

# GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



## DECEMBER 2025 GRACE VINE NEWSLETTER



*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we  
beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the  
Father, full of grace and truth.*

**John 1:14**

# Letter from the Pastors

## The Advent of our God...

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down... – Isaiah 64:1

This month is a time of new beginnings in the church. We start over fresh with the lectionary, the planned set of readings for each Sunday. We have gone through the three year rotation and now we start the system all over again with Year A – the year of Matthew.

With that year of Matthew, it is the beginning of the new year for us. The previous year has ended and now we enter into the festival season. That means the start of Advent, and with it we enter into the newness of life in Jesus. When he enters into history, physically, born of a woman, born under the law, he enters into your time and into mine. He takes on the flesh we share. He lets himself take on time and space that he might save you and me from time and sin. That he might be born to die to lift you up from the grave to newness of life. A life centered on the One who continually comes for you.

We don't think about that part of the Gospel, do we? That the Gospel is not just about getting to heaven (whatever that means), the forgiveness of sins (yes, please!), or resurrection from the dead. It is a continued story of Jesus himself coming for you. Committing himself to you. Reaching out towards you. The Good News of Christ is not that a way has been made to climb up the mountain of God in hopes of reaching his throne room one day. It is that God has come down to you. He is done with waiting for you to put on your hiking boots and grab your walking stick. He has come down to you to bring you heaven itself – where death cannot defeat you; where sins no longer entangle you; where you are free to be his own.

As we enter into the Advent season, remember all of this. Remember that he has already come for you long before you were born. He came long before you made a decision for him. In his coming to Bethlehem, he made a decision about you. That is the Gospel. That is Advent. That is Christmas.

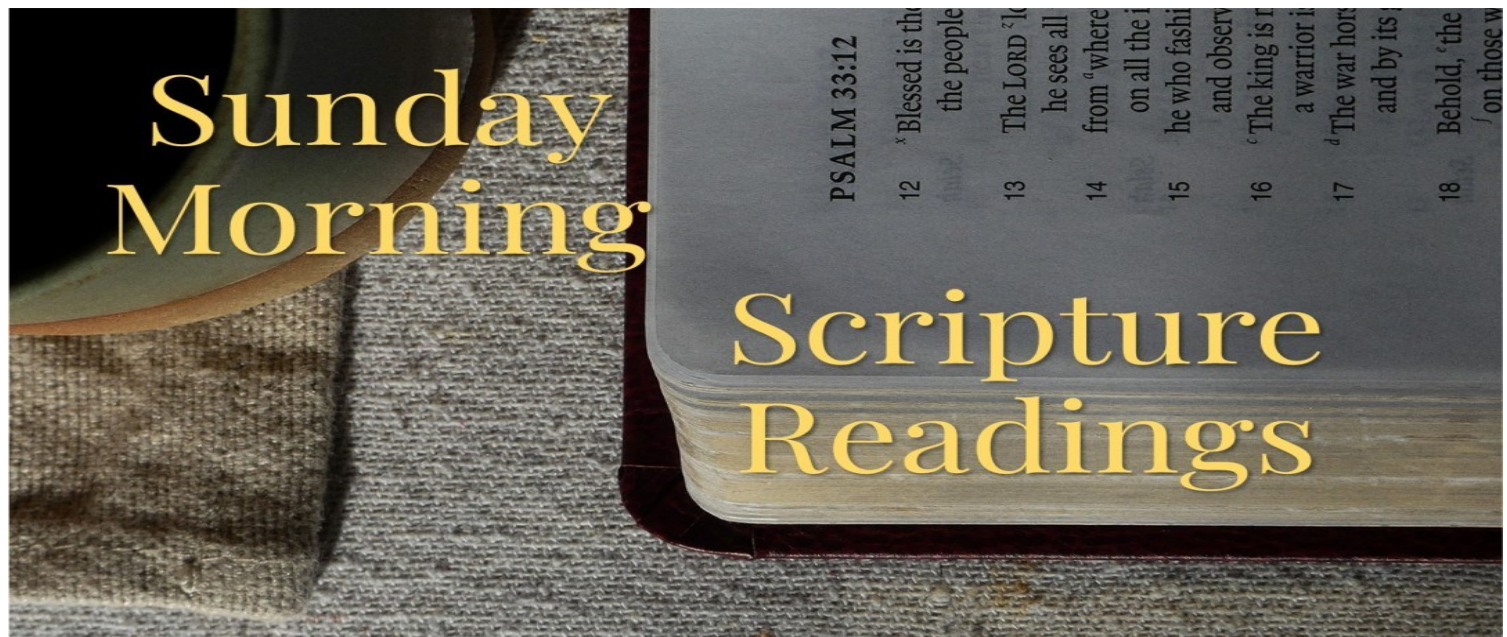
Happy Advent and Merry Christmas,

Pastor Smee



# Scripture Readings for December

Date	Gospel Reading	Additional Readings
Dec-7	Matthew 3:1-12	First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm Reading: 72:1-7 Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13
Dec-14	Matthew 11:2-15	First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm Reading: 146 Second Reading: James 5:7-11
Dec-21	Matthew 1:18-25	First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-17 Psalm Reading: 24 Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7
Dec-28	Matthew 2:13-23	First Reading: Isaiah 63:7-14 Psalm Reading: 111 Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7



# Announcements

By Son Network

## ANNUAL LIVESTREAM EVENT

**12.04.2025**

STREAMING ONLINE!

