

grace notes

The newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church



Christmas at Grace!

Celebrating the Light of God’s Loving Way

All of us know the sensation of being in the dark. Whether we’re sitting at home and the lights go out, or we’re awakened by a strange noise in the middle of the night or, we go out into the backyard to gaze up at the stars and realize the disorientation and confusion when light is suddenly gone! Everything familiar and comforting has disappeared, and for a moment, we struggle to find our way again!

How often do we sense that our world struggles in darkness? Whether it is impending war and escalating violence, the financial doom and gloom, or the myriad of problems pertaining to hunger, greed and natural or environmental

disasters... these challenges often create dark shadows of fear and anxiety. How essential it becomes for us to celebrate this Christmas as the moment God sent his Son to light the way for us; to find hope, to grow faith, and build trust in all he is doing in our world. Recalling the words of Isaiah the Prophet, spoken to people living in dark times, we celebrate that through a tiny baby lying in a manger, God’s Light has been born!

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. Isaiah 9:2

God’s Light of Love shining this Christmas is something to celebrate! It is a promise to receive. It is an invitation for us to live in his Light, no matter how dark and anxious our world may seem. So, we invite you and your family to come and celebrate this wonderful “Light” born to us in a manger in Bethlehem.

For those who are new to Grace, we celebrate this Christmas Light in a “big way.” We have five different worship services on Christmas Eve to give everyone an opportunity to include worship amid all the family activities. The first two are early Family Services (2:30 & 4:00 pm) which offer an extended children’s sermon and a special gift for children. The next two services (7 & 9 pm) have a more “contemporary” feel to them and include candlelight singing. The last service (11:00 pm) is a traditional candlelight service with special choral music. Then, after the “big” celebrations of Christmas Eve, we gather in the quiet of Christmas morning for a reflective “Quiet Communion” service (10:00 am).

Christmas Weekend Worship Schedule

Saturday	December 22	5 pm	4 th Saturday of Advent Service
Sunday	December 23	8, 9 & 10:20am	4 th Sunday of Advent Services
Monday	December 24	2:30 & 4 pm	Family Christmas Service
		7 & 9 pm	Contemporary Candlelight
		11:00 pm	Traditional Candlelight

Christmas Day Worship

Tuesday	December 25	10:00 am	Quiet Communion Service
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Pastor Mark's Remarks:



I So Need Advent!!!

I get to this same point every single year! After getting through the hectic start up of school and church activities during September and October, November seems to fly by too fast! First, it's All Saints Celebration, then the church bazaar happens, followed with the Thanksgiving holidays and the many sport and school activities sprinkled throughout. And guess what! As I get older and hopefully wiser, it seems the schedule gets faster but my energy level doesn't! I almost don't want to think about December, and all activities and events surrounding Christmas! It's all too hectic and frantic. I just want to scream: "Enough!!!" This is why I realize once more, I NEED ADVENT...the time of the church calendar when we slow down, prepare and wait, doing whatever we can, not to rush into Christmas.

Advent...the word 'Advent' is from the Latin 'adventus,' which means 'coming.' It is a brief four weeks before Christmas. No one knows when Advent first came to be celebrated. Obviously, it was not until the celebration of Jesus' birth was firmly established in the later part of the 4th century. But it's safe to say the celebration of Advent has been around for a very long time!

The heart of Advent is preparation. It is a time when we reflect and pray to get our hearts ready for the Lord to come. Whether we're talking about the first time he came to us in Bethlehem, or when he comes into our everyday situations and circumstances, or even when he will come at the end of time. At the heart of Advent is the difficult lesson of waiting! Unlike the world that dashes quickly to Christmas (yes, the retail stores put up the Christmas decorations even earlier this year!), Advent is like a large spiritual "Slow Sign" placed right

in the middle of it all!

So how do we learn the lesson of waiting? We do several things. We prepare by using an Advent wreath at church as well as at home. (We're going to make Advent Wreaths on Sunday, Dec. 2nd! Call the church office to sign up!). Obviously, the circle of pine branches can represent many things, but during Advent it points to God's eternal purposes. The 4 candles - one for each Sunday of Advent - represent different parts of the story: Candle 1 - Prophecy about the Messiah; Candle 2 - Bethlehem preparing for the Savior; Candle 3 - The Shepherds in the field; Candle 4 - the Angels singing to the Shepherds. As we light the candles we sing carols and pray for Jesus to come.

