

# 20 *December* 25

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## Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Messenger

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### Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

Storms can be scary but nonetheless I have always been fascinated by those bold strikes of lighting that sear across the nighttime sky. In a dramatic flash the pitch black of midnight becomes as bright as a noon day sun. Streetlights even go out, fooled by the surprising burst!

That is the image I want to create as we begin our Advent journey together. Our theme for Advent 2025 will be "Shining into the Darkness." Throughout Advent, Christmas and into Epiphany, I want our worship to convey the idea that God sent Jesus into a world that was becoming increasingly dark due the power of sin. He did so by breaking into that darkness with the Light of the Gospel. More than just lighting a candle, God pierced the darkness of the world with a huge lightning bolt of grace. Picture the difference!

Our primary theme verse is 1 Peter 2:9:

You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)

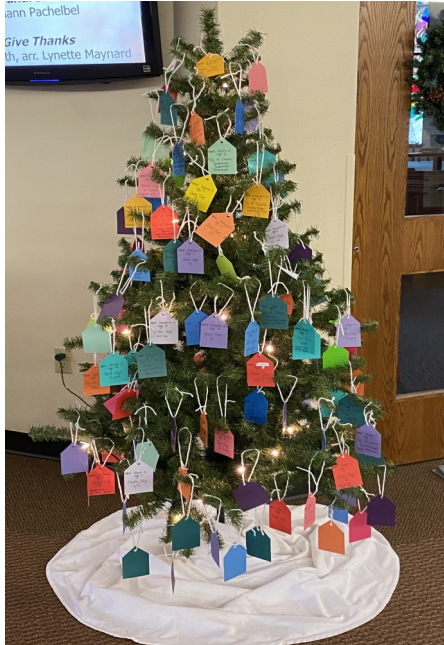
This secondary theme verse will orient our midweek and Christmas Eve services:

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)

I look forward to celebrating this special season with all of you!

# DECEMBER OUTREACH CORNER

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Our annual Giving Tree is to help our Snowhill families during Christmas time. The tags on the tree reflect individual children (gender, age, size) and what they've asked for. Needs are great this year and time is short with how the holiday and school break falls. Please take a tag, buy that item, wrap the gift, **attach the tag to the gift**, and deliver it to the church, no later than **December 14th**. See Sandy Thompson with any questions.



## **Save the Date: January Outreach Breakfast Break:**

Sunday, January 4th during the Sunday school hour we will feature Encompass Connection Center. Come and meet their new leadership David and Theresa Mabry,

following the retirement of Lavern and Ronda Nissley and hear more about the wonderful work they are doing to help marriage and relationship education in Clark County. Please plan to join us and bring a breakfast item to share as you are able.

## ADVENT

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Advent worship is always special at Grace. The sanctuary and surrounding areas glow with reminders of the season. As we focus on how God's light penetrates the darkness of this world, we look forward to worshipping with you at 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. each Sunday morning and at 7 p.m. on three successive Thursdays (December 4, 11, and 18), as well as on Christmas Eve at 6:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. Pastor Tom will be joined in the chancel by Sandy Thompson and Michelle Kouse for the Thursday services.

We are providing a wonderful Advent devotional resource for you once again. Created by our friends at the Lutheran Hour, this devotional is now available in the Grace narthex.

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## STAFF RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

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After 18 years of faithful service caring for our families and youngest members, **Carol Drown** is retiring from her position in the nursery. For nearly two decades, Carol has poured her heart into this ministry, showing extraordinary dedication, patience, and love. Her genuine care for our little ones has been a blessing beyond measure, and her presence in the nursery will be deeply missed.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for all Carol has done and our very best wishes as she begins this next chapter. We look forward to seeing her enjoy worship and fellowship with us in the sanctuary—without the need to listen for the nursery pager!

Please take a moment to wish her well and express your gratitude as well.

