

THE GOOD NEWS OF GRACE

December 2025/January 2026

A Newsletter for Members and Friends of Grace Lutheran Church 1408 Washington Street Wenatchee, WA 98801-2555 Volume 9 Issue 10



"The religious experience is dynamic, effervescent, yeasty." (Howard Thurman)

Dear People of Grace;

Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany are seasons for journeys of the heart. Advent (the first stop along the way) is for longing. Christmas (stop two) is for belonging. Epiphany (the next but not last stop) is for "being", for seeing with the light of Christ's love for the world. Advent is for falling stars. Christmas is for falling to our knees in worship. Epiphany is for falling in love with the Divine.

I watched a video online recently where Howard Thurman was interviewed about the theme of "religious experience." He said the heart and the mind have very distinct roles. The heart has the experience of the holy, ("dynamic, effervescent, yeasty"), but the mind can't handle the experience. Seeking understanding, the mind works hard to put the experience into a container, into a certain shape through which instruction can happen. Doctrines and various teachings come from the work of the mind, but the experiential is still happening to the point where doctrines quickly become "out of date." When doctrines - strict ways of thinking – dominate, then "experience can be used as a form of propaganda... something with a handle" to be wielded against others.

It is important to remember the value of the *experience*. In the arrival of Christ, we recognize that we have received something for which our heart has been longing, even if our hearts have not defined "it" so well. The *experience* of longing, of belonging, of worship, of being children of light, can make all familiar things new, and invite us to unfamiliar and new experiences.

Peace of the Seasons to you,

Pastor James Aalgaard

P.S. I want to thank you all for a touching celebration of my 25 years of ministry. Greeting cards, amazing gifts and your presence made the day very special. I'm so glad we chose All Saints' Sunday for this celebration, because you all have the same sainthood as I: it looks different according to your life, but it is the same calling to be part of the Body of Christ.



THE MISSION OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

To proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ through word and sacraments so that a community of believers is created, trained, nurtured, and sent into mission.

Midweek Advent Services

Advent is a time for pausing together to take a breath and contemplate the coming birth of Christ. We will be gathering for a time of shared silence, song, word and prayer along with "hands-on" expressions of creativity. Our Wednesday Advent services will be using themes of darkness and light, acknowledging we discover blessings in each.

- December 3, 5:45 p.m.
- December 10, 5:45 p.m.
- December 17, 5:45 p.m.

Christmas Eve Worship Wednesday, December 24 5:00 and 8:00 p.m.

Join us Christmas Eve for a time of reflection and celebration of the birth of Christ. Our 5:00 p.m. service will be a service of lessons and carols. We will sing familiar carols, closing the service with the lighting of individual candles and singing "Silent Night, Holy Night," with a final celebratory "Joy to the World." **Prelude will begin at 4:45**, including musical offerings by our young members.

Our 8:00 p.m. service will include readings, vocal choirs, brass ensemble, bell choir, other instrumentalists, preaching and candlelighting, complete with "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World." **The prelude begins at 7:30**. Holy Communion will be celebrated at both Christmas Eve Services.





Christmas Worship Thursday, December 25, at 9:30 a.m.

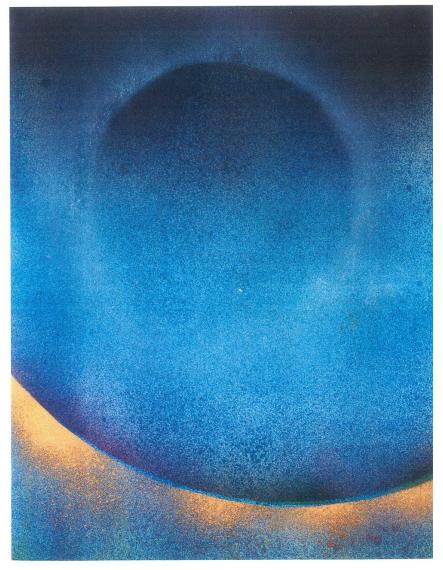
Join us Christmas Day at 9:30 a.m. for an informal time of food, fellowship, and worship. We will gather in the sanctuary, and invite you to bring a food item to share...sweet or savory, your choice!



