

# Grace Notes

## December



## 2022

Perhaps you've had the experience of getting an earworm—musical imagery repetition, in technical terms—a piece of music that plays on a continuous loop in your head for a period of time, sometimes days or weeks. One of the country songs I get stuck in my head from time-to-time is “Time Marches on” by Tracy Lawrence. The tick-tock feel of the main part of the song stands in contrast to the bridge between stanzas 2 and 3, which gives the impression of accelerated change, accenting the lines, “The only thing that stays the same is / Everything changes, everything changes.”

Time marches on! Our day-to-day, humdrum existence gives the illusion that time is moving slowly, but we simultaneously wonder at the months, years, and decades that seem to have slipped away imperceptibly, ushering in momentous changes that alter the way we think, feel, and live. In 2010, when I was called to Grace Lutheran in Elgin, I didn't expect that within a few years I would have to update our Wedding Guidelines to specifically exclude “gay marriage.” On Easter 2013, I didn't expect that my father would be dead four days later. Now those events feel like a different lifetime. Where did the time go?

Last month, Pastor Appel bade farewell to your congregation with the words of Psalm 46: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling... Though the nations rage, the kingdoms totter... The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.” He says, “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” And we respond with great joy, “The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”

Though we see change and decay all around us, the LORD speaks and gives us this assurance: “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the Word of the Lord remains forever. And this Word is the good news (Gospel!) that was preached to you” (1 Pet 1:24-25). Though our lifetimes are like the annual cycle of grass and flowers springing up for a short time and then dying, the Word that remains forever is the Gospel of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation that will carry us from this brief, mortal life into an everlasting, immortal Resurrection with God in heaven. Though everything around us seems to be in a state of flux, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb 13:8).

I know that this pastoral vacancy is a time of change and uncertainty for your congregation, but you can rest assured that “The LORD of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress,” and He is working all things together for your good, even when it is not immediately apparent how this could be so. Pastor Appel and his family were a wonderful gift from the Lord to your congregation, but now that He has called them elsewhere, He will choose another man to faithfully administer His unchanging Word and reliable Sacraments here. In the meantime, I will do my best to see that all your spiritual needs are provided—and if there is one thing we can be sure of, it is that “The LORD will provide” (Genesis 22:14).

In Christ,  
**Carl Roth**

*Prayer: Merciful Father, whose guiding hand has brought us through all our days, we humbly pray You to stay with us and shelter us so that we, who are wearied by the changes and chances of this passing world, may rest in Your changeless peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

# December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6pm LWML/LLL Christmas Party	2	3
4 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Class 10am Worship/Communion	5 7pm Elders  <b>Elders Meeting</b>	6	7 5:30pm-Youth Confirmation 6pm-Soup Supper 7pm-Advent Midweek	8	9	10
11 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Class 10am Worship/Communion	12	13	14 5:30pm-Youth Confirmation 6pm-Soup Supper 7pm-Advent Midweek	15	16	17
18 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Class 10am Worship/Communion	19 6pm GLLC Mtg 7pm-Evangelism	20	21	22	23	24 7pm-Christmas Eve Worship 
25 9am-  Christmas Day Worship	26	27	28	29 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE/NOON 	30	31

**Grace Lutheran Church**

308 Byrne Street  
Smithville, TX 78957  
Office Phone: (512) 237-2108  
Fax Line: (512) 237-2832

Email address: [gracelutheransmithville@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheransmithville@gmail.com)  
Web Site: [www.glcs.org](http://www.glcs.org)

Sunday School 8:45 AM  
Midweek Classes 8:45 AM  
Worship Service 10:00 AM

Elders: Brad Zimmerhanzel  
Colby Zimmerhanzel

Organist(s):  
June Parker  
Esther Wolff  
Kim Appel  
Ruth Eaton

Dec. Altar Wendy Rhode  
Guild: Nelda Rhode



As of November 22, 2022

Name	Balance
<b>Prosperity Checking Acct</b>	<b>44,791.01</b>
<b>CEF-General</b>	<b>2,497.31</b>
<b>CEF-Land/Youth</b>	<b>12,567.88</b>
<b>CEF Scholarship</b>	<b>12,722.81</b>
<b>Legacy Deo</b>	<b>12,978.63</b>
<b>Total Dedicated Funds</b>	<b>21,398.59</b>
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	<b>23,392.42</b>

**Grace Lutheran Learning Center**

401 Wilkes Street  
Smithville, TX 78957  
Office Phone: 512-360-2800  
Fax Number: 512-237-5990

Email address: [gracelutheranlearn@att.net](mailto:gracelutheranlearn@att.net)

**We now accept CCMS enrollment**

**Pastoral Care During Vacancy**

Pastor Carl Roth of Grace Lutheran Church in Elgin is our vacancy pastor. If you are in need of pastoral care (hospital visit, etc.) please contact him at 512-229-8899.

