

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL

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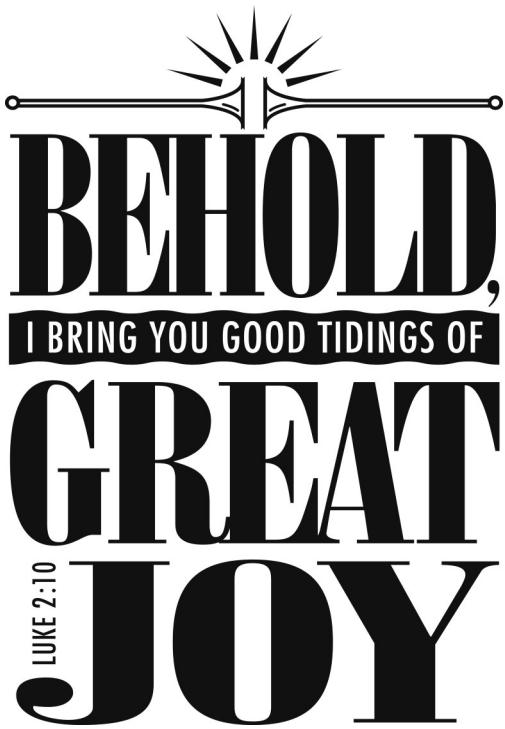
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Blaine, WA

Permit No. 41



DECEMBER 2021

Worship Service

Sunday 10:30 am

Sunday School and Bible Class 9am

Upcoming:

Christmas Potluck—Dec. 11, 3:00pm

Sunday School Program—Dec. 19

Christmas Eve Worship— 8:00pm

Christmas Day Worship—10:00am



Pastor's Message:

What are your verbs?

On Sunday November 7th we celebrated Stewardship Sunday. Steve gave a very thoughtful message about the opportunities we have to serve God and connect with the community around us. Kelley shared a page full of verbs and asked people to highlight your verbs and circle your favorites. If you didn't get a chance to participate in the verb activity there are pages on the table in the Narthex.

Are you ready for the top 20 or so verbs? These are the verbs that the most people highlighted: sewing, walking, working, progressive dining, reading, cooking, gardening, planting, baking, BBQing, celebrating, making, encouraging, loving, talking, listening, helping, praying, learning, weeding, cleaning, sharing, caring, shopping, and organizing. These verbs were highlighted by five to 12 people. There were many other wonderful verbs but they were only marked by a few people or less.

What information is valuable from this exercise? First, as you already knew, you are uniquely and wonderfully made by your creator. Every one of you has unique gifts, talents and interests. No one marked all the same words. Second, there are shared interests where a group of five to ten people or more could gather together around one or more of the activities of shared interest listed above. A group could gather together and swap recipes or take turns cooking for the group or leading a cooking class. In addition to that with a group of people within Grace gathering together like that you can also invite others from outside the congregation to join you as a way of connecting to others in our community.

At the same meeting we asked people to commit to inviting people to church. No one made a commitment to invite people to worship. If we are not doing that as a group there is almost no way to grow as a

church. If you are not willing to invite others to church are you willing to invite people to your group where you are sharing or caring or listening or helping? Once they are connected to your activity group is it then easier to invite them to worship where we are singing, celebrating, learning, praying and being filled by God's love so that we are able to do all of our favorite verbs and make a difference in the lives of others at the same time.

Does anyone enjoy inviting? You could be a blessing to all the groups and to our congregation as a whole if you put this rare gift to use. We are a community with a wide variety of talents and interests. If we can find ways of continuing to put these gifts in motion and also find new ways to use these blessed abilities to connect to others throughout our community that can go a long way to revitalizing our impact in our county and in our world.

Even if you are the only person within our congregation that has a particular interest you can still make a significant difference. Connect with one other person in the community with that interest and begin the building of a new relationship or the enhancing of an existing relationship from there. Impacting the life of one other person is a significant difference.

Let's put our heads together and collaborate as we think of additional ways to be serving and connecting the community where we are planted.