For so many, the holidays are a time of celebration. There's glitz and glitter, lights, shopping, Christmas carols, and baked goods. There are big meals, family gatherings, and gifts. But for some, those things are overwhelming; for others, they are simply unappealing. The Blue Night Service is designed to create space for our grief, lament, and sadness during the holidays. Join us for a service of compassion and care followed by a simple soup supper.

Advent Lessons and Carols from Around the World

Sunday, December 7, 2025 7:00 p.m.



Artwork by Marshall Thomas © 2012 7 Arts Foundation, courtesy of Thos. Illustration Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Hear hope-filled words from scripture with music of many countries, led by vocal & handbell choirs, a brass ensemble, and instrumentalists.

The event is free. Donations for our area's underserved music and arts students are welcomed.

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Grace Lutheran Church, 1408 Washington Street, Wenatchee 509-663-2189 glcwen.org

Joy to the World!

Christmas Caroling Sunday, December 14 2:00 p.m.

Members and friends of all ages are welcome to join together for an afternoon of Christmas caroling. We will visit members currently isolated in their own homes and retirement facilities. Meet in Grace's parking lot to carpool at 2:00 pm on Sunday, December 14. We will meet up at Pinnacle Beerworks for refreshments (Dutch treat) between 3:30 and 4:00. It's a great way to share the hope and joy of the season. Bring a friend!

Children Leading Worship at Grace

Children are invited to make musical offerings in worship this fall term – with instruments and/or voices. We will meet in the Rehearsal Room (using the entrance near the playground) the Sunday prior to each leadership opportunity.

Here is the schedule:

- **December 7** (7:00pm): Sing a song for Advent Lessons and Carols rehearse Dec. 7, 9:15-9:30 warm-up 6:45
- **December 21** (10:30): Sing another verse of Pr. James' song, and ring bells for a hymn rehearse Dec. 14, 9:45-10:05
- **December 24** (5:00pm): Sing a song and play instruments warm-up 4:30-4:40

Prior to each Sunday morning offering, we will meet in the Rehearsal Room at 10:15.

While it is not necessary to sign up in advance, it will be helpful to have an idea of who is available and willing to participate on any given day. If possible, please let Deacon Ruth know which of the above dates work for your family.



A Cure for January 'Blahs'

When the holidays draw to a close, you may find yourself in a melancholy mood. Cast away those blues and join one of our many musical ensembles at Grace.

January is a great time to become a choir member – the music is new to everyone, and we are eager to begin a fresh season. Additional ensemble/choir members are always welcomed. For details, contact <u>Deacon Ruth Anderson</u> at the church office.

SOCIAL CONCERNS TEAM

Funding Applications

Applications for Funding from the Social Concerns Team are available in the Office. If you are aware of an organization that deals with Food Insecurities, Homelessness, and Education, we encourage you to apply to be one of beneficiaries for 2026. The area of focus for 2026 will be Food Insecurities, Homelessness, and Education. Applications will be available on the church website, from the church office, or you can email Kay Fisher. Below is the timeline the Social Concerns Team adopted:

- December 14th applications start going out
- January 18th applications due
- March 15th notify applicants

Gift Cards for WHS Students Experiencing Homelessness

The Social Concerns Team is collecting gift cards for the Students of Wenatchee High School experiencing homelessness. You can help by doing one of the following:



- Select and take a tag (or tags) from the Christmas tree in the temporary narthex. Each tag lists a place of business and the dollar amount of the gift card to be purchased. Bring back your purchased gift card(s) and gift card receipt(s) to the church. Place the gift cards along with the gift receipt in the box labeled "WHS Homeless Gift Cards".
- Write a check to Grace Lutheran Church for the amount you would like to donate. In the memo line be sure to write WHS Homeless Students Gift Cards.

