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# January 2025 In Touch with Grace



Dear family and friends of Grace,  
Ring the bells! Ring them loud and clear! Ring in the New Year for all to hear! The sound of bells at midnight on the eve of a new year beckons its dawning. One of my favorite carols about bells is 'I heard the bells on Christmas Day.' How well its message fits our current times.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote this poem which was later set to music. Longfellow had suffered the tragic death of his wife two years earlier. Then, his eldest son enlisted to fight for the Union Army in the midst of the Civil War. In a few months, just before Christmas, his wounded son arrived home having been seriously injured in battle. When Christmas morning arrived, Longfellow heard the city bells ring out their message of peace on earth. Trying to express in words the mixed emotions flowing through him, Longfellow wrote:

I heard the bells on Christmas Day, Their old, familiar carols play, and wild and sweet, The words repeat Of peace on earth, good-will to men! And in despair I bowed my head; "There is no peace on earth," I said; "For hate is strong, And mocks the song Of peace on earth, good-will to men!" Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The Wrong shall fail, The Right prevail, With peace on earth, good-will to men."

Looking at the world as we begin this new year, where do we see peace on earth? Do we see hope or do we only see despair?

I challenge you this New Year, to really look and

listen for the good news that Christ has been born for all of us. A child born to bring hope, love, joy, and peace into our world and to teach us how we should live in the same way,

We are moving through the twelve days of Christmas where we take time to count our blessings and rest in the joy of Christmas. The last day is the day of Epiphany where the Magi found Jesus after following a star. We celebrate the season of Epiphany until Lent begins in March.

During this time, we, too, are invited to follow the star – Jesus, the light of the world. When things seem darkest, remember the story that Jesus was born for you. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. You are loved. You are never alone. Take time at the end of each day to name what you are grateful for that day. There is always a blessing or two no matter how hard it is to find.

God is not dead nor asleep. God still brings peace on earth and good will for all. This good news is for you. Hold it close and keep Christmas in your heart. See the light this New Year!

May blessings abound for you this coming year.

Pastor Karen



## Announcements

- Thank you to all who participated, led, and created our children's Christmas program. The kids did a great job!!!!



More pics on back of calendar page!

- Confirmation will meet on January 5 after worship. We will celebrate Epiphany. Our second class this month will be January 19 with our intern, Bethany, leading the class. See you there!
- Youth night! January 19 from 4-11 p.m. we will gather for our annual evening of fun! Details to follow but all youth and friends grades 7-12 are invited to attend. Always a great not-to-miss event!
- Our East Side Collaborative is meeting Monday, January 13, at 4 p.m. If you are interested in participating with this group, please let Pastor Karen know. Thank you for the strong response to our Reverse Advent Calendar that we have shared with our neighboring churches to bless the families in our neighborhoods through our local food shelves.
- If you have a family member suffering from dementia, there is a Dementia Support Group that meets every third Wednesday of the month from 2-3 p.m. at Cerenity-Marian. (225 Frank Street, St. Paul. All are welcome to attend.

**Annual Reports for February Annual Meeting are due in the office by Jan. 15th!**

## The Giving Tree -

To all the members of the Congregation at Grace who participated and brought gifts for the Giving Tree, please accept our heartfelt thanks. Donations were shared between LSS Learning Center in the lower level of Grace and Project Home families. We estimated the total dollar amount of what was collected to be over \$1800. Because of your generosity, many children will be a lot warmer this winter in our community.

Together, we make a difference.

The Mission Committee and Community Connections Committee



## JANUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH

The Mission of the Month for January at Grace is Doctors Without Borders. DWB provides lifesaving care to over 70 countries. They are dedicated to providing medical care to people in distress including victims of political violence and natural disasters. The population the group assists typically lack access to adequate resources for medical treatment.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to this organization which serves those in need of medical attention but are unable to financially get access to life-saving and life-changing medical procedures. Please use your blue multi-purpose envelope, mark mission of the month and place in the offering or mail to the church office. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.





