

Grace Lutheran Church & School



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Fridley, MN 55432



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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: Advent 4

Date: December 20, 2020

✠ WORSHIP INFORMATION ✠

Hymns:

TLH 95: Savior of the Nations, Come
TLH 274: Praise We the Lord This Day
TLH 76: A Great and Mighty Wonder
WS 711: See in Yonder Manger Low

Listening assistance is available. Please ask an usher.

Worship Prep:

Psalm 85, TLH p. 140

Liturgy:

TLH, p. 5 (Projected)
Gloria: TLH 58 & 62

Scripture Readings:

2 Samuel 7:8-16
Luke 1:26-38

Sermon: Psalm 85:8-13

⁸ Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. ⁹ Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land. ¹⁰ Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. ¹¹ Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. ¹² The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. ¹³ Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps. (NRSVTM)

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE
KISS EACH OTHER AT THE MANGER

† **THE ANNOUNCEMENTS** †

- ➔ **COVID-19 Pre-Cautions:** If anyone is high risk, vulnerable, recently exposed to a COVID-19 patient, or has symptoms of illness (especially high temperature and cough), the individual along with any others in that person's household are strongly urged to stay home for one's own well-being and the well-being of others. Online worship is still available at [FridleyLutheran.org](https://www.fridleylutheran.org). Due to the Governor's executive order, face coverings are required during worship at Grace. Children under the age of 2 are exempt. For physical distancing, post-its are on the pews that are to be used. Please remember to not block areas of foot traffic. Thank you for being mindful of your fellow Christians.
- ➔ **Christmas Eve Worship:** This will be on Thu., December 24, 6 pm. The children at Grace will be presenting the theme "God's Love Eternal," considering how His love planned the birth of Jesus, the Savior to save the world from eternal punishment, offering forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Join us during this precious time of year to ponder our Savior's coming. This year adjustments are being made in accordance with COVID protocols. To accommodate proper distancing within sanctuary and to keep our occupancy under 100, online registration is required: signup.com/go/jAJfTHA. A seating chart will then be created. The children are asked to be here ½ hour prior to the service so that we can take a group picture and warm up through some things.
- ➔ **Christmas Eve Video:** A reminder that we are having a Christmas Eve service instead of a Christmas Eve program. Therefore, we ask that parents and friends avoid taking flash pictures and videotaping during this service so that the focus remains on the joyous message of our Savior's birth. Our Christmas Eve service will be discreetly videotaped and made available by request. If you are interested in a copy, please speak with Pastor, Frank Radichel, or Rick Nelson.
- ➔ **Christmas Day Worship:** This will be on Fri., Dec. 25, 10 am. Christ's birth is the reason for the season. May the love of this Child be the gift you open up your heart to on Christmas Day!
- ➔ **New Year's Eve:** On New Year's Eve, Dec. 31, we will be having a 7:00 pm worship service with the Lord's Supper.
- ➔ **Catechism Break:** We will be having a two-week break for midweek Catechism students on Dec. 23 and Dec. 30.
- ➔ **2021 Cleaning:** The 2021 cleaning sign-up list is now posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Please consider signing up.

- ➔ **Parking Reminder:** For those members who are able, please park further away to permit those with physical impairments to be able to park closer to the church.
- ➔ **From the Elders:** All loose offerings collected during December will be distributed equally among the congregation's called workers.
- ➔ **Liberia:** To make a contribution to the work in Liberia, write in "Liberia" on one of the Project lines of your offering envelope.
- ➔ **Organ:** A key current project that the Voters determined to have as a goal is the replacement of the organ. There is a fund open for that purpose. You may designate donations as "Organ Fund."
- ➔ **New Tour Choir CD:** A new ILC Tour Choir CD has been released. A poster is by the mailboxes. Cost: \$12/each or \$20 for two. Pastor has copies available on consignment.
- ➔ **CLC News:** Pastor Sam Rodebaugh of Immanuel Lutheran in Winter Haven, FL, has returned the call to Living Savior Lutheran in Eden Prairie, MN. Pastor Michael Eichstadt of Messiah Lutheran in Hales Corners, WI, now has this call. † Pastor Del Maas of Gift of God Lutheran in Mapleton, ND (Fargo area), and St. Paul Lutheran in Ponsford, MN, has returned the call to Redeemer Lutheran in Bowdle, SD, and Zion Lutheran in Ipswich, SD. Pastor Emeritus John Klatt will start serving as vacancy pastor beginning in January 2021. † Pastor David Ude of Living Hope Lutheran in Appleton, WI, has received the call to Redeemer Lutheran in Cheyenne, WY.
- ➔ **Sunday School & Adult Memory Work:** Christmas Eve Parts

