

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



Grace
Lutheran Church

January 2026
**GRACE VINE
NEWSLETTER**



Luke 2:49-52

He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.



Letter from the Pastors

Old that is new...

O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. – Psalm 98:1

It is funny to think that so often we are a people with perpetual FOMO – fear of missing out. We want to be there for certain events. We want to watch certain things happen. Many of us crave that new thing, that innovative thing. We're the first to tell others about the diet, the workout, the car, the restaurant, the recipe, the music, the book, the movie, that is new and somehow "changed my life".

It is even more interesting that at Christmas time all of that changes. We turn on the radio and want to hear the old songs. We want to come to church and hear the same readings, the same story that Linus told us when we were three years old. We were even talking in the office the week before the services that, God bless Chris Tomlin, but when it comes to our carols on Christmas Eve, we don't want to have some new bridge or different melody. We want to sing "Joy to the World" with the melody from George Handel.

Yet, amid all this old nostalgia, the psalm that is traditionally the Christmas psalm, Psalm 98, says to us – "Sing to the Lord a new song." It tells us to not only hold onto the old, because the old ways, the old paths as Jeremiah calls them, are the Way – Christ being the Way of old. Understanding that the One who came 2000 years ago for you, is the 2000 year old promise for you in that baby, in that cross, in that empty tomb. But with that there is this cry for a new song. Why? Because with all the old, my biggest prayer for myself, my family, and for you, is that this great saving work of God, this work that takes on flesh in that manger one night in Bethlehem, that he might not be old but new for me. That when I wake on January 1, being that it is a new year for me chronologically, that Jesus Christ, and the glories of his work on my behalf, might be new. That I might come to him with the excitement and zeal of one recently converted, recently made new in him. I pray that for you as well.

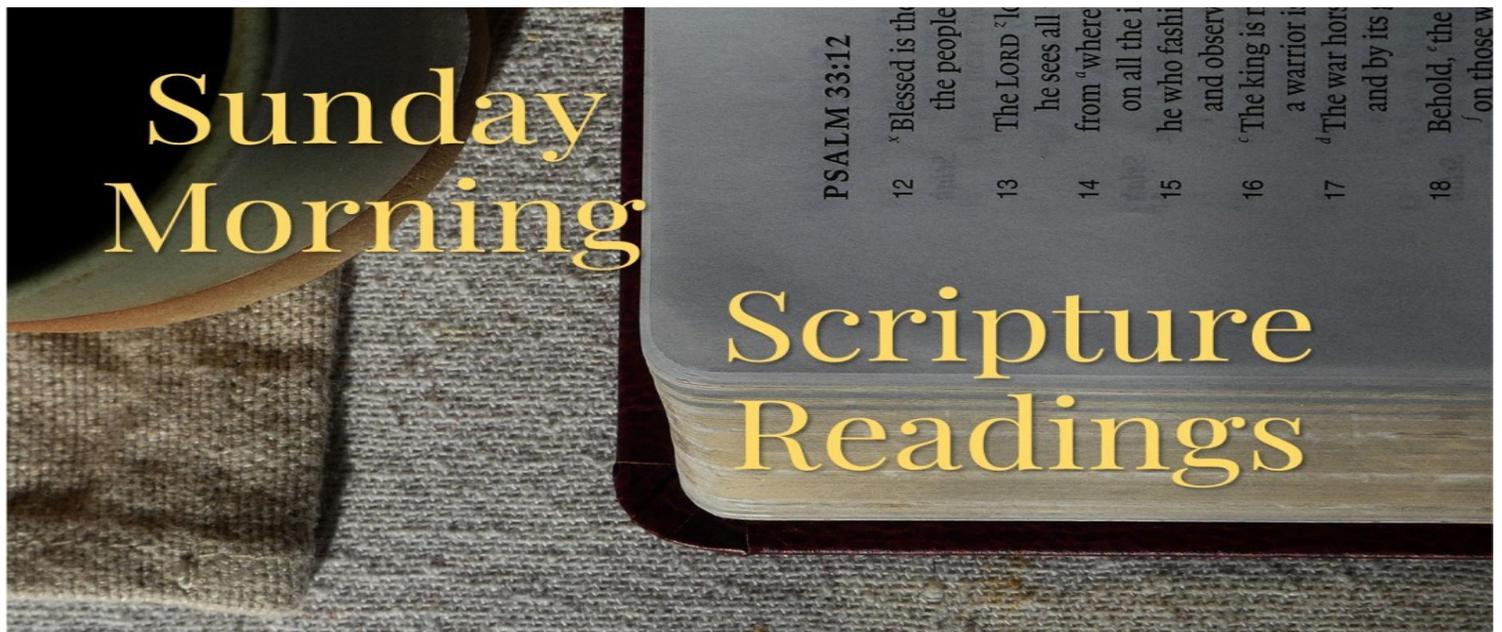
As we enter into this new year and embark again on another trip towards Calvary, and eventually find ourselves back at Bethlehem in 12 months time, I beseech the Lord to nurture in this new song. Helping us to see his marvelous deeds in Jesus with new eyes. May that Baby born to die be ever present in us each day in a new way that we might cry out with shouts of joy over fresh realizations of what has been done. For that child is born for you today and every day. He has defeated sin, death, and hell for you. Cling to him as he clings to you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