## Music Notes -

Many may not remember that at one time, all church music was either based on Gregorian chant or from hymns written by composers long dead. And that was in the 20th century, less than one hundred years ago. But over a four year term, from 1962-1966, Pope John XXIII convened what was to be called the second Vatican Council, or for short Vatican II. One of the many goals set for these meetings was to update the Catholic Service, make it more relevant to the congregants, for example saying the service in the worshiper's language, not Latin. This was long coming, something Martin Luther had done 400 years earlier. Not only was the service's language updated but also the music and instruments used. And thus the introduction of guitars and keyboards into the Catholic Mass.

New hymns were needed, which opened the door to such composers as Marty Haugen. Not only was the door opened to Catholic composers but also to Lutheran musicians, John Ylvisaker being one of them. One of his over 1000 hymns has been sung all over the world - "I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry". It's celebrating it's 40th year in usage. There are two other of his many hymns included in our hymnal: (#451) "We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus", (#593) "Drawn to the Light". The tune to "We Are Baptized" is called Ouimette, a strange name until you realize it is named after the couple, Bob and LaVonne Ouimette, who proposed he write something for the Burial of the Dead Service, which it was part of. The tune for "Drawn to the Light" is called LaCrosse for the city where it was first sung.

Because of Vatican II and the musical pioneers such as Marty Haugen and John Ylvisaker, the door has been open to many more composers, including women. That'll be for next time!

## CALLING ALL GUITARS, UKELELES, WOODWINDS AND STRINGS:

Speaking of instruments finally introduced into church worship 60 years ago, we are highlighting the above mentioned on our January 26<sup>th</sup> service. Music will be available by January 12th. Let's celebrate our diverse sounds!



## FROM THE LIBRARY:

(This is a repeat of last months recommendations as our librarian is not available currently - I hope you haven't already read all of these!)

### CHILDREN

Christmas Gifts That Don't Need Wrapping

### BOOK CLUB READS -

A Gentleman in Moscow

Amor Towles

### FICTION -

A Home for Unloved Orphans

Rachell Wesson

Whiskey Beach

Nora Roberts

Night Circus

Erin Morgenstern

Unspeakable

Sandra Brown

Longitudes and Beatitudes

Thomas Friedman

A Hawk Among Sparrows

Austin Ferrer

It Ends With Us

Coleen Hoover

### SELF HELP -

7 Habits of Highly Effective People Stephen Covey

The Government Manual for New Wizards Matthew Broziks



### Grace Book Club -

Here are the latest titles chosen -

For discussion on: January 2 - The Briar Club - Kate Quinn

February 6 - Lessons in Chemistry - Bonnie Grams

## Sunday School

I am so proud of our Sunday School kids for an amazing Christmas program. Special thanks to Pete for being the reluctant Inn Keeper that continued to help take care of the young disciples that wouldn't stop following Jesus. It was a story of how we should choose to follow Jesus, and how sometimes we are not so sure if we can but God is still there guiding us.

The Inn Keeper gave a room to Jesus when he was a baby in need, and now he makes a room for Jesus in his heart forever. Make room for Jesus in your heart everyday. He came to save all of us.

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

Sunday School classes will resume on January 5th.

**As always, if anyone is wanting to help out with Sunday School in any way please contact Amanda Christie.**



**More pictures on the back of the Calendar page!**

**January XYZ meeting** - January 9th, at 1:00 pm in the Tower Room

Downsizing and Decluttering! (You can't take it with you)

Having too much can impede people from relocating or getting healthcare into their homes. This engaging presentation explores why stuff is so important for some people and teaches practical, easy-to-follow tips on downsizing and decluttering. Learn how to get started.

Representatives from AARP will lead this program and answer our questions.

Refreshments will follow, of course!



## President's Thoughts -

Happy New Year!

Wow! There was a time when 2025 was so far in the future that it seemed unreal that we would actually get there and here we are!! How about you? Are you having some difficulty adjusting this year?

I think we go through this at least a little bit every year, but somehow it seems more of an event this year. Not really sure why. Any thoughts?

Maybe it's because we will be inaugurating a new Federal Administration team the 20th of January, perhaps because of the contentious election, or maybe there are big changes coming up in your life this year, BIG birthdays looming, or several of any number of life-changing events. It can be more than a little challenging to face the change of the year and getting through yet another turning of the calendar.