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## YOUNG AT HEART

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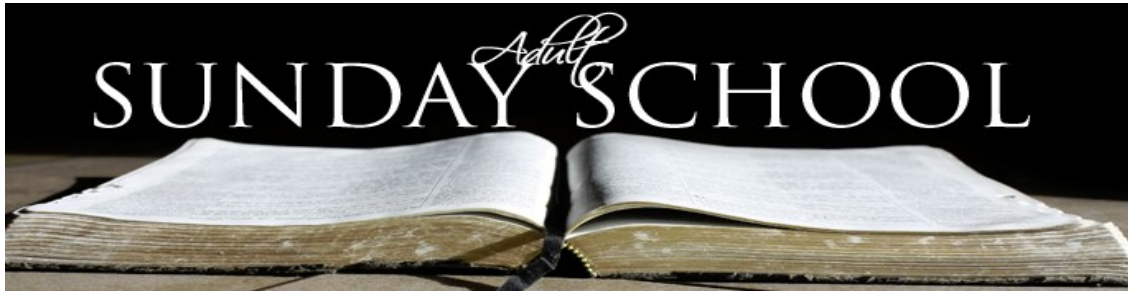
"Young At Heart" enjoyed dancers at High Street Methodist and also musical Scrooge at Lacomedia Dinner theater this past month. We also listened to a piano and flutist at the Covenant Presbyterian Church. December 12th will be our "Young at Heart" Christmas party. Keep an eye out at the narthex for future events to enjoy Christian joy and love. Have a blessed thankful Thanksgiving.





# ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL IN DECEMBER

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During the month of December, the Grace Adult Sunday School classes will engage in a three-part Advent series by noted pastor and speaker Andy Stanley. The series is titled "Sinners Like Me." In it Stanley teaches how Jesus came to redeem people just like us. Those sessions happen on December 7, 14, and 21.

Then on December 28 we wrap up the calendar year with another version of "Cookies and Carols." Bring your leftover Christmas cookies to share with the rest of the class as we enjoy singing and learning about our favorite Christmas carols.

## THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

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Could it be true? Can we prove it? The Biblical record proclaims that mysterious star arose in the east, prompting wise men to travel and worship the newborn Jesus.

The Star of Bethlehem is a 2007 documentary by Rick Larson, revealing what he discovered when he searched for clues about the astrological phenomenon described in Matthew 2. Using the Starry Night astronomy computer program and other scientific documentation, including the Biblical record, Larson sought to answer these fascinating questions.

We will be showing his search on Sunday, December 7 at 6 p.m. in the Grace Community Center. Bring your comfy chairs (or use one of ours), a snack to share and settle in for an Advent night at the movies. We will roll out the Grace popcorn popper, too. The video will be followed by an optional discussion time.

# DECEMBER CALENDER 2025

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**Monday, Dec 1**

6:00 pm Stephen Ministry

**Tuesday, Dec 2**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
8:30 am Miss. Inc Learning Team  
11:30 am Staff Meeting  
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

**Wednesday, Dec 3**

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

**Thursday, Dec 4**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
1:00 pm Quilters  
7:00 pm Worship

**Friday, Dec 5**

8:00 pm Community Group

**Saturday, Dec 6**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
9:00am-12:00pm Auction

**Sunday, Dec 7**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
8:00 pm Community Group

**Monday, Dec 8**

12:00 pm Charity Guild  
6-8 pm Backyard Comm.

**Tuesday, Dec 9**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am Staff Meeting  
2:00 pm Joy Guild  
6:00 pm Exec. Comm  
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

**Wednesday, Dec 10**

1:00 pm WASSO  
5:30 pm Grace Notes  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

**Thursday, Dec 11**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
1:00 pm Quilters  
7:00 pm Worship

**Friday, Dec 12**

8:00 pm Community Group

**Saturday, Dec 13**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
10-3 Women's Ornament Exchange

**Sunday, Dec 14**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
12:15 pm Handchimes  
2-6 pm Massie Recital  
8:00 pm Community Group

**Monday, Dec 15**

5:30 pm YAH  
6:00 pm LRP Team

**Tuesday, Dec 16**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am Staff Meeting  
7:00 pm Council

**Wednesday, Dec 17**

5:00 pm Community Group  
5:30 pm Grace Notes  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

**Thursday, Dec 18**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
7:00 pm Worship

**Friday, Dec 19**

8:00 pm Community Group

**Saturday, Dec 20**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
Prayer Partners

**Sunday, Dec 21**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
12:15 pm Handchimes  
12:15 pm Stable Procession Rehearsal  
8:00 pm Community Group

**Monday, Dec 22****Tuesday, Dec 23**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am Staff Meeting

**Wednesday, Dec 24**

6:30 pm Worship  
9:00 pm Worship

**Thursday, Dec 25**

**OFFICE CLOSED**

**Friday, Dec 26**

**OFFICE CLOSED**

8:00 pm Community Group

**Saturday, Dec 27**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

**Sunday, Dec 28**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
8:00 pm Community Group

**Monday, Dec 29****Tuesday, Dec 30**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am Staff Meeting

**Wednesday, Dec 31**



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