

Grace Lutheran Church & School



460 75th Ave. NE
Fridley, MN 55432



Email: john.p.hein@gmail.com
Home Page: www.FridleyLutheran.org

Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635)

Phone: 763-784-8784

School Phone: 763-784-6340

Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Epiphany 1

Date: January 9, 2022

✠ WORSHIP INFORMATION ✠

Hymns:

TLH 123: Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
Choir: Arise and Shine

TLH 628: Shepherd of Tender Youth

TLH 427: How Firm a Foundation

WS 785: Children of the Heavenly Father

Listening assistance is available. Please ask an usher.

Worship Prep:

Psalm 90, TLH p. 142

Liturgy:

WS p. 1 (Projected)

Scripture Readings:

Psalm 71:1-9,16-19

Psalm 90:1-3, 8-17

1 Timothy 5:1-5

Sermon: Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

¹ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them": ² While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain; ³ In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim; ⁴ When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low; ⁵ Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets. ⁶ Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well. ⁷ Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. (NKJVTM)

**AGING WITH STYLE:
REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR**

✝ ***THE ANNOUNCEMENTS*** ✝

- ➔ **Norma Rust Funeral:** Starting at 1:30 pm this afternoon there will be a visitation prior to the Norma Rust funeral which then starts at 3 pm.
- ➔ **Directory:** We are preparing for the publication of the yearly directory at Grace. Please check your contact information in the draft copy of the directory located in the narthex. Place a check mark by your entry if it is correct. If it is not, then please edit as necessary. If you wish to add email or cell numbers, please do so. Your cooperation is appreciated as we attempt to produce an accurate directory. Also, please ensure your birthday and/or anniversary information is correct.
- ➔ **Liberia:** Given that the trip to Liberia had to be canceled, an effort is being made to allow Pastor to teach via internet broadcast in the coming week. May the LORD bless the Word of God which is sown.
- ➔ **Cell Phones/Smart Phones:** Please remember to turn off during church so as not to interfere with the projection system and with the worship of your fellow Christians.
- ➔ **Cleaning:** Please consider signing up on the fellowship hall bulletin board.
- ➔ **Invitation:** The members of Faith Lutheran in Manchester, MO (St. Louis area) would invite you to join them in the installation of their new pastor, Sam Rodebaugh, on January 23, 2022, at the regular service time 10 am. Pastor Neal Radichel will be the liturgist and perform the installation. A dinner will follow the service. If you plan on attending please inform Pastor Radichel so he has a head count for the congregation: neal.radichel@immanuelmankato.org.
- ➔ **CLC News:** Pastor Luke Bernthal of St. Stephen Lutheran Churches in Mountain View, CA; Stockton, CA; and Hayward, CA; has received the call to Immanuel Lutheran in Winter Haven, FL.
- ➔ **Sunday School Memory Work:** #12 – Conclusion.



Facebook Page: If you're on Facebook, be sure to like or share items that are on the Grace Lutheran Church page. This can help promote the page to others, along with events that we publicize there. The more shares, etc., the more Facebook promotes our church page to others.



CLC President – December 19, 2021

Meeting opened with prayer. November Council meeting minutes read and approved. Treasurer's report reviewed and approved.

Pastors Report

- Kevin Hulke reached out to the Yangs. The Yangs reaffirmed that they no longer wish to be members of Grace.
- The following accountable reimbursement values are used by Pastor for tax purposes for 2022: \$6,000 for travel; \$3,600 for professional expenses; \$5,400 for healthcare; \$15,000 total; Parsonage Exclusion: \$3,000; Fair rental value for parsonage: \$7,800. Motion approved the accountable reimbursements, parsonage exclusion, and fair rental values as shown above.
- Pastor has been invited back to Liberia (January 9-22) to attend a conference hosted by an independent Methodist group which has expressed interest in learning more about the CLC. The CLC Board of Missions requests approval from our council. Motion approved of Pastor's January trip to Liberia.

Board of Elders Report

- Thank you to Kevin Hulke for obtaining a Christmas tree for the sanctuary.
- An order for the new organ will be placed soon since the required funds have been raised and the desired organ features have been determined.
- Comment made about the offering collection for mid-week services. With lighter attendance, it is harder for the offering plates to be passed down a pew. Suggestion was made to have the collection plates on a table by the organ as was done during Covid.
- A thank you gift for each of the organists (4) will be sent. The treasurer will have a check sent to each while the Elders will send cards.

Board of Ed Report

- Looking at larger enrollment possibilities.
- Christmas bag items are being purchased and bags will be assembled.
- The background checks that were recently requested have been received. No issues on any of them. Drivers for field trips may need to be addressed to make sure that they have background checks. Some discussion followed.

Board of Trustees Report

- Old documents are being cleaned out from the storage area behind the altar in preparation for the new organ. Items no longer needed will be destroyed.
- Day to day operations are going well.
- ~\$1300 for new LED light fixtures for 2 older classrooms. Mrs. Hein's classroom was updated previously. New fixtures have different settings that allow for intensity and color of light.
- Key FOB locks on the 2 school doors are now operational. Some discussion on the web-based interface that is part of the system. Entry cards have been given to several people. There was a suggestion to update the list of key holders.