My favorite part of Advent is the way we decorate the church in royal blue and put up the Jesse Tree panels around the front window. The Jesse Tree, named for the father of David, reminds us of the prophecy that the Messiah would come from the lineage of King David, reminding us of God's Plan of Salvation started so long ago. What is particularly striking about our Jesse Tree is how it emerges from the large front cross. It merges prophecy into reality! And the wall hangings, the special altar decorations, and the fact that we refrain from singing Christmas carols (unlike the world who rushes way too much!) all help me to enter into the Advent story and wait for wherever and whenever God is going to show up!

So now you see why I welcome Advent into the hectic pace of December? It's something I just can't do without anymore. And I'm hoping it will be the same for you! As we prepare for this wonderful time of waiting for the Lord to come, I pray for the Lord to be born again in your hearts and homes this Christmas.

Pastor Steve's Remarks:



I would like to begin this article with a personal note of thanks to everyone who participated in my installation last month through prayer, cards, gifts, and words of encouragement. It was a very special moment in my life. I think we will all remember the moment when Pastor Mark presented the Trinity Cross to me. Priceless! I am honored to be the Associate Pastor of Spiritual Formation, and I am very glad to be done with that process. Now, let's get back to ministry, shall we?

Deep into Advent!

Everything turns blue during Advent. Blue shadows stretch long across snowy drifts. Blue tinges our lips as the temperature continues to drop. Blue often colors our spirit as we remember lost loved ones and fading memories of past, or never-realized, family moments. Advent is blue, and that is OK. It is a season of waiting and hoping.

Perhaps it is a healthy discipline to sink into the depths of blue while the world around us gets swept up in the frenetic whirlwind of consumerism and business. Yes, we all have parties, concerts, and benefits to attend. And, yes, we all want to be able to reach out and connect with long-lost family and give something special to those we love. There is nothing wrong with those things. However, I challenge us all to take a few "blue moments" this month.

Take time to pray. Pray for those who have nothing. For those who are separated from family and friends, from food and shelter. Pray for peace and reconciliation in a world torn by war, hatred, and violence. Pray that we would be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit wants us to do this month, for the least of these.

Take time to connect. Pour an extra cup of coffee and ask one more question when you are with your friend. Pick up the phone and call your brother, sister, or parent that you haven't talked to for a while. Take your son or daughter out for a hot chocolate, just the two of you. Ask how things are going, and actually listen, without commentary or advice. Just enjoy your cocoa and listen. Take time to worship. Worship is simply the authentic response to the realization of who God really is.

The problem is that we can't truly focus on who God really is unless we slow down and put things into perspective. That's the key. Slow down. Breathe. Take time to dwell on God's Word and remember who God is. God is the Almighty Creator who gave everything in Jesus. It is hard to slow down on our own.

That is why it is important to gather as a family, as the body of Christ, to worship God together. We come into God's presence, together, to put things into perspective. We long for God and hope, together.

These are "blue" things. Advent is a wonderful time for spiritual formation. May God be formed more fully in you this season.



A Season of "BLUE"!



Stewardship:

Cultivating Joy in Our Giving

By [Randy Alcorn](#)



Giving infuses life with joy. It interjects an eternal dimension into even the most ordinary day. That's just one reason you couldn't pay me enough not to give. The joy that my wife and I experience, comes in envisioning what God is doing in people's lives for eternity, through what we've given to Him.

One way to cultivate joy in our giving is to meditate on various Scriptures, including Matthew 13 where the man finds the treasure hidden in the field and then "in his joy, he sold all that he had" to obtain the treasure. The key is "in his joy." If we fail to see this, we could feel sorry for the man, saying, "It cost him everything." But we aren't to pity this man; we're to envy him, and follow his example!

His sacrifice pales in comparison to his reward—which is the key to his joyful attitude. Likewise, realizing we are storing up treasures in heaven by giving, is the key to our joyful attitude. Giving is a duty, yes, but it is far more. It is an incomparable source of joy.