Our goal is to provide approximately 45 students with a Christmas package containing a WHS T-shirt and a variety of useful gift cards so they may have a very Merry Christmas. Thank you for spreading the joy! Please contact <u>Kay Fisher</u> if you have any questions.

New Social Concerns Team Members Needed

If you are interested in doing community outreach, the Social Concerns Team might be the place for you. Some of our outreach activities include:1,000 Coats 4 Kidz, Families in Need, Packing Friendship, Pantry, and High School Students Experiencing Homelessness.

If you are interested in serving on the committee, contact Kay Fisher or Mike Sweeney.



Midweek programming for our congregation should be a safe experience for all participants. At times, we must consider road conditions. When Wenatchee schools cancel activities due to inclement weather, Grace Lutheran Church will respond in kind and cancel or postpone all activities. We will communicate these decisions to the congregation and the public to the best of our ability.



On November 2, Bishop Manlove led us in affirming Pastor. James' ordained ministry of 25 years.



Pastor James Aalgaard's Ordination - July, 2000.



Workers install the wood ceiling in the library.



Cedar planks cover the new bridge to the patio.



Railings go up.



The kitchen cabinet installation begins.



Cupboards are installed in the Fellowship Hall.



The basement floor's temporary wall is removed to reveal new fire doors.







Fall Leaf Roundup













Tom Gausman digging the hole for a cistern near the Elliott Street entrance. This should improve water flow from the downspout and help alleviate ice on the sidewalk in the winter.

About "The First Noel"

The first Noel, the angel did say,
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel.



They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far, and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far; to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest, and there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three full reverently upon their knee, and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord; that hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with his blood mankind hath bought.

'Noel' is a French word that may come from the Latin *natalis*, meaning 'birth,' or from the Latin *novella*, meaning 'new.' In one sense, 'noel' refers to the whole Christmas season; in another, it refers to the good news that Jesus Christ has come. The first noel, this song says, was sung by an angel to poor shepherds. The chorus rings out like a corner paperboy – "News! News! News! Hear all about it! King of Israel born today!"

Early folk carols such as this one often had a memorable chorus and many stanzas, each presenting some new aspect of the story. An individual or group could sing a stanza, perhaps improvised on the spot, and the whole crowd would join in the refrain. "The First Noel" was first published in its present form by William Sandys in 1833.

It is inspiring to think of "us all" in the final stanza as crossing the boundaries of time. We modern believers join with medieval Christians to praise our Lord, who bought us all with His blood.

From: The One Year Book of Hymns compiled and edited by Robert K. Brown and Mark R. Norton (c) 1995. Devotions written by William J. Petersen and Randy Petersen. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.



Technicians from Paul Fritts & Company Organ Builders made much-needed repairs on the pedal division of our pipe organ.

W Celebrate Grace and Give Hope: Final 2025 Funding Drive! **W**

As we near the close of 2025, Grace Lutheran Church invites you to join in a joyful act of generosity and purpose. Our partner ministry, **Building Better Tomorrows Music & the Arts Foundation**, is launching its **final funding drive of the year** — dedicated to nurturing the creative gifts of **under-served and under-privileged students - right here in the Wenatchee Valley**.

Your **gifts and in-kind contributions** help provide instruments, lessons, performance opportunities, and artistic mentorship — opening doors where hope and imagination can flourish.

Let's celebrate the grace we've been given by Barbara Tilly's generous family and others - helping build better tomorrows for the next generation.

Together, our compassion makes music that never ends.

How to give:

- Drop a donation marked "Build Better Tomorrows" in the Sunday offering.
- Visit bbt.foundation to make a donation online.
- Bring in-kind contributions (music supplies, art materials, or instruments) to the church office by **December 31.**

Thank you for helping share God's abundance and love through music and the arts.

Grace builds. Hope sings. Together, we create tomorrow. Blessings, cheers!