8 PM EASTERN | 7 PM CENTRAL  
6 PM MOUNTAIN | 5 PM PACIFIC

TOGETHER WE GIVE. TOGETHER WE GO.  
TOGETHER CHRIST IS MADE KNOWN.

**HOPE**  
MOVES  
THROUGH  
YOU



## ANGEL TREE



The Angel Tree will be in the Narthex starting November 30th



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A LADIES

### holiday BRUNCH

FRIDAY • DECEMBER 5  
10-11:30 AM • FELLOWSHIP HALL

BRING SOCKS TO DONATE  
FOR OUR HOLIDAY BASKETS

WEAR YOUR FAVORITE SOCKS!

Join us for

## THE LAST MINUTE NATIVITY PLAY

December 17<sup>th</sup>, 6pm

An Advent "Feliz Navidad"-themed potluck, followed by an all-church involved attempt to tell the Christmas story. There will be carols and there will be laughs.

## CHRISTMAS AT GRACE

Christmas Eve – 4:30pm & 7pm  
Christmas Day – 10am  
December 28<sup>th</sup> – 10am  
January 4<sup>th</sup> – 8am, 10:30am



## TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION

January 5<sup>th</sup>, 7pm in the Sanctuary

A night of Lessons and Carols to conclude the Christmas season, led by the pastors and the Lindula family.


There will be a bonfire, a cookie buffet, hot cocoa and cider to follow.

Grace Lutheran Handbell Choir  
*and*  
High Desert Pipers Flute Choir  
*present a*

## Free Christmas Concert

Grace Lutheran Church Sanctuary  
502 North Norma Street – Ridgecrest, CA  
Sunday, December 14, 2025, at 3 pm


Donations gratefully accepted.



## OWLS

(Older Wiser Lutherans)

Meets for games, fun, and entertainment in the Fellowship Hall the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.



## CHURCH COUNCIL

Church Council meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm in room 8. If a regularly scheduled council meeting needs to be rescheduled, the will be notified through the weekly MailChimp mass emailer as well as the bulletin.



Naomi's Friends

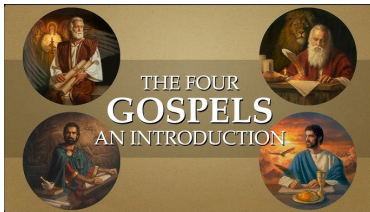
## Naomi's Friend's is a Widow's Support Group

that meets the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month at

Ale's Crab House @ 12pm.



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Peace Bible Study meets the third Wednesday of the month at 9 am in the CR. The study is called *Introduction to the Four Gospels*. All are welcome.



Limbo Young Adult Life group meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at the Smee's home.

Team 784 meets in the  
Fellowship Hall  
For ages 3rd grade to 90+

Kingdom Kids meets in the  
Conference Room for kids  
up to 2nd grade & adults



Join "A Bible and a Pencil" Bible study via Zoom on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm. The study is on the book of Exodus. Please contact Mark Brynestad via email at [marknsue78@gmail.com](mailto:marknsue78@gmail.com) for further information



An in-depth Bible study of Mark via Zoom on Tuesday nights, 7:00, under the instruction of Mark Brynestad. Please contact Mark Brynestad via email at [marknsue78@gmail.com](mailto:marknsue78@gmail.com) for further information regarding this class.

*Spotlighting  
the Family of Grace*

# The Gray Family

Keith, Jennifer and Andy



Keith grew up in Wisconsin, where he was raised Lutheran and Jennifer grew up in Kansas, where she was raised Catholic. They met and went to school together in Missouri. After graduation, Keith came to Ridgecrest to start work at the Naval Air Warfare Center in September of 2001, the day before the infamous attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. He is currently the Range Safety Officer.

Jennifer's degrees in civil engineering took her to work in the San Diego and Austin, TX areas, leading to a few years of long-distance relationship. They were eventually married on the beach in Coronado – Jennifer's uncle officiated the ceremony (he had also married her parents).

Jennifer transferred to work on the base and moved to Ridgecrest in 2005 -- as a civil engineer, she recently worked with Nate Hardy on earthquake reconstruction projects.