Other Business

- Service List – reviewed the updated list that Rick presented.

Adapted from minutes submitted by Secretary William Rust

THE EMPTINESS OF NOTHING ...

THE FULNESS OF FAITH

The Saint Paul *Pioneer Press* (12-19-21) carried an *Associated Press* article that in its title asked, "What's your religion?" It answered its own question. "A common reply is 'None'." According to the article, "Nones," as they are called, "now live across the U.S., representing a diversity of ages, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds." Some claim "some connection to God or a higher power." The God of the "nones" is like the gods described in Isaiah 44. The idolaters planted a tree, cut it down and carved an idol. They fell down before the carved image. They worshiped it and prayed to it saying, "Deliver me, for you are my god" (Isaiah 44:17). The offal was used as firewood to warm themselves and also to bake bread. Such is the foolishness of idolatry, and the emptiness of nothing.

Some "nones" say "religion has some importance to them." Some claim to be "religious and spiritual," while others are "spiritual but not religious." What does this mean? In this context, the religious focus on a set of doctrinal principles whatever they may be, regardless of the particular religious purveyors. The exercise of their religion might be described as a choose-and-pick smorgasbord. Their religion is an overt practice of emptiness of whatever strikes their fancy.

The spirituality of the "spiritual but not religious" has no connection to the Holy Spirit. It is internal. They allow that there is a higher intelligence, something greater than themselves. They internalize as spiritual whatever strikes their fancy.

In the end the distinction between the two is without a difference because both deny the divine nature of God, and deny the authority of the divine Word, no matter how pious they may appear or how piously they may speak of, or use the name of Jesus to their own ends and purpose.

The article speaks of a young woman who in the last analysis spoke of what is the height of human pride and the depth of spiritual ignorance. (Nothing, of course, was said of the substance of the Christian faith, the core of which is the Gospel.) She had left a Baptist Church because she was uncomfortable "with its conservative views on immigration, gender and sexuality." She who identified herself as a "queer," said her Baptist church "wasn't a very nurturing environment for someone's faith." One can only speculate on what is meant by "faith." She said, "I just don't feel like that gelled with my view of what God is and what God can be." She embraces a "spiritual but not religious life." Whether she identifies with the "nones" is not said, but in the end it makes no difference.

Sadly and to the harm of precious souls, it is difficult not to identify the apostate church in our day with the emptiness of the “nones,” and the young woman’s desire to create a god who agrees with her. Any church that denies the inspired, inerrant, Word of God, as well as its divine authority as the final Word on doctrine, faith, and morals, promotes a smorgasbord approach to Scripture. Denying any part, a “jot or tittle” of the Divine Word, contradicts the Law of God and preaches another gospel.

When apostate churches seek to satisfy the whim of society by denying the truth of the Word or by changing it to make it compatible with societies’ mores and will, or when they make a god in their likeness and/or try to make the true God into what they think He can or should be they are playing her game. They who deny the Word of God piously cover their tracks by saying religion and faith is “all about Jesus,” whereupon they proceed to make of Jesus whatever they want or think He should be to fit their agenda or to make Him a promoter or supporter of their cause, no matter how far removed from the truth or morality. While God in the fullness of His deity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—is love, it is a gross and damnable lie to equate the love of God for the sinner with the sinful actions of sinners who delight in sin.

To embrace the emptiness of nothing or to make a god who agrees with the mind of corrupt man leads down a blind, dead-end alley. It is death to manufacture a god and set it on a pedestal, or to create a god of one’s desire. How empty to have to hug oneself to feel love. When contemplating death, how empty is the heart that has nothing to hang onto, as compared to the apostle Paul who said, “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death. I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 7:24-25)?

One cannot help but think of Elijah’s encounter with the prophets of Baal. Elijah challenged them to call on their god and he would call on His. After frantic chanting, long prayers, and mutilating themselves as they implored their god to send fire to burn the sacrifice, Elijah mocked them and their god, “Perhaps he is meditating or on a journey or sleeping.” Alas, “There was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention” (1 Kings 18:29). Elijah called on His God Who sent fire that consumed the sacrifice and the altar. The 450 prophets of Baal who had misled the people were executed. The person of God, the love of God, the will of God, to say nothing of His gracious will to save the sinner are **not** subject to the machinations of men.

The sum of nothing is nothing! During life, the promotion of the emptiness of nothing is a delusion followed and advanced by those who reject God and who believe nothing or who create a god of their own making. Their

moans and pleas fall on deaf ears. There is no one to hear them. On the day they die they go the way of the prophets of Baal for the emptiness of nothing is nothing ...

On the other hand, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who in Christ has claimed each Christ-believer as His own, promises in His Word: “It shall come to pass that *before they call, I will answer*; and while they are still speaking I will hear” (Isaiah 65:24). The promises of the living God inspired the faith and confidence of all who anticipated the birth of the Savior, who worshiped at the manger side at Christmas, as it does Christ-believers who wait with eager anticipation for the Lord’s return.

