

Grace Messenger

December 2020

DECEMBER WORSHIP & ADULT EDUCATION

BEHOLD!

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned" (Isaiah 9:2).

The days are clearly growing shorter as winter approaches. It is dark when I get up and dark when I go home at the end of the day. But as dark as these days of December might be, there is a deeper darkness that surrounds many who live in our world. Every day is day of deep darkness because Christ, the Light of the World, is not shining in their lives.

As we begin this Advent season and as we anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth later this month, we do so with the prayer that our efforts bring the light of Christ into dark places. Our theme "Behold!" has been designed to focus attention on that light.

We will worship each Sunday morning at 8:00 and 10:45 a.m., and each Thursday evening (December 3, 10 and 17) at 7 p.m. Our Christmas Eve services are scheduled for 6:30 and 9:00 p.m. Please join us!



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Shake any family tree and you never know what kind of people might fall out. Let's face it; we all have an uncle or cousin we whisper about behind closed doors. We all have a relative or two we try to avoid at family gatherings. No surprise there. But here's something you may not know. Jesus had a few shady characters in his family as well. Actually, he had some relatives that make your most wayward cousin look like a saint.

In this 5-part Adult Sunday Schools series, Pastor Andy Stanley (North Point Church, Atlanta, GA) introduces us to a few of these colorful characters and the role they play in the Christmas story. Learn with us at 9:15 a.m. each Sunday through December 27. We meet in the community center.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: STEPHEN MINISTRY

In 2006, Pastor Dan Powell shared information with the congregation of a new ministry opportunity. Upon hearing the purpose of this new ministry, Carol Spurlock felt a stir in her heart. She continued to feel this stir and wondered if this was the Holy Spirit encouraging her to get involved. Ultimately, she followed through, attended Stephen Ministry training and has served our community as a Stephen Minister for 14 years. She stated that this ministry provides a listening, caring presence when the challenges a person faces in life can seem overwhelming, by being that Christian friend to listen to their struggles and concerns in 100% confidentiality. Although Stephen Ministry is beneficial in many circumstances, it is especially needed during the trying times we currently face in 2020. She encourages others to get involved the next time training is offered. The blessings received through this ministry are abundant for both the person receiving the care and the Stephen Minister providing the care. The commitment is minimal, the blessings are abundant!

FOCUS ON CHARITY GUILD CONTINUING TO SERVE

This month we are focusing on Charity Guild to help you understand the impact Charity Guild is having in our community as well as surrounding communities. The Charity Guild currently has 20 men and women who are actively making pillows that are distributed through the Ohio Community Mercy Hospice Office. Last year Charity Guild made 1,009 pillows (in five different sizes) including 237 patriotic pillows that were distributed to veterans in November in nursing homes, and to those members of our church. The pillows are used to provide comfort for Hospice patients and many others who benefit from receiving them. These pillows have been very well received by Hospice patients and others who are ill. Maxine Shroyer, as one of the co leaders of Charity Guild, receives numerous thank you letters and positive reports.

Here are some examples of gratitude which Maxine shared. She received a special note from the Coordinator of Ohio Community Mercy Hospice. To understand what this Coordinator wrote, you need to know that the Coordinator distributes those pillows that Charity Guild makes, to the nurses, who in turn take these pillows to their patients either in their homes, nursing home or to those in the hospital. The coordinator wrote: "I wanted to tell you how important your pillows are to our patients... I got a report from one of our nurses who went to visit a new patient who was complaining about back pain from her chair. This nurse gave that patient one of the kidney shaped pillows (which Charity Guild had made) to help with that patient's back pain. As that same nurse later that same day, continued with that patient's assessment, the patient reported that now she had no pain. The pain was gone after she got that pillow."

Another example is that Maxine gave 2 hand pillows to a patient with Parkinson's and he squeezed the pillows and that kept him from shaking. In addition, a wife of another patient, reported that her husband didn't want her to leave him even long enough for her to go to the bathroom. She would slip the pillows from Charity Guild into her husband's hands so he could squeeze them while she went to the bathroom. After he passed forward, those pillows remained clenched in his hands on his way to and at the funeral home.