The following is the nomination slate for 2021:

- Treasurer: Phil Radichel
- Elder: Dale Enns; Al Rosendahl
- Education: Dale Enns; Roger Ochsner; Bob Vandevveer
- Trustee: Al Rosendahl; Bob Vandevveer
- Delegates: Dale Enns; Dave Rust; Al Rosendahl; Benno Sydow; Frank Radichel; Rick Nelson
- Key Executives: Rick Nelson; William Rust

Last Week's Stats: Dec. 13, 2020			
Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$4,356	CLC: \$1,265
Wed. Offering:	Grace:	\$870	CLC: \$120
Weekly Need:	Grace:	4,000	CLC: 950
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	+1,226	CLC: +435
Year-to-Date Offering:	Grace:	\$194,428	CLC: \$46,782
Year-to-Date Need:	Grace:	200,000	CLC: 47,500
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	-5,572	CLC: -718
GLC Other:	743	Living Faith:	105
SAF Endowment:	0	MDF:	10
ILC Student Aid:	15	ILC Bldg.	0
<i>Current Balances:</i>		<i>Tuition Aid: \$668</i>	

JUST ANOTHER CHRISTMAS?

In a difficult year, for a number of reasons, Christmas season 2020 will be different. Unlike the past, there will be government recommendations, if not restrictive mandates on office parties, family gatherings, caroling, travel. Citizens will be expected to walk about masked. Shopping habits will change. The number of people who can attend church will be capped. Some will stay away out of fear. The feel-good emotion of the season will be diminished by the continuing counts of cases of illness as well as the incessant daily reports in newspapers and on television news of deaths in the city, the state, and the world. The sounds of a tumultuous and ignominious election year will echo into the next. This will be a different Christmas season. Some may wonder why there should even be one this year. Still others will see it as an opportunity and excuse for a party of whatever magnitude it can be.

Yet it will also reflect sameness and continuity though this year gatherings may be zoomed. Santa with Rudolph and his red nose will still come sledding from the North Pole and drop himself down the chimney. There will be enticements to purchase gifts which in turn will foster gift exchanges. Greetings most probably will be sent by text or email. Little children will sneak a peek under the Christmas tree. There will be cookies. Homes are decorated inside and out. The malls and radio stations will play music of the season to inspire buying and provide entertainment.

“Peace on earth” will echo into a world at war with itself from people at war with one another. “Silent Night, Holy Night” will waft across the airwaves to a noisy, raucous world. We will hear, “O come all ye Faithful” sung to and by people who don’t know to Whom they are called to be faithful. “Joy to the World” will be heard in a world in which many feel no joy. For the unbelieving world, without Christ the Christmas season will indeed be different because of the pandemic, yet the similarly empty as in past years.

Similarity of the world to Christmases past is the result of unbelief which, if it does not reject **Christ** Who gives **Christmas** its substance, diminishes and uses Him. Its celebration continues to be an excuse for fun and frolic.

For the Christ-believer, Christmas season activities this pandemic year will also be a bit different. However, penitent sinners, Christ-

believers, **celebrate** the sameness or similarity. Whatever the difference this Christmas season, the similarity we treasure is rooted in Christ, the eternal Word Who is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). The God whom we worship, the Savior whom we praise, confirms and inspires hope for:

Christmas is the celebration of the faithfulness of the Heavenly Father.

Our Father, in response to man’s sin, from the depth of His heart desired to redeem all mankind from sin and judgment. He promised a Savior and nourished and preserved that promise until the fullness of time.

Christmas is the celebration of the promised Savior from sin.

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15).”

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name *Immanuel*” (Isaiah 7:14), being interpreted “*God with us*” (Matthew 1:23).

“[Mary] will bring forth a Son and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

“There is born to you in the city of David a Savior Who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11).

“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He should destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8)

“Christ came, Who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen” (Romans 9:5).

Christmas is the celebration of Christ’s life.

“[Christ] committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:22)

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

Christmas is the celebration of Christ’s substitutionary death.

“...But He *was* wounded for our transgressions...He was smitten by God and afflicted, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement

for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, everyone, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:4-6).