Generations in Grace

All generations of Grace are invited to a time of food, learning through song, scripture and activity on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Come build relationships across the generations together! Our Generations in Grace gatherings are scheduled for the following Sundays at 9:30 a.m.: December 7 and 21, January 4 and 18. We'll meet in the rehearsal room (use the entrance near the playground). Mark your calendars!

DECEMBER & JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Fern Keith	12/2	Joyce Fisher	12/14	Sonya Westerman	12/25
Suellen Harris	12/3	Sylvia Hwang	12/16	Marsha Sjoberg	12/26
Susan Copner	12/5	Dorothy Packard	12/16	Jan Lee	12/27
Shirley Leslie	12/5	Jim Fisher	12/19	Gavin Godfrey	12/28
TJ McMahon	12/7	Devin Olson	12/19	Pat Strand	12/28
Chris Prince	12/7	Hollie Olson	12/19	Brianne Vertrees	12/29
Carole Richardson	12/10	Steven Thompson	12/21	Austin Florea	12/30
Judy Conner	12/11	Tristan Cunderla	12/22	Sonja Boersma	12/31
Gloria Foster	12/13	Paula Salter	12/22	Jacob Didesch	12/31
Mark Woolsey	12/13	Noah Fenhaus	12/25	Phillip Dormaier	12/31
Kelly Thompson	1/1	Markus Bentsen	1/13	Alan Smith	1/27
Jerry Lawson	1/3	Dave Richardson	1/15	Carol Christopherson	1/29
Kara Melton	1/5	Zoe Jaspers	1/17	Alice Evenhus	1/29
Everly Vertrees	1/6	Sonia Ramsey	1/18	Raider Liesch	1/29
Natalee Aalgaard Baunach	1/9	Joshua Gale	1/19	Cortez Martinez	1/29
Courtney Rookard	1/9	Kristen Guthrie	1/19	Cruz Martinez	1/29
Del Schauer	1/10	Lisa Mattix	1/22	Erik Olson	1/29
John Ballinger	1/11	Nancy O'Donnell	1/22	Katrina Olson	1/29
Lisa Heminger	1/11	Greta Bentsen	1/23	Matt Olson	1/29
Marlena La Paz	1/11	Jim Mayer	1/23	Erling Rivedal	1/29
Karlene Mayer	1/11	Paul Woolsey	1/24	Joan Heminger	1/31
Dianne Gillin	1/12	Morgan Kardos	1/27		



December Worship Assistants

	Acolyte	Assisting Minister	Lector	Altar Guild	Tech	Communion Assistant
12/7			Dee Ann Gregg	JuLee Fiebelkorn	Erik Olson	Karen Zanol
12/14			Joyce Owens		Phil Gregg	
12/21		Kate Gregg			Chad DuLac	
12/24 5pm					Marlena La Paz	
12/24 8pm			Dee Ann Gregg		Asher Campbell	
12/28				Denise Miller		

Seeking Worship Helpers

Volunteer helpers make our worship run smoothly. We would love to expand our volunteer pool. <u>Here is a link to a "google sheet"</u> where you can put your name on an open slot. If you are having a hard time navigating the google sheet, please call (509-663-2189) or email our <u>church office</u> or <u>Pastor Aalgaard</u> and we can help.

Please note! The google sheet is a single document that can be changed (and added to) by anyone who has the link. You are very welcome to add your name to a slot that's empty, but please do not remove others' names or otherwise change the form.

LECTIONARY READINGS

Sunday, December 7 Second Sunday of Advent

> Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12

Sunday, December 14 Third Sunday of Advent

> Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146:5-10 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11

Sunday, December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25 Sunday, December 28 First Sunday of Christmas

> Isaiah 63:7-9 Psalm 148 Hebrews 2:10-18 Matthew 2:13-23

ANNA & MIRIAM CIRCLES

Anna Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 16, at 10:00 a.m. at Grace (Rehearsal Room). If you have questions, feel free to contact Linda Sinnett or Faye DeJong.

