

Grace News

Grace Ev. Lutheran Church
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DeWitt, IA 52742

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Church Office Hours
M-Th - 8am to 3 pm
F - 8am to Noon

December 2024

Dear Redeemed and Loved Saints of Grace!

Do you remember having to collect 100 items for the 100th day of school? As we approach 2025, we as a congregation, are going to celebrate 100 years in De Witt. It makes me want to try something unique. Can we collect 100 stories of Grace? I have created an email which I will check most likely once a week. The goal is to create a booklet that we can pass out during our 100-year celebration in September 2025.

You don't need to worry about the length of your story. It could be long or short. But I would encourage you to share with each other how the ministry of Grace has both either impacted you and your family and friends. I believe this is something that would be unique and very personable to us as a congregation during this upcoming year.

What if we get more than 100 stories? The answer is simple, the more the better! So if you have a story to share please send an email to grace100stories@gmail.com. The deadline to submit a story would be July 31st, 2025.

Now on to the second part of my letter, thank you. Thank you for all the cards I received on pastor appreciation day. I am very thankful for all your love and support.

Finally, and most importantly it is Christmas time! We get to celebrate the joy of the Father's promise to send his Son, Jesus into the flesh to redeem us. And to usher in the kingdom of God here on earth.

As we approach this Christmas season, I want to encourage you to invite your neighbors and friends to one of the various opportunities to hear the love that God the Father has for them that He sent his Son into the flesh for them. Whether it is to one of our various Christmas Eve/Day services or to the cantata performances.

I pray blessings upon all of you this holiday season, as you gathered with family and friends to give thanks for all that Jesus has done. And as we prepare to receive our King, who was born in the town of Bethlehem.

In the service of Jesus,
Pastor Eric

Pastor Eric Obermann
563-321-0032
pastoreric@gracedewitt.org

Kerry Good
kgood@gracedewitt.org

Mark Sperry, DCE
563-321-0674
msperry@gracedewitt.org

Mark's Office Hours
M-Th - 7:00 am to 1:00 pm

Grace Lutheran Preschool
PH: 563-659-9193
Preschool Teacher/Director
Christine Greve
preschool@gracedewitt.org

Grace Lutheran Camp
2675 242nd St, P.O. Box 156
DeWitt, IA 52742-0156
Camp Reservations
camprentals@gracedewitt.org
319-230-7718

SERVING THIS MONTH:

The Elders: Sunday's 8:00 AM Alan Ruggeberg
10:30 AM Jon Betz
Wednesday 11:00 AM
7:00 PM

The Organist: Diana Baetke & Tasha Becker

The Acolytes

December 1st

8:00 AM Zanyel Barys
10:30 AM Gavin Birt

December 4th

7:00 PM Cade Converse

December 8th

8:00 AM Kitt Converse
10:30 AM Brady Dies

December 11th

7:00 PM Leo Hill

December 15th

8:00 AM Ava Johnson
10:30 AM Cameron Miller

December 18th

7:00 PM Larry Oronzio

December 22nd

8:00 AM Austin Nolin
10:30 AM Isaiah Sunday

December 24th

6:00 PM Zach Yutesler
10:00 PM Zane Burzlaff

December 25th

9:00 AM Brody Lawrence

December 29th

9:00 AM Kennick Meyer



Sunday Worship

8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
At Grace Church

Advent Worship

Dec. 4th, 11th, & 18th
11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Cantata

"Joy, Unspeakable Joy!"

December 8th

8:00 a.m. @ Grace Church
10:00 a.m. @ Immanuel, Grand Mound

Christmas Cantata ~ Encore

"Joy, Unspeakable Joy!"

December 11th

7:00 p.m.

Children's Christmas Program

"To Us a Child is Born"

December 15th

3:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24th

6:00 p.m. Worship/Communion
10:00 p.m. Worship/Communion

Christmas Day

December 25th

9:00 a.m. Communion Service

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

The Christmas Chorale, including members and friends of Grace and Immanuel Lutheran-Grand Mound proudly present, *"Joy, Unspeakable Joy"* which will be performed on Sunday, December 8th at 8:00 a.m. at Grace and 10:00 a.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church-Grand Mound. Come Celebrate the Wonders of His Birth!