Having been raised a Wisconsin Synod Lutheran, Keith first joined a small congregation (Trinity) that met at the Heritage Inn, later moving for a few years of attending Our Savior's, while Jennifer continued to practice her Catholic faith, with occasional attendance together at one of the two churches. After being married about 5 years, they came to Grace during the years under Pastor Mark Brynestad, where they took communion together for the very first time. They soon transferred the Grays' family membership to Grace.

Their son Andy was born in 2010 and has surprised his parents with his athletic skill, particularly in baseball, which has them regularly traveling year-round. Other family interests include trap shooting and bird hunting with their Brittany Spaniel, whose natural skill as a bird dog makes up for the goofiness of their Great Dane/German Shepherd mix. Both dogs are greatly loved family members.



## ***Keith's Apple Pie***

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Cut apples and make sugar mix for filling first so its ready to go when you make the pie crust.

### ***Crust Recipe***

#### **DO NOT OVERHANDLE**

Makes top & bottom crust w/ a little left over

1 cup flour

$\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. Salt

$\frac{1}{3}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Crisco

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup ice water (ice cubes in cup, let sit)

1. Mix flour & salt in w/ fork
2. Mash in Crisco - should look pebbly
3. Drizzle ice water in and mash it in (no ice cubes)
4. Sprinkle flour on counter
5. Gently lift ball & very lightly knead (keep cold & manageable).

### ***Filling***

8 cups apples, sliced small (about 2  $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs)

$\frac{3}{8}$  cup sugar

$\frac{3}{8}$  cup brown sugar

2 Tbsp flour

$\frac{1}{8}$  tsp salt

2 tsp lemon juice

$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp nutmeg

2 tsp cinnamon

1 - 2 TBSP butter or margarine (can use up to 1 stick, more is better)

1. Combine sugar, salt, lemon, nutmeg, and cinnamon
2. Place  $\frac{1}{2}$  peeled, sliced apples (or unpeeled is ok) in pie crust
3. Sprinkle  $\frac{1}{2}$  sugar mix over apples
4. Pour in rest of apples, mount toward center, and cover with rest of sugar mix.
5. Cover evenly with small pats of butter, lay top crust on and pinch edges.
6. Cut holes in top.

Bake at 450 degrees for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 325 and bake for 45 minutes. Check for even bubbling, juice should be bubbling through crust.

# December 2025

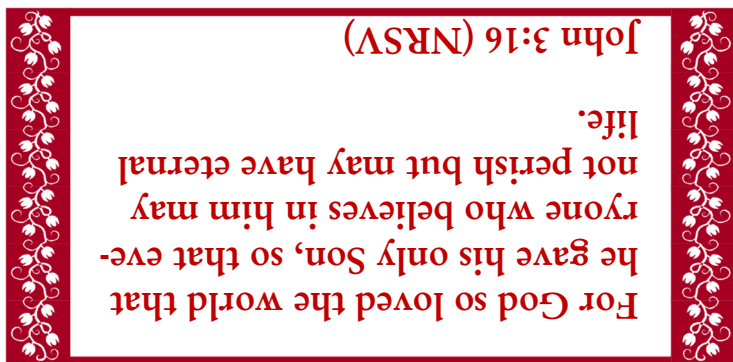
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 5:30 pm Model Planes 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>2</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 4 pm Delta Beta Event 5:30 pm Praise Band practice	<b>5</b> 10 am Ladies Christmas Brunch 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>6</b> 10 am Joy Hardy Funeral
<b>7</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 6 pm Youth Group	<b>8</b> 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>9</b> 12pm Naomi's Friends 1:30pm OWLS 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 2:30pm Parkinson's Group 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:30 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	<b>12</b> 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>13</b> 7 am-11:30 am Christmas Parade
<b>14</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 2 PM Christmas Concert	<b>15</b> 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>16</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	<b>17</b> 9 am Peace Bible Study 10:30 am Music Together 6 pm LMNP	<b>18</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:30 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	<b>19</b> 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>20</b> 10:30 am Music Together 8am IMTT Renewal
<b>21</b> Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour	<b>22</b> 6:30 pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>23</b> 12 pm Naomi's Friend's 1:30 pm OWLS 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>24</b> 4:30pm Christmas Eve Service 7 pm Christmas Eve Service	<b>25</b> OFFICE CLOSED 10 am Christmas Service	<b>26</b> 4 pm Youth Orchestra	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Worship 10:00am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour	<b>29</b> 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	<b>30</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	<b>31</b>			





502 N. Norma  
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



[www.gracelutheran.org](http://www.gracelutheran.org)  
[www.facebook.com/gracelutheran.org](http://www.facebook.com/gracelutheran.org)

We're on the Web at:

Rev. Kris Madsen, *Senior Pastor*  
Rev. Carleton Smece, *Associate Pastor*  
Christine McClain, *Office Manager*  
Jane Kuhlman, *Music*  
Paul Jauregui, *Custodian*  
Michell Koenig, *Gracevine Editor*



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Worship Services Sundays at 8 & 10:30 am  
Christian Education Hour Sundays 9:15 am