The peace of Christ be with you as you bake, BBQ and be present in the lives of others. Pastor

Grace Budget Draft Summary	2021 Actual	2021 Budget
	Jan—Oct	
Income + Covid Inc.	190,049	201,053
Expenses	181,184	201,053
Covid Tax Credit	-28,227	
Excess Revenue / (Shortfall)	37,092	0

Love Came Down

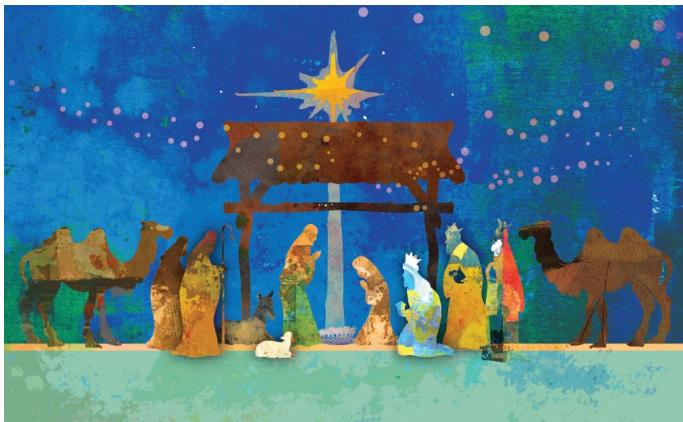
His coming was just the beginning! What a beginning it was! It may be because of all of the Christmas Eve Services & Christmas Programs I've attended & been a part of throughout my life, but my picture of that night is amazing!

Here are these two people, Mary & Joseph, who have made this big long journey. She with an unorthodox pregnancy & he with her still, at the angel's bidding. They arrive into town with no place to stay. They end up with the animals. Mary gives birth, seemingly with simply Joseph to help her. There is a spectacular star in the night's sky! The angels sing! The shepherds visit!

It is beautiful, simply beautiful! I am reminded of that passage from Isaiah (Isaiah 53:2) that states, He had nothing to attract us to Him! It seems as though there is no real reason to revere this event. A kid was born in the place where animals sleep. Yet, it is quite the event!

Love came down! He came that we may be with Him forever! What a tremendous gift we were given that night! What a gentle, loving Savior we have that gave up everything that we may have everything! May your celebration of this beginning be one of peace, joy & love that you share with everyone you meet!

Mrs. Z



Time to Double Down

After you have made a decision that is pleasing to God, the Devil may try to make you have second thoughts. Intensify your prayer time, meditation and good deeds. For if Satan's temptations merely cause you to increase your efforts to grow in holiness, he'll have an incentive to leave you alone.

—St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)

"We are Grace" has certainly experienced this kind of intrusion. When planning outreach events we have been met with a steady stream of obstacles. However, faith is stronger than fear. Even during the pandemic "We are Grace" and the Cares Committee have continued to reach out and draw people near.

Let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we Do Not Give Up!

Galatians 6:9

LOVE
*YOUR neighbor
AS YOURSELF.*
Mark 12:31

There are many of you ... who think to yourselves: "If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help the Baby! I would have washed his linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger!"

Yes, you would! You say that because you know how great Christ is, but if you had been there at that time, you would have done no better than the people of Bethlehem. ... Why don't you do it now? You have Christ in your neighbor. You ought to serve him, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Christ himself.

—Martin Luther



Thank you to everyone who donated and prayed for the shoe boxes. With everyone's help the girls packed and sent 15 boxes filled with happiness, joy and the love of Jesus. The boxes have toys, school supplies, hygiene items, and a handwritten note from a Girl Scout filled with hope and friendship.

We do not yet know where the boxes will end up but we do know that with your love, prayers and God's grace they will reach children all over the world.

Thank you for your prayers, help and support.



We had a fantastic month talking about all the things we are thankful for. I hope you all have had the chance to see our thankful turkey that has something we are thankful for on each feather. These kids are thankful for so many amazing things and it was great to take the month to ponder all the great gifts we have been given.

Now we are ready to celebrate Christmas! We will be spending the couple weeks we have before Christmas break getting ready for our Christmas program and learning why we celebrate Christmas. It is such a wonderful time of the year and we hope our students can take to heart the significance of Jesus being born.