In Him,

Pastor Smee

Scripture Readings for January

Date	Gospel Reading	Additional Readings
Jan-4	Luke 2:40-52	First Reading: 1 Kings 3:4-15 Psalm Reading: 119:97-104 Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14
Jan-11	Matthew 3:13-17	First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm Reading: 29 Second Reading: Romans 6:1-11
Jan-18	John 1:29-42a	First Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7 Psalm Reading: 40:1-11 Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
Jan-25	Matthew 4:12-25	First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-4 Psalm Reading: 27:1-9(10-14) Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18



Announcements

ANNUAL MEETING

-January 11th & 18th Budget forums
between Services.

-January 25th at 11:30 in the Sanctuary.

TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION

January 5th, 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.



(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.

Women's MINI RETREAT

"JOY THROUGH ALL SEASONS"

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31
10:30AM-1:00PM

GUEST SPEAKER: JAN UNFRIED
TICKETS \$10 - CHILDCARE AVAILABLE

HOSTED AT GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RCNAZ CHURCH

The 2026 Flower Chart is available in the Narthex on the bulletin board. The cost of a flower arrangement is \$33.00.

Altar Flowers

Naomi's Friends

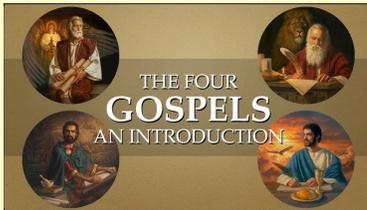
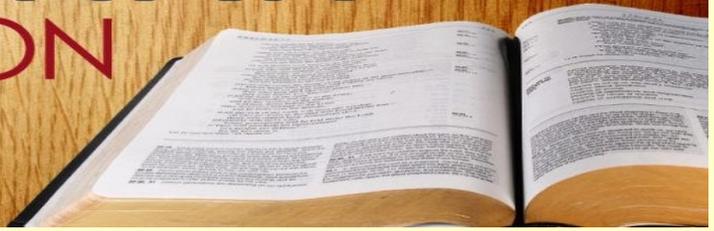


Naomi's Friend's is a Widow's Support Group

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.



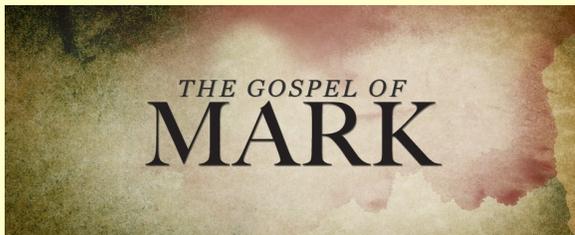
Limbo Young Adult Life group meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at the Smee's home.

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 for further information regarding this class.



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 for further information regarding this class.