Maxine reports that she will deliver pillows not only to Hospice but to anyone who has the need. Charity Guild typically meets the second Wednesday of each month at 1:30 in the Fellowship Hall at Grace Lutheran Church. However, due to COVID-19, they will not meet again as a group until January but they are still actively working at this time making pillows at each of their homes. These volunteers are making a difference in people's lives as they continue to serve. Maxine reports, "It's gratifying to know that what we are doing is helping so many people."

Charity Guild can always use additional members and donations since their requests for pillows are increasing. They rely completely on donations for supplies and the cost of these supplies are currently increasing. If you'd like more information about Charity Guild, you may contact Maxine at 937-831-1900.

Pictured below are some of the pillows made in 2020 and a photo of Maxine delivering some pillows to Hospice this fall.



DECEMBER OUTREACH: GIVING TREE/WINTER COAT DRIVE

Giving Tree and Coat Drive: Let's make the holidays special for our local partner, Snowhill School. Please pick a tag from the Giving Tree and have all donations returned by 12/13/2020.

A VIRTUAL CONCERT EXPERIENCE!

Although Capital University will be unable to offer an in-person Christmas Festival this year, the 2020 Christmas Festival, **Together We**, will be offered in an online format, giving them the opportunity to share the joy and hope of the season with audiences near and far.

Together We will include never-released video highlights of several past Christmas Festivals (years 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2019) performed by the renowned Conservatory of Music choral ensembles and instrumentalists. The virtual concert will also feature a first-ever performance by the 2020-21 Chapel Choir. Join this concert as **together we** celebrate the miracle and wonder of the Christmas story.

Links to the video concert will be available at www.capital.edu/christmas-festival only on the following two dates and times:

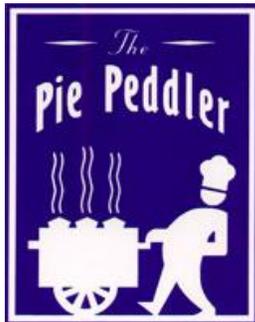
Saturday, December 5, 7:30 PM

Sunday, December 6, 3:30 PM

Mark your calendars to celebrate this joyous season! Contact Bev Kaech with questions. Thanks to Kristi Leeth for sharing this information.

2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes will be available in the narthex to be picked up starting December 14. If you do not find a set of envelopes with your name, please contact Darla Kalifoot (399-6257 ext. 102). For 2020 tax credit, your offering must be received in the Grace office by noon on Friday, December 31, 2020, or postmarked December 31, 2020. If you use leftover 2020 offering envelopes in 2021, please scratch out the offering envelope number as your 2021 envelope number has changed.



MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER

WHO LIKES PIE?! It's time for our first Mission Trip Fundraiser and we're once again partnering with the Pie Peddler. We'll have an information table set up in the Narthex beginning November 22. The sale runs through Sunday December 6, with the pies delivered to the church on Saturday, December 19. Cream and Fruit pies are \$9.50 and Pecan pies are \$10.50. All profits go directly to our high schoolers' trip costs. As always, thank you for your support!

HEARTFELT THANKS

Dear Friends,

My name is Patricia Dittrich and I am a member of Peace Lutheran Church in Rosenberg, TX. My husband is the coordinator of the Texas Region NALC Disaster Response Warehouse. There have been several storms impacting the Gulf Coast area and we have been shipping out supplies as soon as they come in. In sorting items, I found a toy with your church information on it.

I wanted to personally thank you for your generosity in sending items to help our Brothers and Sisters in Christ! Most people have lost so much and the gift of a quilt, flood bucket, baby and school items, Bibles and more is very much appreciated!

May the Lord bless you and thanks again for your kindness! Peace, Pat Dittrich

Dear Grace family,

Thank you for the birthday cards and prayers. It was very meaningful to me. Clem Meyer

Dear Grace family,

My thanks and appreciation for the cards and prayers for healing from my surgery.

Cathy Zernechel

BEHOLD



2020 Advent Devotional Readings & Prayers

The Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Advent Devotional is available for download on the Grace app or the Grace website under Adult Education. Printed copies will be available in the narthex. Please contact the church if you have questions.

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



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