans 6:3-5

Flowers for 2024:



Flowers at Grace can honor a special event, remember a loved one or simply give glory to God. You may sign up at the welcome center, on-line or call the office. The actual cost of flowers has increased to \$75.00 a Sunday. The suggested donation will now be \$30. Since that does not cover the cost, this donation is not to purchase flowers for your own, but contribute for the enjoyment of all. After the service, the arrangement is moved to the welcome center for the following week to enhance our space even longer.



The staff of Grace would like to express their sincere gratitude to the congregation for the generous staff Christmas gift! It is greatly appreciated by all and heartfelt! We look forward to serving the Grace family in the New Year and wish you blessings in 2024!

Thank you!

*Pastor Matt Cox
Linda Hoch
Molly King
Jon Sweet*

*Jeff Daubenmire
Maria Laderman
Sarah Odum
Debbie Yoho*



Following is the fourth in a series of 11 articles on the Reformation by Pastor Tom Jacobson - Southeastern Ohio Mission District Dean

Justification by Faith

To set the stage, in 1510. Luther was a monk, a friar, who had returned to Germany after his visit to the holy city of Rome. His "father superior," John Staupitz, the Vicar General of the Augustinian Order in Erfurt, had commissioned Luther to walk from Erfurt to Rome as an official representative of the Augustinian Order. While Luther was in Rome, his eyes were opened to reality; the city of

Rome, known as the holy city of St. Peter, was actually filled with corruption and immorality. Even many of the priests and monks in Rome lived shameful lives.

Back home, Luther continued his spiritual struggle. His logic was that since he was a sinner, God who is righteous must punish sin. He felt that the only way to escape was to rid himself of his sins. Only then could he find peace.

Hence, Luther was rather hard on himself. At one point, it is said that he spent six hours in confession, listing off all of the sins he could remember committing. His father superior and mentor John Staupitz admired Luther's zeal, but felt that Luther was missing the most important thing. He encouraged Luther to see another side of God. God is not only filled with judgment; God is also filled with mercy. By overly focusing on his every weakness, Luther was missing the bigger picture of God's love for him.

Staupitz felt that Luther could benefit from a new environment, and he also knew that the best way that one can learn about something is to become a teacher. So, he sent Luther to the backwater town of Wittenberg, which is today in the former East Germany. There, Luther would study at the newly founded University of Wittenberg in preparation to be a biblical and theological teacher. Staupitz was

correct. Luther's study opened his mind to a "new" way of thinking about God and His relationship with humanity. Of course, Luther's discoveries were not new, as others in the history of the Church had learned these things long before. But they were new to the young man Martin Luther.

By the standards of Germany today, Wittenberg is a fairly small community of about thirty thousand people. Back in Luther's time, Wittenberg was much smaller. Luther reportedly said to Staupitz, "This place will be the death of me," to which Staupitz replied, "Well, God can use a clever young man like you in heaven if it comes to that."

Luther eventually earned his doctorate degree in 1512. He was added to the theological faculty of the University of Wittenberg at that time on the condition that he would teach in Wittenberg indefinitely. Luther's main focus of study was the Bible, especially the Old Testament. If Luther were alive today, he would probably

"Well, God can use a clever young man like you in heaven if it comes to that."

John Staupitz's reply to Luther's statement, "This place will be the death of me."

teach in the Old Testament department of a modern seminary. But Luther viewed the Old Testament as a witness to Jesus Christ. Indeed, he came to believe that the Bible as a whole, not only the New Testament, was a book about

Christ and who Christ is for us.

Luther feared the phrase "the righteousness of God" from Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter three. He knew that in the eyes of God, he was unrighteous. In spite of all his efforts, he was powerless to cleanse himself from all sin. Even his best actions were not pure. And so, he felt that he was doomed to face God's judgment and condemnation.

But at some point, along the way, probably in the year 1519, Luther had what is often called a "Tower Experience." What that meant is that he was in the tower of the monastery when it occurred. It was there that he grasped the meaning of Paul's words "the righteousness of God." He realized that righteousness is not only something that God demands; God provides righteousness to sinful people through the gift of Jesus Christ, which we receive through faith, trust in the promises of God. Luther reports, "I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise."

What is Epiphany and why does it matter?

Brenna McCormick, NewSpring Church
You decorated, traveled, ate, opened gifts, and ate some more. You rang in the new year with a long list of resolutions. Now, what?

Epiphany: It's time to take down all the decorations.

Many people have only heard of Twelfth Night or Epiphany as the deadline for taking down Christmas decorations, but it's actually a significant part of Christian history.