**CHURCH OFFICE**

Normal hours are 9 to 2 Tues. – Thurs and 9 to 1 on Friday. If you need any help from the office i.e., copying documents, record information, info to be put in the bulletin and/or newsletter, etc., please feel free to stop by, call, etc. I am here to provide you with whatever you need from the church office. You may also leave a note in the Secretary's box in the Narthex, and I will get back with you as soon as possible. Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions. Lisa Stem



There is a plastic container in the Narthex for collection of **used bulletins & white printed papers** to be recycled at the Smithville Recycling facility. If there are any questions please ask Katie or John Stelling for info



**KFUO Bible Study Resources**

Looking for Bible study opportunities during the week? Make use of the fantastic resources for growth in your Christian faith produced by our very own LCMS radio station, KFUO ([www.kfu.org](http://www.kfu.org)). Their variety of programs will provide something of value to every person who listens.



<b>Dec. 2</b>	Brad & Donna Zimmerhanzel
<b>Dec. 11</b>	Daniel & Shelly Robinson
<b>Dec. 18</b>	June & Dennis Parker
	Rowan & Nora James
<b>Dec. 30</b>	John & Cheryl Moore
<b>Dec. 31</b>	Gene & Melissa Brown
	Vince & Jeanie Kaiser



<b>Dec. 1</b>	Joe Ray (Bubba) Bennight
<b>Dec. 3</b>	Caren Hannusch
	Dorwin (Blackie) Wallace
<b>Dec. 5</b>	Robert Vinklerek
<b>Dec. 6</b>	Annie Mae Rohde
	John Anderson
<b>Dec. 7</b>	Amber Hurst
<b>Dec. 8</b>	Lisa Stem
<b>Dec. 12</b>	Joshua Zimmerhanzel
<b>Dec. 14</b>	Konner Pietsch
<b>Dec. 15</b>	Betty Flora
<b>Dec. 18</b>	Allan Hurst
	Stephanie Schwall
<b>Dec. 19</b>	Sharon Hancock
	Gracie Harmon
<b>Dec. 21</b>	Nicole Claiborne
<b>Dec. 23</b>	Charles Knippa
<b>Dec. 24</b>	Gertrude Davis
<b>Dec. 25</b>	Corey Macks
	Brody Taylor
<b>Dec. 26</b>	Heather McNeil
<b>Dec. 28</b>	Jack Page
	Kyle Pietsch



Braille volunteers meet the 4th Monday of each month @ 8am. We carpool to Immanuel Lutheran Church in Giddings to assemble braille bible study books.



The Born Again Emporium will be open December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. We will be closed for the Christmas holidays. The store will be closed for some remodeling. During the closure no donations will be accepted. Updates will be provided when advisable. Facebook will also have information. Thank you everyone for your support. We need your donations and your support as shoppers. December will be the quarterly allocation. Your support allows us to provide support to the community.

### Gifts for Organ Repair



On June 12, the voters approved organ repairs that will cost approximately \$11,800. Fischer Pipe Organ Tuning and Service will be putting us on their schedule so that these repairs can be made this fall. If you'd like to make a special gift to help with the cost of these repairs, you can make use of the "Organ Fund" envelopes in your offering envelope box. Thanks for

your generosity in providing for music that glorifies God in our worship services at Grace!

### **Wishing these Friends a Happy Birthday! from your "Grace" family**

If your birthday or anniversary does not appear correctly, please contact the church office so we can correct our files. Thank you.

### Advent Midweek Services and Soup Suppers



The season of Advent begins this year on Sunday, November 27. As the first season of the Church Year, Advent prepares our hearts to receive Christ with repentance at His final coming on the Last Day even as we anticipate the joyous celebration of His first coming on Christmas. Each year, we

have midweek services on Wednesday evenings to aid us in this devotional task. Join us on Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, December 7<sup>th</sup>, and December 14<sup>th</sup>. We will have soup supper starting at 6pm and service starting at 7pm.