The preschool is selling Christmas cards and each one is made by one of our students or teachers. It is a set of 24 for \$12. Contact the church office to get your Christmas cards!



The Greatest Gift

When we give each other Christmas presents in [God's] name, let us remember that he has given us the sun and the moon and the stars, the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans — and all that lives and moves upon them. He has given us all green things and everything that blossoms and bears fruit and all that we quarrel about and all that we have misused. And to save us from our own foolishness, from all our sins, he came down to earth and gave us himself.



Advent Devotions: Child of Promise

The birth of the Savior is celebrated again this year in *Child of Promise*, a joyful look at the miracle of Jesus' birth. From the beginning, foretold in Genesis and proclaimed throughout the Old Testament, God announced the coming Messiah to a wayward world. In Jesus Christ, that promise was fulfilled.

Each year Christians reflect on the hope God offers the world at Christmas. Born unto us—God's Son, our Savior—Jesus is the fulfillment of the Father's promise to send a Redeemer. Announced beforehand by the prophets, in the Christ Child we have the forgiveness of our sins and the hope of life eternal. This God has given to us in His *Child of Promise*.

Devotion Booklets are available on the table in the back of the church.

A Season of Waiting

Many of us wait for milestones and miracles: physical healing, the return of a prodigal child, an end to financial struggles. Paul offers us hope as we wait: "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had" (Romans 15:5, NIV).

When you're in a season of waiting — including Advent! — consider what you're thankful for and what you crave. Tell God how you're feeling and ask for endurance while you wait.

Savoring Simplicity

Clare of Assisi, who lived in the 1200s, founded the Poor Clares, a community of simplicity and service. "O holy poverty," she wrote, "to those who possess and desire you, God promises the kingdom of heaven and offers ... blessed life!"

These ancient words still ring true. We can't serve both God and money, says Jesus, adding that it's a matter of the heart. But before selling your house, consider small steps for embracing simplicity and blessing:

Trade an afternoon of shopping for coffee with a friend who's struggling.

For guests, prepare a pot of chili rather than a multicourse meal.

Donate good-quality items you're not using.

Living simply is challenging, especially at the holidays, but the rewards are simply amazing. "The challenge of simplicity is a magnet to the human spirit," writes Dale Evans Rogers. "Much of the beauty of Christmas lies in its challenge to look further, deeper, until we find its secret in the heart of God."



DECEMBER 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Cares Committee 1pm	3	4 MEN'S Bible Study 8 am
5 9:00 Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30 Worship w. Communion	6	7	8	9	10	11 Christmas Potluck 3pm
12 9:00 Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30 Worship	13 Ladies' Bible Study	14 Preschool Prep 2pm Preschool Program	15 <i>NewsLetter DEADLINE</i>	16	17	18 MEN'S Bible Study 8 am
19	20 9:00 Bible Study & S. School Sunday School Program 10:30 Worship/Communion H.S. Youth Event 6-8pm	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship 8:00pm Office Closed	25 Christmas Worship 10:00am
26 10:30 Worship	27 Office Closed	28 Pastor on Vacation	29	30	31	

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Marlissa Wahl 19 Victor Gervol
 5 Bryan Wahl 22 Zane Rector
 Eddie Fontes Lynne Shelton
 10 Jean Cartwright Bette Mitchell
 11 Curtis Whitney 28 Heather Haslip
 12 Russell Carleton Katlyn Carelton
 Gladys Faulkner Jason Higby
 Susan Holmes Eliee Faulkner
 13 Seth Zuch Lary Breitbarth
 14 Isaiah Zuch Randy Sanders
 30 Meredith Mateer
 (Markusen)

ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Michael & Rochelle Halldorson
 16 Glen & Gloria Hagen
 Eric & Becky Baker
 27 Steven & Laura Nelson





Saturday, Dec. 11@ 3pm

Sign-up sheet in the
Fellowship Hall.

WHO:

Cares Committee Members
and All Willing Volunteers



WHAT:

December is an especially nice time to reach out to people. A friendly greeting in the mail can certainly bring a bit of joy to someone who may be alone or unwell. If you have an hour or so, please consider joining members of the Cares Committee to prepare birthday, get well and thinking of you cards.