However you face the coming year, I hope that you take Christ with you for all of your challenges and triumphs. It is always possible with him by your side. That doesn't mean it won't be difficult at times, but there is the assurance that you will make it to the other side with God's help and be stronger for the challenges. It also means that He is there for all of your celebrations as a teammate, coach, cheerleader, and all-around support system. Lean on Him and His never-failing love.

Personally, I am looking forward to being in less of a leadership role here at Grace and more just an active member in the roles I choose. In other words, more like most of you in the congregation. The past 2 years as president have been challenging as well as satisfying. I have appreciated engaging with you regarding many topics and challenges surrounding Grace's future ministry on the East Side of St. Paul and with all of the construction and maintenance happening. We managed it all and are still together because we continue with the same overall mission. To be Christ in our community and the world. No matter what changes come in 2025, that will still be our constant goal on a daily basis, whatever the current date.

Thank you for allowing me to serve. It has been an honor and now let's move into the New Year with purpose!

Linda Sackreiter, Congregation President thru the end of December.

**FOOD SHELF SUNDAY IS JANUARY 2nd!!!**

**ANNUAL MEETING PART 2 IS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 16th!**

That means that Annual Reports are due in the office (electronic preferred) by  
**JANUARY 15th!**

**Thank you!**

# Community Connections - ongoing projects!!

## Internal, Local and Global

**If you would consider serving treats** on a Sunday morning, we would appreciate your help. Please take a look at the sign-up schedule in the South Tower room and see if there is a date that works for you to help out! If you would be willing to bring treats but would prefer to not serve, please speak with Linda Sackreiter and we can arrange that as well.

Thanks for your help!!

### 2024 Collections

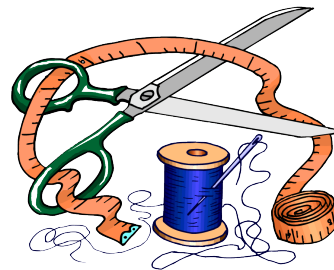
*Quilts, baby care kits* (Note: soap size accepted for baby care kits is 3.5 or 4 oz gentle soap; soap in each kit has to total 8 or 9 oz)

We delivered 30 Quilts and 9 baby kits to the LWR warehouse last month and have already started with new ones.

Other on-going collections at Grace - used eye glasses and cancelled stamps. Please find the small collection baskets on the library shelf. Also, Sandy Abernathy will take any American Flags that need to be disposed of properly. These can be left in the collection area in the library. (We are not currently saving soup can labels) Thank you for all donations!



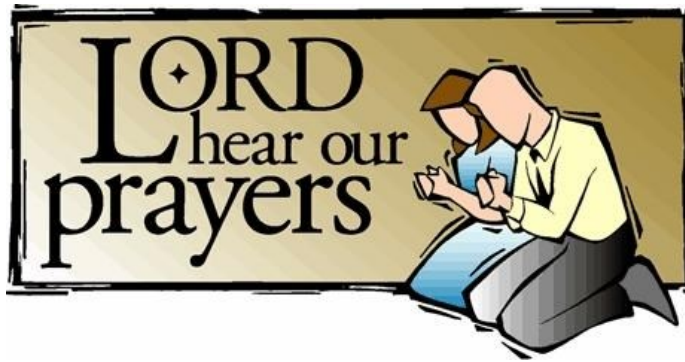
**Quilt Days**— We will be meeting again in January on the 2nd Saturday (11th) and the 4th Saturday (25th). All are welcome to join us. No skills necessary, we will teach. Most months we meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays in the Tower rooms. Come join us in this month for some good conversation and to put those hands to use for a wonderful cause. Lutheran World Relief distributes donated quilts all over the world including in the US.



**Miles of Pennies** The large collection jar in the library is always accepting donations toward giving to the LSS fund for helping homeless Youth in St. Paul. Our goal was \$250.00 for 2024 and we sent \$275 to LSS this year! Let's exceed that again in 2025! We are getting close. Thank you to everyone who participates in this important mission. Your generous donations of coins and paper money are appreciated.







**We lift our prayers to God** in times of thanksgiving and times of need, in times of joy and times of sorrow. This month we especially pray for Russ Carlson, Stacy Bray, (Marlene Hockbein's niece), Judy Adam, Bev Henderson, Ron House, Carol Anderson, Butch Nelson, April Premo (niece of Judy Nelson), and all those we name in our hearts.