Like the man finding the treasure, we should consider the costs-to-benefits ratio—the benefits far outweigh the costs. The traveler made short-term sacrifices to obtain a long-term reward. "It cost him everything he owned." Sure, but it gained him everything that mattered. The man wasn't exchanging lesser treasures for greater treasures out of dutiful drudgery, but out of joyful exhilaration. He would have been a fool not to do exactly what he did.

Likewise, in Matthew 6 Jesus tells us that our giving is in our own best interests: "store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven." He's talking about deferred gratification. The man who finds the treasure in the field pays a high price now by giving up all he has—but soon he'll gain a fabulous treasure. As long as his eyes are on that treasure, he makes his short-term sacrifices with joy. The joy is present, so the gratification isn't entirely deferred. Present joy comes from anticipating future joy.

By analogy, have you ever saved money for a future vacation, and taken present joy in anticipating what's ahead, even though for the moment you're cutting back on things you enjoy, such as going to the coffee shop or out to eat? The future joy looms larger than the present one you forgo. Athletes do this when training for a race. What they hope to win outweighs the momentary sacrifice.

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Director of Worship & Music



As we come into the Advent Season, we feel a sense of waiting, of anticipation. Through the 22+ years I have been in music ministry I've often had people ask why we don't sing Christmas Carols much (or at all) During Advent – it is because we are waiting for Christmas, celebrating Advent!

In our instant-gratification culture it is the norm to just do and have whatever we want, and not practice much self-restraint. I think waiting to sing Christmas Carols until Christmas Eve is one of the ways we can model being counter-culture and different from the mold our society wants to crush us into. Besides, the anticipation makes it so much better when we finally get to break into those songs with a full building of happy worshippers!

I wanted to again remind you of some opportunities to help us make the season special. The Grace choir is working on music for our Advent music presentation during all 4 services Dec. 15-16, as well as the rest of Advent and the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Service. **We'd love to have you join us – we'll be working on the music during the beginning of our rehearsals from 6:45 to about 7:30 pm on Wednesdays in the Worship center (no rehearsal on Nov. 21).** We will also have 2 Saturday practices on Dec. 1, 2 pm to 3:45 pm and Dec. 15, 9 am to 10:45 am. Please feel welcome to join us – it will help if you let me know you are coming so we can have music ready for you and a place to sit. You can reach me at 763-421-6520 ext. 113 or email jonthano@graceandover.org.

You're Invited to "Christmas Is....."



A holiday concert featuring Jen Hubal, Joe Rand and featured Instrumentalist to benefit Peter & Katrina Anderson, and the Lymphoma & Leukemia Society. The concert will be held on Sunday, December 16th at 7:00pm with a Cookie and Cocoa reception to follow. A love offering will be taken. Good music, good friends & a good cause. We hope you will join us.

Vision Board:

Frequently Asked Questions regarding Our Nightingale Location!

A number of questions came from the recently held focus group meetings concerning the undeveloped Grace Lutheran Church property at the intersection of Crosstown Blvd. and Nightingale Ave., commonly called the Nightingale Site. The Vision Board would like to provide answers to these questions.

What are the facts regarding the Nightingale Site?

Purchase Date	2000
Size	9.2 Acres
Cost	\$305K (\$232K + \$73K Assessments for sewer & water)
Tax Value 2012	\$195K (Reflects depressed real estate market)
Annual Cost	\$1K (Primarily liability insurance)
Property Taxes	\$0 (Churches are exempt)

The Nightingale Site was purchased after a comprehensive study and much prayerful reflection by Grace Leadership. The intent is to use the site for expanding our mission of being a ministry of Grace in the heart of Andover. A portion of the property is currently being used at no charge for a Community Garden, in cooperation with the Andover Park and Recreation Commission. The property is surrounded by single family houses and is in close proximity to schools.

Should we sell the Nightingale Site and expand the Round Lake Site?

The Nightingale Site provides Grace with our only real opportunity for expansion. A quote from an architect's preliminary study conducted several years ago said, "*It is apparent that the future of Grace Lutheran Church may not solely be located at Round Lake Blvd.*" The report acknowledges the Round Lake Site is currently land-locked with few logical expansion opportunities. On the other hand, the Round Lake Site is situated on the intersection of two major roads where it is highly visible, making it a valuable marketing tool. As we reflect on how the Holy Spirit is working here at Grace, the Vision Board believes Grace should remain open to both improving the Round Lake Site and developing the future opportunities the Nightingale property offers.