We will have an encore performance of the Christmas Cantata on Wednesday, December 11th, 7:00 p.m., at Grace. COME LISTEN AGAIN or for the first time and join us in celebrating the Birth of the King with *"Joy, Unspeakable Joy"*.



Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 15th @ 3 pm

Rehearsal Schedule

Saturday, December 14th

4th—8th Grade—9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Pre-K - 3rd Grade—10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 15th - 9:15 a.m.

The Children's Program is at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 15th. All Children need to be in Grace Hall by 2:45 p.m.

Grace Ev. Lutheran Church

Angel Tree

The Angel Tree Project provides Christmas gifts for local families in need to help them know the joy that the Christmas Season Brings.



TAKE A TAG FROM THE TREE &
BLESS A FAMILY IN NEED

Nov 24th—Dec 15th

Check List

1. Take an ornament off the tree. Write your name on the Sign-up sheet.
2. Purchase your gift, approximate value of \$25-\$40
3. Return the wrapped gift with the attached ornament tag to the Christmas tree in the foyer by **December 15th.**



Thank you for your generosity,
The Board of Outreach.



Fellowship Sunday

December 15th
9:15 am to 10:30 am

Plan to join us on Sunday as we fellowship with one another, while enjoying a cup of coffee and a delicious snack.

Looking for cards? We recently added Christmas Cards. There is also a variety of sympathy, thinking of you, get well, birthday cards, and much more available for purchase next to the Welcome Center. Please take a moment to see the wide assortment of cards and napkins displayed in the foyer.

IMPORTANT - Deadline for submitting articles for the January newsletter is December 15th.



Join us on Sunday, December 1st, after the late service to decorate the Church for the Advent season. We will be putting up the sanctuary Christmas tree, hanging wreaths, setting up the nativity, and putting the family Christmas tree up in the foyer. Everyone is welcome to participate.

Grace Endowment Fund

With December 31, 2024, approaching, it is a good time for everyone to review your financial position and make adjustments in preparation for Federal and State income taxes. Charitable contributions can reduce tax liabilities. The Endowment Committee is asking everyone to include the Endowment Fund in their year-end contributions. Each year the Endowment Committee receives requests for funds far exceeding the amount available. If the Endowment Fund grows, more money becomes available for distribution. This fund will provide income year after year for projects supporting missions, education, youth, worship, music and capital improvements that help our church run and grow.



Grace Lutheran Camp

2675 242nd St, DeWitt, IA

Christmas TREE FARM

Opens

Friday, November 29th
9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Weekend Hours:

Saturdays: 9 to 4:30 pm
Sundays: 11 to 4:30

Hot Cocoa
Photo Opps
24" Wreaths
Greenery

CHRISTMAS TREES

Cut your Own
Pre-Cut

Christmas tree prices start
at \$60 and increase
based on size.

Following the Worship Services on Sunday, December 1st, 8th, and the 15th the Elders will be collecting contributions for a Christmas Offering for Pastor Obermann and Mr. Mark Sperry/DCE as an expression of congregational gratitude for their dedicated service to the Lord and His church. These gifts will be presented to them during the 6 p.m. Christmas Eve Service on December 24th.

The wooden collection box will be in the narthex during these services for everyone wishing to contribute.

Proceeds will be equally shared by the Pastor and DCE, unless anyone wishes to designate specific amounts to each. If so, please place your gifts in separate envelopes marked for "Pastor Obermann" or "Mr. Sperry."

Update on Tiling Project

As many of you are aware we had a drainage issue between the buildings which caused issues in the downstairs hallways and Sunday school rooms in the basement. The work included in this project is to update the drainage system, reinforce the gutters, remove and replace the sidewalk, repair wall damage and replace landscaping. The estimated cost of this multi-phase project is \$21,000.00.

Your assistance with this funding is greatly appreciated. Thank you to everyone who has donated to this project we have now raised 67% of the funds needed. If you would like to donate to this project, please label it "Tiling Project" and place it in the collection plate or in the secretaries door.



Referral Center Donations

We will continue to collect monthly donations for the Referral Center as the need is great. The referral center can always use soup, Hamburger Helper, kid cereal, tuna, pasta, pasta sauce and canned vegetables. All donations can be left in the shopping cart located in the foyer.