Miriam Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 16, at 6:15 p.m. for an appetizer potluck at Kathy Jo Evans' home. Please let Kathy Jo know if you plan to attend. If you need contact information, please reach out to the church office.

PRAYERS OF GRACE

- ◆ The family of Adnan AbouAmmo (father of Omar AbouAmmo, our first Judy Olson Organ Scholar) prayers for peace and comfort as they mourn his death.
- Pastor Gary Krumdieck (Faith Lutheran, East Wenatchee) receiving hospice care.
- Gloria Foster for continued healing.
- Sandy Morgan (Joyce Owens' Sister) she is continuing to lose eye sight and can't read any more; prayers that a new prescription will help delay loss of eyesight.
- Cheri Knudson for healing.
- Dave and Dan Martinson (Ann Martinson-Bartlett's brothers) prayers for continued healing.
- Dan Hutchison prayers that he will be able to receive help for a medical concern. Also, emotional support for Joe Trowbridge as he navigates this time for Dan.
- David Thomas (Marshall Thomas' brother) prayers for healing as he faces serious health issues.
- Elizabeth Revelise (Chris Prince's wife) for healing, strength and the rebuilding of immunity as she finishes chemotherapy.
- Jim Wurl as he builds strength to walk.
- Paul Arndt pulmonary fibrosis which is untreatable.
- Erling Rivedal receiving hospice care.

To submit a prayer, please call (509-663-2189) or email our <u>church office</u> or <u>Pastor Aalgaard</u>. Please share with us details that are pertinent to the request. If you are asking us to pray for a person other than yourself, please seek that person's permission. Prayer requests are published for four weeks. You are welcome to resubmit your request if you would like it to remain on the list longer. Updates are welcome, also. We will do our best to help your request have a balance of privacy protection and sharing information. The ministry staff at Grace reserves the right to edit requests.

COUNCIL CORNER

November 18, 2025

- Chelan Douglas Community Action Council and Grace have received a \$35,000 Packing Friendship grant to purchase food for all participating organizations.
- Council began initial discussions about the 2026 Operating budget.
- Bishop Manlove visited Council and expressed gratitude to the Congregation for mission support.
- Grace's next Semi-Annual meeting is planned for January 25th 2026.

TREASURER TALK: 10/31/25 Results

Offerings for the first ten months totaled \$327,847. This is (\$47,153) under budget. Offerings for the first 10 months compared to last year are down by (\$39,284). Interest income for the first 10 months totaled \$56,244.61 This is over budget by \$31,244. Expenses were \$420,324 which is (\$42,291) under budget. Net Income is (\$34,362) compared to the projected deficit of (\$62,615).

	Jan-Oct 2024	Jan-Oct 2025	2025 Budget	Variance
Total Offerings, & Misc	\$367,131	\$327,847	\$375,000	(\$47,153)
Total Interest	\$60,527	<u>\$56,244</u>	\$25,000	<u>\$31,244</u>
Total Income	\$427,658	\$384,091	\$400,000	(\$15,909)
Operating Expenses	(\$426,216)	(\$420,324)	(\$462,615)	\$42,291
Net Income (Deficit)	\$2,293	(\$34,632)	(\$62,615)	\$27,983

Cash on hand is \$which includes Treasurer Reserve of \$40,000.

	10/31/24	9/30/24	10/31/25
Cash Surplus Position	\$124,561	\$112,192	\$91,169
Treasurer Reserve	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Deficit Reserve			
Total	\$164,561	\$152,192	\$131,169

Dennis Burgett

2025 TEAM & COMMITTEE LEADERS

Arts: Marshall Thomas
Building & Grounds: Dave Coe, Tom Gausman

Endowment: Karen Zanol

Faith Formation: Open Fellowship: Open

Graceful Garden: Linda Sinnett
Pastoral Support: Julie Banken

Staff Support: Open

Social Concerns: Mike Sweeney,

Bob Bartlett

Stream Team: Marlena La Paz **Worship:** Kathy Gavin

Youth & Community: Open

Memorial Garden: Ernie Bentsen

2025 CHURCH COUNCIL

President:
Vice President:
Dave Coe
Dennis Burgett
Secretary:
Chad DuLac
Members-at-Large:
Tory Schmidt
John McQuaig