Growth Opportunities:

CONNECT CLASS
Sunday, December
2nd 5:00-7:30 pm!



All are welcome at the next . . .CONNECT CLASS!

- * Would you like to get more 'connected' here at church?
- * Would you enjoy making friendship connections and learning about the core values of Grace?
- * Are you interested in exploring church membership at Grace?

If you answered yes to any one of the above questions (or all of them), then please join us for the next CONNECT class from 5 – 7:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 2. Come to enjoy a delicious dinner at 5 pm, followed by time to connect more with the pastors and others from Grace.

All are welcome to attend the CONNECT class on Sunday, Dec. 2. Please call the church office, 421-6520, or sign up on opportunity pages in the bulletin to register for this CONNECT class,

Yoga Devotions!

Soft lights and music make this hour of yoga relaxing and beneficial to your strength and health. Join us on Thursdays from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Contact Ellen Law at 763-218-9980 if you have any questions. We look forward to having you!



Mobile Online Giving is Available!

Grace Lutheran Church now offers a mobile version of our online giving page to make it easy for you to give at anytime from your smart phone. Simply scan the image you see here using your phone's Quick Response (QR) code reader! If you have any questions, please contact Bonnie Trembath in the church office or email bonniet@graceandover.org.



Upcoming Events:



Adult Mission Trip to Haiti - May 2013

Members of Grace are currently recruiting teammates and planning a mission trip to Haiti in May 2013. All adults are wel-

come! During the inaugural Haiti mission trip last July, a team of 17 enjoyed life-changing experiences, while completing an array of projects to help the people of Haiti. Projects focused upon a hierarchy of essential needs. These included providing safe food and water, bolstering education, establishing sustainable & readily replicable family businesses, and some fun for the youngest Haitians. The goals for the next trip are flexible and will be determined by the team. Early suggestions have included a greater focus upon making a personal connection and addressing basic needs by working side-by-side with a family to build their new home.

Once again, World Wide Village will partner with the team from Grace to coordinate the trip. This Twin Cities organization provides safe accommodations, culturally enriching transportation and wonderful Haitian food. They leverage a Haitian staff and strong community relationships to coordinate all projects for the team. The cost of this trip is approximately \$1,000 per person plus airfare (-\$600). The last team experienced an inspiring outpouring of financial donations that made it possible for everyone to participate and also funded the projects that they pursued.

If you are unable to join the mission trip, but would like to help, please stay tuned for opportunities to donate vital supplies or fund projects. If you have even a little interest and would like more information please:

- a) Email Scott or Anne DeFoe at moose_defoe@yahoo.com
 - b) Chat with a member of the July 2012 GRACE2HAITI team
 - c) Keep checking the Grace Notes and blue opportunity pages for invitations to upcoming information meetings,
- or
- d) Investigate online at either World Wide Village (www.worldwidevillage.org) or the GRACE2HAITI2013 team's site at www.tumblr.com/blog/grace2haiti2013.



Family Promise Ministry . . an opportunity to share God's grace!

We will share God's grace in very tangible ways as we host Family Promise guests the week of Dec. 9 - 16. As a faith community of willing volunteers, Grace will provide lodging, meals, caring hospitality and overnight security for families in our community who are experiencing homelessness.

YOU will be the hands & feet of Jesus, sharing God's grace by serving our Family Promise guests in one or more of these ways:

- * Cook an evening meal for 16 people
- * Be an Evening Host – dine with our guests and spend an evening with the FPAC families
- * Set up and take down beds on Sunday
- * Donate food staples, i.e. milk, juice, bread, fruit and snacks.
- * Be an Overnight Host from 8:30 pm to 7 am, (yes, you get to sleep)
- * Transport guests in the Family Promise van, either at 6:45 am or 4:45 pm
- * Cook a Hot Breakfast for our guests on Sat. Dec. 15
- * Donate a gas card (any amount) for transportation costs

Family Promise of Anoka County (FPAC) is an interfaith hospitality network, providing temporary shelter, hospitality, and case management for families with dependent children. In collaboration with 16 local congregations and countless volunteers, Family Promise helps families to regain housing, independence and dignity during a time of need. The van transports guests to Grace each evening for dinner and an overnight stay at the church. Then after breakfast, families are returned to the Day Center in Coon Rapids, and from there the children can go to school while parents go to work or use the resources at the center to seek employment and housing.