Altar Guild

The church has an amazing group of volunteers that work together as a team to set up communion and change the paraments for the worship services. They are currently in need of some more volunteers. The Altar Guild provides all volunteers with training and you are paired with a partner, which makes the job easier and quicker. If you have the time to assist with this or would like more information on the duties and responsibilities, please contact the church office.



December 19th Victory Center Service Event

Once again, thank you to everyone who contributed to the meal, helped serve and prayed for our November service event at the Victory Center in Clinton. Our next service event meal will be on December 19th. We are planning to serve up to 40 people and allow for seconds. If you haven't volunteered to help with some part of one of these meals, please prayerfully consider being involved in some way. Men are encouraged to join us in this mission, especially with serving the meal.

All food needs to be prepared and brought to the church by 4:00 PM on Thursday, December 19th.

Main Dish

5 Volunteers

To bring a meat dish/
casserole.

Drinks

2 Volunteers:

- 1 gallon of white milk
- 2 gallons of chocolate milk

Desserts

3 Volunteers

Prepare a dessert that serves
15 people.

Side Dish **3 Volunteers**

Bring a salad or side that serves at
least 15 people.

Deliver & Serve **5 Volunteers**

Needed to help deliver and serve the meal.
We meet at Grace at 4 pm.

A sign up sheet is located on the Welcome Center. Please contact Kristy Engelkes at 563-210-2462 or the church office if you have any questions

LWML will be collecting MITES on Sunday, December 1st. If you would like to help support the LCMS with their mission projects you can place your donation inside the box located in the Narthex or leave a marked donation in the offering plate. Thank you for your support of LWML and the missions of the LCMS.

Altar Flowers for 2025

Altar Flowers are a way we add beauty to the sanctuary for our worship services. Each bouquet can be purchased, "in honor of" or "in memory of" someone. We have two bouquets available each week for \$30 per arrangement. You can purchase altar flowers for a specific date by signing up using the altar flower folder on the Welcome Center. Sign up for the date you would like; indicate one arrangement or two; make a note as to what you want the News & Notes to say; then place your payment in the envelope provided in the secretary's door. The office will handle ordering the flowers.

We hope that we have flowers every week, but we know that there are Sundays when the arrangements have not been spoken for. It is these Sundays when you will not see arrangements on the altar. To assist the church in having arrangements every Sunday there is another way you can help. Donate money to our flower fund. We will then use the money in the flower fund, to cover the cost of flowers when they have not been spoken for. It is important to remember that we can only use the flower fund money when there is a balance in the flower fund account.

This year is almost over but we still have dates available in December. The 2025 Altar flower sign-up sheets are available now, the cost for the flowers will remain \$30.

Offering Envelopes for 2025 will be available in the foyer after Thanksgiving. Please, take a moment following services to pick up your box. Remember, do not use these envelopes until January!

If you do not have a box of envelopes and need them, please contact the church office.



The three year olds are feeling the Christmas spirit this month! We start with a Christmas program

on December 4th at 5:30. Not only are we learning about Christmas, but also our feelings. Our Bible stories all align with the birth of Jesus! We will be having a birthday party to celebrate his birth before winter break begins.



We can't believe it's already December! This month the 4s will continue to learn more letters, letter sounds, practice writing our names, and continue on with counting practice. We will also be learning about Gingerbread. We will be wrapping up our unit on colors and can't wait to celebrate Christmas.

The 3's and 4's Preschool class will be having their Christmas Program on Wednesday, December 4th. They will be spreading Christmas joy as they sing to their family and friends.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Save Around Coupon Book fundraiser. With your help along with the preschool families we were able to raise around \$600.

It is not too late! If you missed the fundraiser but would like to get a coupon book, please speak with Kerry at the church office. We have 5 books left to sell. Cost is \$25.



Reminder to Sunday School Families

We do not have Sunday School on:
December 22nd
December 29th
Or January 5th

We will see everyone back at Sunday School on January 12th.



The Christmas Season is approaching. It is the time of year when we write out Christmas Cards to our friends and family. This year, why not consider writing Christmas Cards to the residence at Maggie's House and Fieldstone.

Please take a moment to write a short note or sentiment on Christmas Cards sign your first name (last name is optional). When completed bring them back to church and place in the designated basket.