Paula Salter
Tami Woolsey

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	7:00 p.m. Appleaires	2	3 11:00 a.m. Lectionary Study 5:45 p.m. Advent Service 6:30 p.m. Bells of Grace 7:30 p.m. Voices of Grace	7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer 7:00 p.m. Recital	5 2:00 p.m. Bus leaves for PLU	6 1:00—3:00 p.m. Lessons & Carols Dress Rehearsal
9:15 a.m. Growing in Grace 9:30 a.m. Generations in Grace 10:30 a.m. Worship 7:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols	7:00 p.m. Appleaires	3:30 p.m. Building & Grounds Team 4:00 p.m. Drum Circle 5:00 p.m. Social Concerns Team 5:00 p.m. Ukuleles	11:00 a.m. Lectionary Study 5:45 p.m. Advent Service 6:30 p.m. Bells of Grace 7:30 p.m. Voices of Grace	7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer 10:00 a.m. BeFrienders	12	13
9:30 a.m. Confirmation 10:30 a.m. Worship 2:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling	7:00 p.m. Appleaires	16 10:00 a.m. Anna Circle 5:30 p.m. Blue Night Service @ First UMC 6:15 p.m. Miriam Circle	17 11:00 a.m. Lectionary Study 5:45 p.m. Advent Service 6:30 p.m. Bells of Grace 7:30 p.m. Voices of Grace	7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer 6:00 p.m. Church Council 6:30 p.m. Recital	19	20
9:30 a.m. Generations in Grace 10:30 a.m. Worship	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship 5:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	25 Christmas 9:30 a.m. Worship	26 Church Office Closed for Christmas Holiday	27
28 10:30 a.m. Worship	29 Church	30 Office Closed for Grand Holiday	31 Christmas			

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				Happy New Year! Offices Closed	2	3
9:30 a.m. Generations in Grace 10:30 a.m. Worship	7:00 p.m. Appleaires	7:00 p.m. Arts Team	7 11:00 a.m. Lectionary Study 6:15 p.m. Bells of Grace 7:30 p.m. Voices of Grace	7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer 10:00 a.m. BeFrienders	9	10
9:30 a.m. Confirmation 10:30 a.m. Worship	7:00 p.m. Appleaires	3:30 p.m. Building & Grounds Team 4:00 p.m. Drum Circle 5:00 p.m. Social Concerns Team 5:00 p.m. Ukuleles	11:00 a.m. Lectionary Study 6:15 p.m. Bells of Grace 7:30 p.m. Voices of Grace	7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer	6:00 p.m. Game Night	17
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9:30 a.m. Confirmation 10:30 a.m. Worship Following Worship Congregational Meeting	7:00 p.m. Appleaires	5:00 p.m. Ukuleles 7:00 p.m. Recital	28 11:00 a.m. Lectionary Study 6:15 p.m. Bells of Grace 7:30 p.m. Voices of Grace	7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer	30 5:00 p.m. Recital 7:00 p.m. Recital	31

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church In America 1408 Washington Street Wenatchee, WA 98801-2555 (509) 663-2189

Return Service Requested

GRACE	LUTHER	AN CHUR	CH STAFF

Pastor James Aalgaard

Pastor

pastor@glcwen.org

Director of Music Ministries

Deacon Ruth Anderson deacon@glcwen.org

Laura Olsen

Pastoral Intern

intern@glcwen.org

Office Administrator

Jen Pearson -Gale office@glcwen.org

Ann Martinson-Bartlett Office Assistant **SUNDAY WORSHIP**

10:30 a.m.

<u>CHURCH OFFICE HOURS</u> Tuesday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

CONTACT

(509) 663-2189 office@glcwen.org

WEBSITE

www.glcwen.org