PLEASE join us in sharing God's grace to those in homeless situations. Please sign up on the blue opportunity pages during worship or contact Jeannie Helmann 763-421-6520, ext. 122. jeannieh@graceandover.org.



Vision Board cont'd:

We are committed to keeping both properties.

What are the plans for the Nightingale Site?

As a body, we continue to pray for God's lead and guidance to meet the vision He has for us. We are conflicted between "What would Jesus do" and what can we afford to do. We will continue to pray for God's help to point us in the right direction and guide us toward the proper vision. God tells us in Jeremiah 29:11, *"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."*

What might we do with the Nightingale Site?

The property is located in close proximity to three schools, Andover Elementary, Oakview Middle and Andover Senior High, making it an ideal location for an appropriate youth and educational facility. Currently, our youth are housed in portables which were to be a temporary solution to the lack of youth facilities. Additionally, Grace Church does not have space for a commercial kitchen and rooms to support the gathering of larger groups; examples include weddings, funerals, parties, youth events, fund raising events, summer camp, etc. The Vision Board has had very preliminary discussions regarding the possible construction of a multi-use facility on the Nightingale Site to address these and other needs. No workable plans exist at this time.

What can we afford?

When we look at our current financial situation, we are burdened with a \$1.4 million mortgage and the need to make significant repairs and improvements to our building. We have a passion to do more for our community, both locally and beyond, and to offer more opportunities for spiritual growth. The revenue coming in (mostly our weekly offerings) are barely enough to support what we are currently doing. Said in another way, Grace Lutheran Church is doing an outstanding job of balancing what we can do against the resources we receive. We are operating on a tight budget with a minimal staff that is working extremely hard.

Though we all believe the expansion of our facilities is exciting and praiseworthy, we believe it would be irresponsible to do so by incurring additional debt. The development of the Nightingale Site is coupled to the success of our current Free 2B Grace Campaign. With God's help and guidance, we pray that the upcoming campaign will erase our financial burdens, allow us to make repairs and improvements to our current facility, strengthen the spiritual formation of our members, and inspire us to fulfill the vision of expanding our mission of Grace in the heart of Andover.

God Bless,

Your Vision Board

Stewardship cont'd:

I use this example in [The Treasure Principle](#): Suppose I offer you one thousand dollars today to spend however you want. Not a bad deal. But suppose I give you a choice—you can either have that one thousand dollars today or you can have ten million dollars one year from now, then ten million more every year after that. Only a fool would take the thousand dollars today. Yet that's what we do whenever we grab onto something that will last for only a moment, forgoing something far more valuable that we could enjoy later, for much longer.

When we give to God's work today, we invest in His Kingdom—and needy people and Bible translation, ministry to prisoners, the disabled, hungry children, diseased people—all in Christ's name. That investment will yield dividends for all eternity. When we decide whether to keep something or to give it, we should ask how the decision will pay off not just ten days or ten months from now, but ten thousand years from now.

The more we give, the more we delight in our giving—and the more God delights in us. Our giving pleases us. But more importantly, it pleases God.

Some would say, "You shouldn't give if you aren't giving cheerfully." They cite, "God loves a cheerful giver" ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#)). The cheerfulness often comes during and after the act of obedience, not before it. As in parenting, the sacrifices we make for the ones we love ultimately bring satisfaction.

God delights in our cheerfulness in giving. He wants us to find joy. He even commands us to rejoice ([Philippians 4:4](#)). What command could be a greater pleasure to obey than that one? But if we don't give, we're robbed of the source of joy God wants for us. The Macedonian Christians understood the joy of giving: "Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity" ([2 Corinthians 8:2](#)).

Eric Liddell said, "When I run, I feel God's pleasure." When I give, I feel God's pleasure. There's no better feeling. God's grace to us is the lightning, our giving to Him is the thunder.



Senior Moments:



According to the Grace Lutheran roster, there are 86 senior members at the present time, which is represented by 68 couples and 18 singles.

The Christmas season will find our seniors volunteering to "ring the bells" for the Salvation Army. Our date is Sat. Dec.

15th from 10am to 8pm at County Market in Andover. If you are interested in assisting with this ministry for one of the two-hour shifts, please contact Kent Swedberg at 763-755-6011.