We are asking that these cards be at church on or before December 14th. This date will insure that we get the cards where the need to go in time for Christmas.

Contact the church office if you have any questions.

Voter's Meeting

As stated in our current by-laws, Regular meetings of Voters Assembly shall be held on the 2nd Monday of the month during the months of January, April, July and October. The regular quarterly voters meeting shall be announced at a regular Sunday service at least one week prior to the date of convening said meeting.

Special meetings of the voters assembly may be called by a majority vote of the Church Council or by a written petition of at least 25 voting members .. these meetings will also be announced at a regular Sunday public worship services prior to the meeting and you will receive a reminder via text or email if you have provided that information to the Church.

This is your chance to have a say in Church affairs. Please prayerfully consider attending. Our next Voter's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 13th at 7:00 p.m.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME—GRACE LUTHERAN SKI TRIP

Make plans to join us on Sunday, January 26th for an evening of fun on the slopes. We're heading to Sundown in Dubuque.

This is open to all Grace members. Costs are: \$50 for ski rental, lift ticket & lesson; \$55 for Snowboard rental, lift ticket & lesson; or \$30 for lift ticket only. To register go to <http://shop.sundownmtn.com/groups>. When asked, type in the following code: GRACE25 and you will be directed to the site. All registrations and payment must be submitted by Sunday, January 19th. After that date the site will close and no further registrations will be accepted.



- 2nd Dylan Spain
Gary Paarmann
Hollie Appleby
Brianna Johnson
Kortney Stearns
- 3rd Cathy Youngers
- 5th Dick Broadfoot
- 6th Stephanie Pillers
- 7th Brooke Paasch
- 9th Jim Owen
Chad Jeffery
- 10th Katelyn Edwards
- 11th Mary Jo Kelly
- 16th Kim Haring
Carolyn Lane
Emilie Butler
- 17th Judy Hartmann
Rylee Wagner
- 18th Matthew Diercks
- 19th Luke Hill
Jill Johnson
- 20th John Gisel
- 21st Dick Kelly
Verlene Reid
Sara Suhr
- 22nd Carol Anderson
David J. Hansen
Steve Butler
- 24th Tammy Mickelson
Jason Mork
- 25th Lauren Walker
- 27th Lori Olson
- 28th Gayle Fuller
Kimberly Burzlaff
- 29th Kolton Goddard
- 30th Madelyn Johnson
Chad Tobey



- 3rd David & Stephanie Pillers
- 5th Dave & Tracy Paarmann
- 8th Lucas & Nicole Rickertsen
- 9th Donald & Connie Havener

Youth Group Christmas Caroling & Pizza Party

Attention all 6th through 12th graders. Make plans now to join us Sunday, December 8th at 4:00 pm for our annual Caroling, Pizza Party & Gift Exchange. Please let Mr. Sperry know by Wednesday, December 4th if you're coming so we make sure to have enough food for everyone. Please bring a wrapped gift valued \$10-\$15, to participate in the exchange. Feel free to contact Mr. Sperry if you have any questions.

ALL YOUTH (6th – 12th Grades) LOCK-IN

Attention all 6th – 12th Graders. The All Youth LOCK-IN will be held Friday, January 17th here at church. We will again be joined by a team of students from Concordia University Chicago. To sign-up, please email Mr. Sperry at msperry@gracedewitt.org. There is no cost for this event, but we ask that each participant bring a snack for the snack table. Deadline to sign-up is Sunday, January 12th.

ENDURE

We are now 7 months away from the next LCMS Youth Gathering. Grace will have 16 youth and 5 adults travelling to New Orleans next July. As this group meets for Bible study and team-building please keep all of them in your prayers.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article – December 2024 Repenting of “Yours” and “Mine”

Retailers have had their Christmas displays up since before Reformation Sunday. The kids have made their list and checked it twice, or three times or more. It won't be long before the tree will start shedding its needles, the stockings emptied, the gifts unwrapped, toys broken, and the too small or out of style clothes returned. Before we know it, the annual celebration of Christmas will be over.