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me” (Matthew 27:46).

“...[He] was delivered up because of our offenses” (Romans 4:25).

Christmas is the celebration of Jesus’ resurrection.

“He is not here; for He is risen, as He said, Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matthew 28:6)

“... [He]was raised for our justification” (Romans 4:25).

“...As many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death” (Romans 6:3). “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him” (Romans 6:8).

“ I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die” (John 11: 25-26).

Christmas is the celebration of the reconciliation of sinners who through faith are reconciled unto the Father.

“Now all things are of God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Not imputing their trespasses to them...(2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

Christmas is the celebration of God’s grace unto salvation.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Christmas is the celebration of the restoration of hope in a world otherwise without hope.

“And now, Lord what do I wait for? My hope is in You” (Psalm 39:7).

“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” (Jeremiah 29:11).

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit”

(Romans 15:13)

Just another ho-hum Christmas?

Christmas is the celebration of Jesus Christ, true God and true Man. Taking our flesh upon Himself, Jesus humbled Himself unto death. *Without the faithfulness* of the Heavenly Father Who promised His Son out of the depth of His love for fallen mankind, and *without the Savior* in Whom the Father reconciled us to Himself, *there would be no Christmas. Without Christmas there would be no Good Friday, no Easter, no Ascension, no life eternal!* We would be without hope in the world. Without the Spirit Who is the Generator and Preserver of faith, we would be lost in our sin and with the world condemned.

At Christmas penitent sinners declare, "Glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit." Whatever the circumstances in the world or in our personal lives, we do not know how things will shake out in this life, the next hour, the next day, or the next year, if there is one. Yet our hope is in Christ, our Immanuel, Who will accompany us through every moment of joy or affliction, of exultation or tribulation, until we who celebrate Jesus' birth hear the invitation, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). In the meantime "Cast all your care upon Him for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7), redeemed children of God, each of whom is known by name to Him.

Penitent sinners in faith recognize that Jesus' birth speaks to their deepest need. With joyful and thankful hearts they emulate the shepherds who at the announcement of the Father's faithfulness "hastened" to the manger bed of their Savior and returned to their fields "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them" (Luke 2:20).



*Thanks be unto God
for his unspeakable gift.*

2 Corinthians 9:15, KJV

The year is different, *but the message is the same.* Thanks be to God! Unlike the world dead in sin, with Simeon the Christ-believer looks ahead with hope and says, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation..." (Luke 2:29-30).

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 12/2020

† TODAY AT GRACE †

Organist: Jan Davis

Elder: Dave Rust

Ushers: Gary Gunther; Bob Maki; Bill Rust; Jeff Stifter; Bob Vandever

Counting Team 3: Brian Eichstadt; Duane Enns; David Hein; Dan Degnan; Benno Sydow

Church Cleaners: D. Rust

School: Oman

† NEXT WEEK AT GRACE †

Ushers: Gary Gunther; Bob Maki; Bill Rust; Jeff Stifter; Bob Vandever

Counting Team 4: James Bomber; Roger Ochsner; Al Rosendahl; Dave Rust

Church Cleaners: Ochsner

† OUR SCHEDULE †

- Sun., Dec. 20:** Bible Class cancelled
8:45 am – Christmas Eve Rehearsal
10:00 am – Worship Service (Advent 4)
12:00 pm – Council Meeting
- Wed., Dec. 23:** 12:00 pm – Grace School's Christmas Party
Grace School's Christmas Break Begins
Catechism for Public School Students (break until Jan. 6)
- Thu., Dec. 24:** **CHRISTMAS EVE**
5:30 pm – Children Arrive at Church
6:00 pm – Christmas Eve Worship
- Fri., Dec. 25:** **CHRISTMAS DAY**
10:00 am – Christmas Day Worship
- Sun., Dec. 27:** No Bible Class or Sunday School
10:00 am – Worship Service (Christmas 1)
- Thu., Dec. 31:** **NEW YEAR'S EVE**
7:00 pm – New Year's Eve Worship w/Lord's Supper
- Sun., Jan. 3:** 9:00 am – Sunday School & Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service w/Lord's Supper
- Wed., Jan. 6:** 4:00 pm – Catechism for Public School Students
- Sun., Jan. 10:** 9:00 am – Sunday School & Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service
12:00 pm – Council Meeting
- Sun., Jan. 17:** Voters & Dorcas Guild Meetings