Faith itself is a gift of God by the Spirit through the Gospel. The birth of the Savior and His atonement is the substantive expression of the Heavenly Father which generates and inspires faith and hope in all who say, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord ...”

In contrast to those who adopt what we have called the emptiness of nothing, rejecting the God of Truth and religious and moral principles of Scripture, the Christ-believer confesses from the heart, “*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Hebrews 11:1).

Christians suffer the same woes, the same illnesses as unbelievers. Christians are not immune to temptations, fears, concerns, doubts and whatever else afflicts others in this sin laden world. What distinguishes Christ-believers from Christ deniers is the confidence of faith. Our Father in heaven kept His promise by sending the Savior to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil. He brought us to faith at our baptism by the Word through which we also were brought into a familial relationship with the Heavenly Father. This relationship and faith He has nourished through the Gospel. In Christ and for Jesus’ sake He says to us, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are mine” (Isaiah 43:1).

A promise is only as good as the faithfulness of the one who makes it! Our Promise-Maker is the eternal God Who created us, redeemed us, and sanctified us, and Who takes minute-by-minute interest in us. He says to us as He said to His displaced people, captive in Babylon, “*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you (Jeremiah 29:11-12)*. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees that every promise of the Lord is good and will be fulfilled. In every circumstance of life, He is Immanuel—God with

us—and in the moment of death He will hear our plea, “Lord Jesus receive my spirit, for You have redeemed me. O God of Truth.”

We do not know what the next day, or even hour holds for us; we certainly do not know what faces us as citizens, as individuals, or even as the Church in the New Year. Take no thought for tomorrow for the Lord knows not only what lies ahead but how to address it. Commit your way to the Lord, Who hears the prayer of His children and invites us: “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me” (Psalm 50:15). Pray with confidence to Him in Whom, “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

What is the substance of things hoped for? Upon deliverance from Saul’s hand David prayed:

“I will love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, *Who is worthy* to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies. The pangs of death surrounded me, and the floods of ¹ungodliness made me afraid. The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, And my cry came before Him, *even* to His ears” (Psalm 18:1-6).

What is the evidence of things not seen that *faith* has grasped, and which guides us with joy on the path of Truth through this dying world? It is rooted in Jesus’ promise: “I have come that they may have life, and that they have it more abundantly” (John 10:10), which in turn is guaranteed as the angel affirmed: “He is not here; for He is risen from the dead ...” (Mark 16:16), upon which Jesus said, “Because I live, you will live also” (John 14:19).

What a difference faith makes ... the difference between the emptiness of nothing, and the incomprehensible, abundantly, overwhelming fullness of life with our Lord, to Whom we give thanks, praise, and glory forever!

Lord, Who has claimed us, called our name
By You we live and live in hope.
Protect our faith until we claim
Through faith in Christ, our home above.(df)

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 1/2022

† TODAY AT GRACE †

Organist: **Sue Nelson**

Elder: **Dave Rust**

Ushers: **Brian Eichstadt; Alex Baker; Kevin Baker; Dan Degnan; Ryan Oman; Eli Wales**

Counting Team 2: **Gary Gunther; Rick Nelson; Bill Rust; Bob Vandever; Clint Welker**

Church Cleaners: **Volunteers?** School: **Jankowski**

† NEXT WEEK AT GRACE †

Ushers: **Brian Eichstadt; Alex Baker; Kevin Baker; Dan Degnan; Ryan Oman; Eli Wales**

Counting Team 3: **Duane Enns; Tom Graham; Kevin Hulke; Dan Degnan; Benno Sydow**

Hospitality Team 4: **Bonnie Baker; Nick & Miranda Duehlmeier; Jenny Kleifgen; Pat & Dawn Paplow**

Church Cleaners: **Volunteers?** School: **Jankowski**

† OUR SCHEDULE †

- Sun., Jan. 9:** 8:30 am – Choir Practice
9:00 am – Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service (Epiphany 1)
1:30 pm – Norma Rust Visitation
3:00 pm – Norma Rust Funeral
- Mon., Jan. 10:** 7:00 pm – Council Meeting
- Wed., Jan. 12:** 4:30-6:15 pm – Catechism for Public School Students
7:00 pm – Midweek Bible Class
- Sun., Jan. 16:** 8:30 am – Choir Practice
9:00 am – Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service (Epiphany 2)
11:00 am – Hospitality
11:30 am – Voters' & Dorcas Guild Meetings
- Sat., Jan. 29:** 9:00 am – Grace Work Day
- Wed., Mar. 2:** Ash Wednesday – Midweek Lenten Worship Begins



Last Week's Stats: Jan. 2, 2021 Sun.:57

Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$2,262	CLC:	\$435	
Weekly Need:	Grace:	4,150	CLC:	1,000	
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	-1,988	CLC:	-565	
GLC Other:	305	Living Faith:	5	Tuition Aid:	165
SAF Endowment:	0	MDF:	160	Kinship:	115
ILC Student Aid:	15	ILC Bldg.	0	IIF: 0	CEF: 0
Current Balances:		Tuition Aid: \$3,522		Organ: \$41,425	