But for the children of God, we know that the gift of Christmas doesn't ever end. Week in and week out, the Lord continues to shower His gifts on us. Every time the Lord gathers us to His house, and we are led to kneel at His table, the gift of forgiveness is repeatedly granted to us. It is nothing we deserve. It comes to us freely!

The fourth stanza of the stewardship hymn, “Forgive Us Lord for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788) highlights both this gift and our response.

Teach us, O Lord, true thankfulness divine, that gives as Christ gave, never counting cost

To learn thankfulness is necessary. The parents of young children are well-versed in the fact that they must teach their children thankfulness. It does not come naturally. The spiritual genetics inherited from our parents allow us to think that the world revolves around us. When we receive something, there is an inward desire to think that we in some way deserve it.

But there is no way that we deserve anything we get from our Lord. We need that ongoing lesson from God Himself. Thankfulness toward God is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. God's Word works this thanksgiving in us. We need this weekly reminder that Jesus didn't consider “equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself” for us, to the point of death on a cross (Phil. 2:6). He didn't bat an eye. He paid the price! Our life of stewardship is one of daily and weekly thanksgiving inspired by the Lord Himself.

That knows no barrier of “yours” and “mine,” assured that only what's withheld is lost.

Because Jesus gave us everything and more, there can be no ownership. The child at Christmas is quick to claim that the newly gifted toy is “mine!” But as Psalm 24:1 asserts, “The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” There isn't anything in creation that is ours. When we cling to and claim ownership of anything in creation, we are losing out on the continual gifts with which the Lord desires to shower upon us. Closed hands cannot receive anything new. We cling to the old and dead and miss the new thing that the Lord desires to do in and for us.

We are led to repent of the “yours” and “mine” and remove the lie that we have any ownership. In this we have the promise that God will continue to give to us. Not just at Christmas, but every Sunday at the altar in the Lord's house.

Grace Ev. Lutheran Church - December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 "Mites" Sunday 8:00am Traditional Worship w/Communion 9:15am Sunday School/ Adult Bible Study 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Comm 2:00pm CLUB345 Christmas Celebration	2 1:00pm 500 Card Club 6:00pm Discipleship Board 6:30pm Elders Meeting	3	4 11:00am Advent Worship 5:30pm Confirmation 5:30pm Preschool Christmas Program 7:00pm Advent Worship 8:00pm Cantata Rehearsal at Immanuel	5 9:00am Tops Meeting 9:30am Stay Active Senior Exercise Group	6 Office Closed 8:00am Trustees Mtg	7 Hall is Rented 9:00am Cantata Rehearsal @ Grace
8 8:00am Cantata 9:15am Sunday School/ Adult Bible Study 10:00am Cantata @ Immanuel 10:30am Traditional Worship 4:00pm Youth Caroling & Pizza Party	9 6:00pm Council Meeting	10 7:00am Finance Board Mtg	11 7:15am Staff Meeting 11:00am Advent Worship 5:30pm Confirmation 7:00pm Cantata	12 9:00am Tops Mtg 9:30am Stay Active Senior Exercise Group 1:30pm Service @ Maggie's House	13 Yoga Friday - Preschool	14 9:00am Children's Program Practice
15 Fellowship Sunday/ Newsletter Deadline 8:00am Traditional Worship w/Communion 9:15am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Comm 3:00pm Children's Christmas Program	16 1:00pm 500 Card Club 7	17 6:30pm Camp Board Meeting	18 Office Closes at 1:00 PM 9:00am Sewing Ladies 11:00am Advent Worship 5:30pm Confirmation 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:00pm Glory Bound Choir	19 9:00am Tops Mtg 9:30am Stay Active Senior Group 4:00pm Victory Center Service Event 6:30pm Men's Table Talk	20	21
22 8:00am Traditional Worship 10:30am Traditional Worship	23 No Preschool - Christmas Break	24 Office Closed - No Preschool 6pm Worship 10pm Worship	25 Office Closed - No Preschool 9am Christmas Worship	26 Office Closed - No Preschool	27 Office Closed - No Preschool	28
29 9:00am Traditional Worship	30 No Preschool - Christmas Break	31 Office Closed - No Preschool	1 Office Closed - No Preschool	2 No Preschool - 9:00am Tops Mtg 9:30am Stay Active Exercise Group	3 No Preschool - 8:00am Trustees Board Meeting	4