What is the history behind this holiday?

The word epiphany means "manifestation" or "revelation." When Christians talk about Epiphany, we are referring to the three wise men or the Magi's revelation that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah that Israel had been waiting for (Matthew 2:1-12). On this day, we recognize the wise men's journey to see, worship, and bring gifts to "the one... born king of the Jews" (Matthew 2:2). The festival commemorating Epiphany is Jan. 6 and is also called Three Kings Day. **Epiphany celebrates Jesus' outward and visible expression of love for us.**

Why does the Epiphany matter?

Christ's birth was a big deal for the wise men, and it is a big deal for us. At its essence, Epiphany celebrates Jesus' outward and visible expression of love in leaving His rightful place in heaven to live as a human and become the sacrifice for our sins. The Magi, wise men who studied the stars and were considered sinners, represent Jesus' ability to draw all types of people to Him. **He is a Savior who came for all people, including each one of us.**

Should I celebrate Epiphany? And if so, how?

Epiphany traditions vary from culture to culture. It can be helpful to remember and celebrate significant events in Jesus' life, including the Epiphany. What is important to keep in mind when celebrating any holiday is the reason for and the heart behind the celebration. Rather than acknowledging traditions or rituals because they've always been done, celebrate the meaning of the holiday: **Jesus came to earth to save us.**



**GRACE EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
Westerville, Ohio



2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 ---Office Closed---	2 1:00pm Katharine Circle 8:00pm AA Mtg	3 10:30am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm Singers	4 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 1:00pm A&E Decoration Take Down 6:30pm Dartball v. Epiphany	5 8:00pm AA Mtg	6 9:30am AA Mtg 7:00pm @CBJ Hockey Game 8:00pm AA Mtg
7 Baptism of Our Lord (Pr. David Wendel) 8:30 & 11:00 am Worship Services 9:30 Youth Choir 9:45am Adult Learning and Sunday School 2-4pm Christian Assembly of the Word (CAW)	8 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 1:00pm Ruth Circle	9 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 12-6pm Blood Drive 8:00pm AA Mtg	10 10:30am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm Singers	11 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 6:30pm Dartball @ Bethel	12 8:00pm AA Mtg	13 9:30am AA Mtg 8:00pm AA Mtg
14 2nd Sunday After The Epiphany (Pr. David Wendel) 8:30 & 11:00 am Worship Services 9:30 Youth Choir 9:45am Adult Learning and Sunday School (My Very Own Blanket Event) 12:15pm Secret Sisters Event 2-4pm Christian Assembly of the Word (CAW)	15 ---Office Closed---	16 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 8:00pm AA Mtg	17 10:30am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm Singers	18 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 6:15pm Supper Club 6:30pm Dartball v. Grace	19 8:00pm AA Mtg	20 8:00am Men of Grace 9:30am AA Mtg 8:00pm AA Mtg
21 3rd Sunday After The Epiphany (Pr. David Wendel) 8:30 & 11:00 am Worship Services 9:30 Youth Choir 9:45am Adult Learning and Sunday School 12pm Youth and Family Mtg 2-4pm Christian Assembly of the Word (CAW)	22 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group	23 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 1:00pm Grace Stitches 6:30pm Yarn Matters 6:30pm Council Mtg 8:00pm AA Mtg	24 10:30am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm Singers	25 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 6:30pm Dartball vs. Rome 7:00pm Worship and Music Mtg	26 8:00pm AA Mtg	27 9:30am AA Mtg 8:00pm AA Mtg
28 4th Sunday After The Epiphany (Pr. David Wendel) 8:30 & 11:00 am Worship Services 9:30 Youth Choir 9:45am Adult Learning and Sunday School 2-4pm Christian Assembly of the Word (CAW)	29 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group	30 9:30am Stroller Fitness Group 8:00pm AA Mtg	31 10:30am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm Singers	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>We envision Grace to be a welcoming, Christ-centered community of faith, inviting all, growing in discipleship, sharing in ministries.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Worship materials and sermon available online at www.grace43081.org</p> </div>		

Grace

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Place address label here

We are a congregation of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC)

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Silent Night Star Walk

There is something magical about going for a walk outside in the crisp, cool night air. It's a reminder that nature isn't revealed just by the light of day. A nighttime walk has a certain mystery and beauty to it. Depending on where you live, you may need to bundle up quite a bit for your silent night star walk. As you walk, look up at the stars and consider the majesty and beauty of God. After the walk, ask one another, "What did you see that reminded you of the beauty and majesty of God?"