While the Prayer Shawl Ministry is not a senior activity, approximately 50% of those who participate are seniors. This is a wonderful ministry providing shawls and lap robes to church members in need. North Memorial Hospital, Granny's Closet and many others will benefit from their efforts. While the prayer shawls and lap robes are primarily made at home by the participants, the group does meet for lunch once a month at various locations.

When there is a funeral at Grace, there is much hustling and bustling going on behind the scenes. It starts with notification to the seniors, by the church office, that a funeral is scheduled. At Grace, we offer luncheons for the family in the fellowship hall, following the funeral service. This generates many requests for assistants to shop, prepare bars, prepare the food, serve and clean up. It is a labor of love for families during their time of need. While the majority of these activities are done by seniors because of their availability, as time and schedules permit; other Grace members participate as well.

The property team has completed patching and painting the infamous cement block wall. As you drive by the church on Bunker Lake Boulevard, glance south and pause to admire the view. A number of property team members also put the lawn mowers and hoses away for the season and cleaned the garage.

If you would like to know more about programs for seniors at Grace, please call the church office at 763-421-6520 for more information.

On the third Tuesday of each month, Pastor Gene Heglund

leads the "breakfast" seniors in a Biblically-related study at the Farmstead in Andover. The current charge for a delicious breakfast buffet served by the Farmstead staff is \$6.50. The meeting begins at 8:30 and is usually completed by 9:45 (because the seniors have other commitments!). Reservations need to be made for the breakfast and there is a calling committee who does this each month. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Kris at the church office and she will let us know. In addition, this group attends occasional plays at Lyric Arts and usually meets at Billy's for brunch on the Sunday of the play. "Annie" is on the schedule for December.



Women's Ministry Update

THANKS to the women of Grace who participated in the recent women's survey. We have received 91 surveys and are in the process of summarizing the information as well as prayerfully planning for future events. (Yes, we will host another Great Escape Women's event next April).

We value your ideas, suggestions and comments! So please feel free to contact us at any time... as we seek to provide a safe and trusting environment for all women to be welcomed, encouraged and equipped for our spiritual journey through life.

Thanks again from the Women's Ministry Team at Grace: Tari Yates, Mary Jo Andrusko, Kate Morphew, Deb Stang, Anne DeFoe and Jeannie Hellmann.