Adult Bible Study—Sundays @ 9:00am

Join us for a 5 week series: Dream Big by Bob Goff. 11/21—12/19

WHEN:

Thursday, December 2nd from 1:00 to 3:00pm

WHERE:

Grace Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall

Servants	December 24	December 25
ACOLYTES	Seth	Isaiah
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Lenore	Dick

Thank you
Lenore Onyon
Cares Committee Chair

Servants	December 5	December 12	December 19	December 26
ACOLYTES	Caleb	Ele	Emily	Caleb
ALTAR COMMITTEE	All	All	All	All
COFFEE HOUR	Lenore & Carol D.	Joan G. / Sandie		
SCRIPTURE READERS	April	Steve G.	Dan	Kristi G.
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Sandie		Steve	
PIANIST	Cheryl Neuberger	Janet Mehus	Cheryl Neuberger	Cheryl Neuberger
ORGANIST	Brent Johnson	Brent Johnson	Brent Johnson	Brent Johnson
USHERS	Jim & Ron	Dan	Jon & Jay	Dick

PUZZLE



F M K N L A D E G S C E J A T S
H → → → U
H M ↓ E L
V W B
S A R
R V H
B O L Y Q O X A V H R T
O X A V H R T
Y Q O X A V H R T
Q O X A V H R T
X A V H R T
A V H R T
H R T
T

An angel told Joseph what to name Mary's baby. Solve the puzzle to discover the name's meaning.

Directions: Begin at the circled H below and follow the arrows. Circle every other letter, and then place them in order to complete Matthew 1:21.

"S_e w_ll _ _ve b_ir_ _
to _ s_n, and _ _u a_e to
gi_e _i_ the _ _me J_ _us,
b_c_u_ _ he _ill s_ _e his
_ _op_e f_o_ t_ _ir s_n_."

MATTHEW 1:21, NIV

START HERE

Answer: "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21, NIV



Bible Quiz



In Matthew's genealogy, which woman is *not* mentioned as Jesus' ancestor?

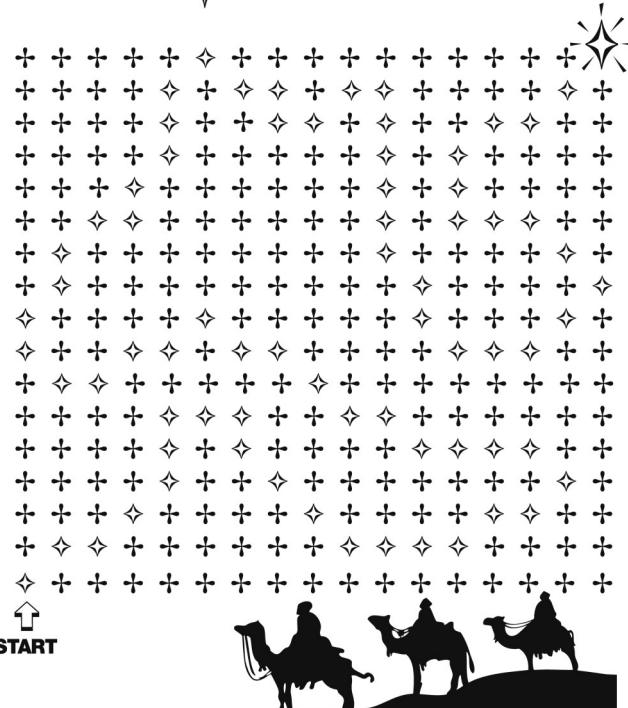
- A. Tamar
- B. Rahab
- C. Mary
- D. Ruth
- E. Sarah
- F. Bathsheba



Answer: E (See Matthew 1:1-17.)

Puzzle!

Starting in the lower-left corner, help the wise men follow the ✶ path that leads to baby Jesus.



Now unscramble these words to discover what gifts the wise men brought Jesus.

L D O G N C A K N R I E N F S E R Y H M R

Answer: gold, frankincense, myrrh