**How to donate other than in the offering plate:**

There is always snail mail. The office is open to receive the mail and our bookkeeper will count what comes in each week and deposit it in the bank. Our address: 1730 Old Hudson Road, St. Paul, 55106.

To donate electronically: You can schedule a transfer of funds with your own bank if they have bill pay available and it will come automatically on the date you choose. Otherwise, you can go to our website ([www.gracelutheranstpaul.org](http://www.gracelutheranstpaul.org)) and click on the GIVE page.

This site is secure for financial transactions through Vanco which is the Simply Giving program. At the GIVE page you can go through the steps as directed and give whatever amount you wish to several different categories (general, other, etc.) This works best on the Firefox or Edge browsers. This does get to us electronically in a very timely manner. If you are comfortable using the QR, it will take you directly to the GIVE page on the website. **Please call the office if you have any questions.** Thank you.

Give QR



**Financial Snapshot for GLC-2023**

	<u>November Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual*</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund	\$ 45,018.75	\$ 227,204.77	\$216,386.25
Expenses	\$ 22,208.73	\$ 253,343.55	\$268,028.53
Deficit/Overage	\$ 22,810.02	-\$26,138.78	-\$51,642.28

\* Does not include \$296,000.00 rec'd in June from the Met Council.



- 1 Kaliska Reed
- 3 Sam Martinez
- 5 Susan Lindquist
- 8 Anna Colvin  
Jake Kemen
- 9 Carl Alleman
- 10 Raymond Voss
- 11 Thomas Mohwinkel  
Peter Zitzewitz
- 13 Andy Martinez  
Patricia Rydel
- 14 David Hunter
- 15 Leila Colvin  
Rebecca Schaaf
- 20 Peyton Olson

- 27 Brian Jackson  
Abigail Westling
- 28 Patricia Young
- 30 Alicia Runquist



# Worship Leaders for January 2025 -

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>
5	Jeff Oberlander	Cami Alleman	Phyllis Hunter
12	Bethany Ketchem	Alexis Petersen	Jim Baumer
19	Pastor Karen Williams	Kaliska Reed	Barb Holtan
26	Dave Hunter	Tony Childs	Carolyn Hesterberg

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ushers (the families of the acolytes are also helping out)</u>
5	Norm Walby, Jonathan Williams
12	Brian Petersen, Rachel Petersen
19	Brian Jackson, Lydia Rose, Violet Rose
26	Jeff Oberlander, Anne Oberlander

<u>Date</u>	<u>Money Counters - (we could use some additional volunteers on our counting teams)</u>
5	Kate Pray team
12	Amanda Christie team
19	Monique McClure-Hegge team
26	Kate Pray team
30	Amanda Christie team



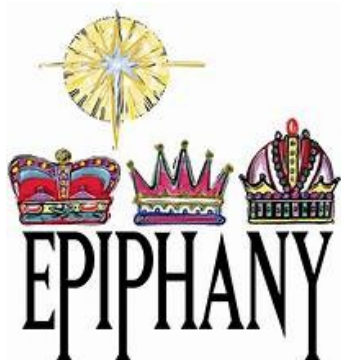
## Construction and Traffic updates!

The East entrance has been repaved and is again wide enough to use. The Gold Line construction involving our site is completed for the winter and word is that the buses will be running by late March.

**The bridge across 94 on White Bear is now open again as are the accompanying entrance and exit ramps!! And Old Hudson Road between McKnight and Ruth is now open again.**

Thanks for your patience!!

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**Pastor:**

Rev. Karen Williams

**Intern:**

Bethany Ketchem

**Custodial Staff:**

Linda Denson

**Office Staff:**

Linda Sackreiter

**Music Staff:**

Russ Carlson—Director of Music  
Ministries

Kathleen Hollar—Organist

Jan Steingas—Triple G's

Russ Carlson—Bells of Grace

Connie Smeby—Joyous Juniors



The word "JANUARY" is written in a large, blue, stylized font with a white outline. Above the letters is a blue semi-circle containing several white snowflakes of various designs.