nday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		27 10:00 AM Golden Rule Yoga Class 2:00 PM Music Academy 4:00 PM Music Academy 4:30 PM Music Academy 6:00 PM Cub Scout Pack 414	28 6:30 AM 5 Star Professionals 9:30 AM WOW 3:30 PM Catechism Leader Meeting 6:30 PM Catechism 6:30 PM Rockin' Kids Bible Club 6:45 PM Adult Choir Practice	29 6:30 PM Yoga Devotions 7:00 PM Worship Team Practice	30 Planet Wisdom	1 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study 8:00 AM Grace Music Academy 8:00 AM Music Academy 9:00 AM Sunday School Program Rehearsal 2:00 PM Choir & praise Team Christmas Rehearsal 5:00 PM Worship & SONday School
2 Advent Family Worship Sunday 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Blended Worship & SONday School 10:20 AM Contemporary Worship & SONday School 3:00 PM High School Dojo 4:00 PM Steering Committee Meeting 5:00 PM Connect Class	3 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 6:30 PM Pastoral Care Team Meeting 7:00 PM Monday Night Women's Group	4 10:00 AM Golden Rule Yoga Class 6:30 PM Haiti Informational Meeting	5 6:30 AM 5 Star Professionals 9:00 AM Quilters 9:30 AM WOW 12:00 PM Ruth Circle 1:30 PM All Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Catechism 6:30 PM Rockin' Kids Bible Club 6:45 PM Adult Choir Practice	6 6:30 PM Yoga Devotions 7:00 PM SaLT Team Meeting 7:00 PM Worship Team Practice	7 5:30 PM Dillenburg/Rosendahl Rehearsal 7:00 PM Middle School Christmas Party	8 New Members Weekend 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Sunday School Program Rehearsal 10:00 AM Celiac Support Group 2:30 PM Dillenburg/Rosendahl Wedding 5:00 PM Worship & SONday School
9 2nd Sunday of Advent New Members Weekend 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Blended Worship & SONday School 10:20 AM Contemporary Worship & SONday School 2:00 PM Children's Christmas Program 3:00 PM High School Dojo 4:00 PM Steering Committee 5:00 PM Family Promise	10 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 5:00 PM Family Promise 7:00 PM Monday Night Women's Group	11 10:00 AM Golden Rule Yoga Class 5:00 PM Family Promise 6:30 PM Vision Board	12 6:30 AM 5 Star Professionals 9:00 AM Quilters 9:30 AM WOW 5:00 PM Family Promise 6:30 PM Catechism 6:30 PM Rockin' Kids Bible Club 6:45 PM Adult Choir Practice	13 5:00 PM Family Promise 6:30 PM Yoga Devotions 7:00 PM Worship Team Practice	14 5:00 PM Family Promise	15 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study 8:00 AM Grace Music Academy 8:00 AM Music Academy 9:00 AM Choir & Praise Team Christmas Rehearsal 5:00 PM Family Promise 5:00 PM Worship & SONday School
16 3rd Sunday of Advent 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Blended Worship & SONday School 10:20 AM Contemporary Worship & SONday School 3:00 PM High School Dojo 4:00 PM Steering Committee Meeting 5:30 PM Family Table 6:15 PM Jen's Concert	17 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 7:00 PM Monday Night Women's Group	18 8:30 AM Graceful Seniors Breakfast 10:00 AM Andover Ramsey Mom's Club 10:00 AM Golden Rule Yoga Class	19 6:30 AM 5 Star Professionals 9:00 AM Property Team Meeting 3:30 PM Music Academy 4:30 PM Music Academy 6:45 PM Adult Choir Practice	20 6:00 PM Golden Rule Christmas Program 6:30 PM Cub Scout Den 6 6:30 PM Golden Rule Christmas Program 6:30 PM Yoga Devotions 7:00 PM Worship Team Practice	21 First Day of Winter	22 No SONday School 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study 5:00 PM Worship
23 4th Sunday of Advent No SONday School 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Blended Worship 10:20 AM Contemporary Worship	24 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break Christmas Eve 2:30 PM Children's Service 4:00 PM Children's Worship 7:00 PM Candle Light Service 9:00 PM Candle Light Service 11:00 PM Traditional Candle Light Service	25 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break Christmas Day OFFICE CLOSED! 10:00 AM Worship	26 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break	27 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break 6:30 PM Yoga Devotions 7:00 PM Worship Team Practice	28 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break	29 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break No SONday School 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study 5:00 PM Worship
30 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break No SONday School 8:00 AM Traditional Worship 9:00 AM Blended Worship 10:20 AM Contemporary Worship 6:00 PM High School Youth New Years Eve Party	31 Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study	1 Office CLOSED! Anoka-Hennepin Christmas Break New Year's Day	2 9:00 AM Quilters 9:30 AM WOW 1:00 PM All Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Ruth Circle 5:30 PM Catechism Leader Meeting 6:30 PM Catechism 6:30 PM Rockin' Kids Bible Club	3 6:30 PM Yoga Devotions 7:00 PM SaLT Team Meeting 7:00 PM Worship Team Practice	4	5 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study 8:00 AM Grace Music Academy 8:00 AM Music Academy 9:00 AM Baptism Class 5:00 PM Worship & SONday School

Youth Happenings:



Upcoming Events in Youth!

A special thanks goes out to those parents who attended our first ever Par-

ent University! We've had two good meetings so far. If you had to miss, don't let that stop you from joining us next time on Wednesday, January 16th at 6:30pm. See you then!



Middle School Christmas Party!

Join us December 7th from 7-9pm for an evening of food, fun, and games. All Middle School students are welcome. Bring a friend!



RollerDome! Don't Miss It!

Let's get together and rollerblade/skate at the Metrodome on Wednesday, December 19th from 4:30-9:00pm. Details will be given at Catechism.

Children Ministry:



January Baptism Workshop

Baptism is an important step in the life of a family. A Baptism Workshop will be offered for parents who would like to have their child baptized here at Grace, on Saturday, January 5 at 9:00am. During the workshop, you will have an opportunity to explore what Baptism means for you and your child, as your family takes this step in your faith journey. We will share with you, insights on raising a child who knows and loves God. The next Baptism Workshop will be in March. Please contact Monica Allen at monicaa@graceandover.org or the church office to sign up for the workshop.