*Spotlighting
the Family of Grace*

**Karen
Rivers**



Karen Rivers came to Ridgecrest from Oakland, CA as a third-grader in 1954. She attended Vieweg, Murray and Burroughs and married Dick Rivers in 1964, the year she graduated from high school. She and Dick raised 4 children, 3 girls and a boy, who benefited from Karen's dedicated involvement in their youth, as she supported them in all their academic and athletic activities. Her children have stayed in Ridgecrest and have given Karen 17 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Although raising her children was her first priority, Karen worked on the base where she started as a secretary, later becoming a Financial Specialist, while her husband Dick worked at the Post Office and later became a firefighter at China Lake, working his way up to Assistant Fire Chief. After retirement, Karen and Dick spent years on the road enjoying the RV life, until Dick was no longer able to travel, passing away in 2018.

In retirement, Karen decided to give back to her community by becoming a Pink Lady at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital, serving as president of that group for 3 years. She also volunteers at WACOM Thrift shop, and belongs to USO and Altrusa, contributing time at High Desert Haven, where her own mother was a patient to the age of 95.

After being raised, baptized, married and seeing her children baptized in the Protestant services offered at the Base Chapel, Karen was a little lost when the Chapel was destroyed in the earthquake of 2019. At the invitation of Ann Pruett, Karen came to Grace, where she found and has grown to love the commitment, sharing and grace of her new church family and enjoy the sermons that have taught her a lot about the Scriptures. Karen has found her new church offers her excellent pastors and fellowship; greatly appreciating Grace's many intergenerational gatherings and other activities, Karen regularly attends and enjoys events at Grace, such as those offered by the Women's Ministry.

Krautbrook

Karen's Recipes

*2 lb hamburger meat
1 large head of cabbage,
shredded
2 large onions, chopped
1 Tbsp salt
1 Tbsp ground black pepper
1 recipe for 2 loaves basic white
bread, or 2 loaves frozen bread
dough*



Place bread dough in warm spot (perhaps top of lit oven) to rise. Brown hamburger in a large pot, add onions and cook for 10 minutes, add cabbage and cook until wilted, add salt and pepper. Continue cooking until cabbage and onions are done. Drain in a colander and let cool.

Preheat oven to 350° F.

Roll out bread dough 1/3 inch thick, cut 16 squares (4 or 5 inches each).

Place 1 heaping spoonful (about 1/3 cup) of meat filling in center of dough square.

Bring opposite corners together and seal. The buns should be oblong in shape. Place filled buns on a parchment lined baking sheet.

Bake at 375 degrees in center of oven until dark golden brown on top, 20-25 minutes.

Check the bottom crust for doneness, if not done, cover pockets loosely with foil and bake an additional 5-10 minutes.

Remove from baking sheet to a rack, brush with melted butter.

Jello Salad

*1 small carton cottage cheese
1 pkg pink Jello – no water
1 small carton cool whip
1 can crushed pineapple - drained*

*Mix jello and cottage cheese.
Add rest of ingredients.
Mix well. Cool*



January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 OFFICE CLOSED Happy New Year!	2	3
4 Worship 8:00 & 10:30am	5 7pm Twelfth Night Celebration	6 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	7	8 2:30pm Parkinson's Group 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	9 4 pm Youth Orchestra	10
11 Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 9:15am Budget forum 6 pm Youth Group	12 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	13 12pm Naomi's Friends 1:30pm OWLS 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	14 9am Music Together	15 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	16 4 pm Youth Orchestra	17 10am Music Togeth- er 8am IMTT Renewal
18 Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 9:15am Budget forum 6 pm Youth Group	19 OFFICE CLOSED FOR MLK DAY 6:30 pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	20 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	21 9 am Peace Bible Study 9am Music Together	22 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	23 4 pm Youth Orchestra	24 10am Music Together
25 Worship 10:00am 9:15 am Christian Education Hour 11:30 am Annual Church Council Meeting	26 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm Flutes 7 pm Boy Scouts	27 12 pm Naomi's Friend's 1:30 pm OWLS 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	28 9am Music Together	29 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 5:15 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir	30 4 pm Youth Orchestra	31 10:30 am -1 pm Ladies mini retreat

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 Equip Share
Grace
 Lutheran Church

502 N. Norma
 Ridgecrest, CA 93555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

For God so loved the world that
 he gave his only Son, so that eve-
 ryone who believes in him may
 not perish but may have eternal
 life.
 John 3:16 (NRSV)



www.gracelutheran.org
[www.facebook.com/](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