Rockin' Kids Bible Club

We are preparing for Christmas! We will be singing in a

special Grace Music presentation on Sunday, December 16 during the 9 and 10:20 a.m. Worship Services. All rehearsals will be during Rockin' Kids Club on Wednesday night, we will even have the opportunity to work with the Adult Choir. Rockin' Kids Bible Club will have their Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 12. If you would like to help lead a craft or game rotation, please let Monica Allen know.



SONday School Birthday Offering!

We have collected \$55.34 in Birthday Offering since September! Wow! That is enough to purchase two flocks of chicks. This means 100 chicks will bless two families in the world. Kids at Grace make a difference. Birthday offerings will be collected on the 2nd and 9th of December.



Christmas Nursery

Nursery will be available at these services over Christmas weekend and

Christmas eve:

- * Saturday, December 22 at 5 p.m.
- * Sunday, December 23 at 9 and 10:20
- * Monday December 24 at 2:00, 4:30 and 7:00 p.m.



Children Ministry:

Family Worship Weekend
December 2nd & January 6th
Children will begin in Worship
Services with their families and
then be dismissed to SONday School after the Chil-
dren's Sermon



There will be No SONday School December 23rd & 30th; enjoy your families!

The Giving Tree



This year, as part of our Faith and Community Partnership with Sand Creek Elementary School, we will have a "GIVING TREE" at Grace, allowing us to share our abundance and God's grace with families who are in need in our community.

We will collect gifts underneath our GIVING TREE for the first few weeks in December. Then later this month, we will deliver these gifts to families at this school who will be blessed by our generosity this holiday season.

The GIVING TREE is located outside of the Children's Ministry office (near the Fellowship Hall). On the tree, there are tags with specific requests, for example 'a toy for 6 yr. old boy' or 'Cub gift card' for the family holiday meal. Simply take a tag from the GIVING TREE, purchase the requested item, tape the tag onto your gift. Please bring all gifts to the Giving Tree or the Church Office by December 16th and thank you for sharing God's grace through this Christmas season!

Children's Christmas Program



The SONday School children invite you to join us on Sunday, December 9 at 2 p.m. for their Christmas Program. The program will begin with the younger children sharing music and poems. Then, Grade 1-5 will present the play, The Fumbly, Bumbly, Angels. We will meet a group of angels with a special mission and a dream to have their place in the Heavenly Choir. Following the program, there will be reception of cookies and lemonade in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank You:



Thank you to the whole Grace family for the recent Noisy Offering gift. We will use it whenever unexpected expenses arise. Sorry this is late. Tyler has been moving a lot and his stuff was stuck in storage at Bethesda Hospital in St. Paul. Tyler is just beginning Rehab at the Knapp Center at HCMC. I pray that his illnesses are behind him and he can move forward. Thank you all so much for your cards and continued prayers that have sustained us and will bring Tyler home.

Greg Emberland & family

(Tyler Emberland, Greg's son, was involved in a motorcycle accident on July 27 and sustained critical injuries. Since the accident Tyler has had many surgeries to reconstruct his face, repair broken bones and remove fluid from his brain injury. He has suffered many setbacks and illnesses which have kept him hospitalized, much of the time in ICU. Please continue to lift him and his entire family up in prayer as he begins his rehabilitation at the Knapp Center, and pray for the day that he is able to go home with his family).



THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

Thanks to the 500 Grace volunteers who packed 183,600 meals at Feed My Starving Children on Nov. 16 & 17.

That's enough meals to feed 503 children a daily life-saving meal for an entire year!

Do you hear starving children, in various countries around the world, shouting THANK YOU!

Do you hear our heavenly Father, from His perspective, whispering THANK YOU!



Grace Lutheran Church

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in the Heart of Andover!*
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Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

We hope you will join us for Worship during one of our 5 services this Christmas Eve, December 24th.

2:30pm - Family Christmas Service + Nursery
4:00pm - Family Christmas Service + Nursery
7:00 & 9:00pm - Contemporary Candle Light Service
11:00pm - Traditional Candle Light Service

December 25, 2012
10:00am - Christmas Day Service