Dear Member of Grace Lutheran Church,

We are excited to have Sunday School back at 8:45 am every Sunday. Our classes will be in the fellowship hall for all ages. 3yrs old through kindergarten teachers are Kim Appel and Ester Wolff, 1<sup>st</sup> grade through 4<sup>th</sup> grade is Kayla Herschap, 5<sup>th</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be Donna Zimmerhanzel and Gene Brown, III and High School will be Gene Brown. We are always in need of volunteers to help teach or to sub when one of the teachers is out, so please feel free to contact a board member and we will gladly assist you in getting set up to volunteer.

#### DONUTS!!

There is a sign-up sheet on the Board of Education Bulletin Board for anyone who wants to furnish snacks between Sunday School and Church. There is also a donation can in the kitchen by the donuts if you would rather just donate to the cause.

We have decided to not have an organized Christmas Program this year due to not having a permanent Pastor at Grace. We will however be singing Christmas Carols each Sunday in December at the opening of Sunday School. We are asking that anyone attending Sunday School let June or myself know if there is a special Christmas Carol you would like to sing and we will try to put them on the list. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact a Board member.

The Board has chosen our next Sunday School Mission to be the Bastrop County Pregnancy Resource Center. There are envelopes on the Board of Ed Bulletin Board for anyone who would like to contribute to our Mission.

Our Board members for this year are: Charlie Johannessen, Toni Ann Kadlecek, Kathy Kasper, Mary Lou Oliver, Melissa Brown, June Parker, Barb Johannessen and the Sunday School Superintendent is Donna Zimmerhanzel. Please feel free to contact any of us at any time if you have questions.

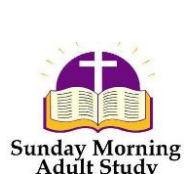
May God Bless all of you.

Respectfully,

Barb Johannessen  
Board of Education

#### Sunday School

Sunday school for all ages has returned to its regular time slot of 8:45 AM. The response from so many members of our congregation has been tremendous. The parish hall has been filled with great joy each Sunday morning as so many children and adults are eager to learn God's Word—and there's always room for more! Please join us each week in the Parish Hall for a short opening with everyone together before we go to our separate classes. You won't regret making time to read, learn, and rejoice in God's Word!



#### Adult Bible Study

Adult Bible study at 8:45 AM continues each week, led by the guest pastor for that week. Join us to spend time together in God's Word.



#### Youth Confirmation

Youth confirmation classes are continuing **each Wednesday evening** this fall in the parish hall from **5:30-6:30 PM**. Please keep our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and their families in your prayers as they grow in the knowledge and grace of God's Holy Word. Pastor Nate Hill will be teaching our youth confirmation class.

#### Youth Group

All middle school and high school students and their parents are invited to join us at Youth Group! We normally meet every first Sunday of the month from 6:30-8:00 PM. Each month, we have time for Bible study, games, and snacks! Please join us!



# LWML

Lutheran Women in Mission

### UPCOMING:

Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>  
6pm-LWML/LLL  
Christmas Party

Dec 11<sup>th</sup>  
Church Christmas  
Tree set up

Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>  
6pm- January  
Business Meeting

No quilting in  
December

We welcome you to join us in “Serving the Lord with Gladness.” Please contact any LWML member or June Parker at 512-581-1168 to learn more or go to [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) or [www.lwmltxdist.org](http://www.lwmltxdist.org) to read about the mission and great history of LWML.

Mission for November is Towers Nursing Home.

LWML will be the Soup Supper Host for December 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Donations to the large Mite Box in the Narthex are joyfully accepted.**

### LWML TEXAS DISTRICT GRANT BULLETIN BYTES:

Let Your Light Shine, Bethany, Austin and LSEM- \$10,000

Almighty God and Father, You sent Your Son in love to call even the little ones to His embrace, for Your Kingdom belongs to people like these. In Your mercy, O God, work through the ministries of Let it Shine Enrichment Academy as they care for preschool children in the autism spectrum of disorders and other special needs. We thank You, for this caring arm of Lutheran Special Education Ministries that provides a loving and welltrained enrichment center for children who are often turned away from early learning facilities. Bless the use of this mission grant to let Your love shine in the lives of these children. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

### National Mission Grant Bulletin Bytes:

#### Bring the Inner-City Children to Camp — \$25,000

*Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) shares both God's grace and the glory of His creation. Many families in metropolitan Denver are unable to fully finance camp tuition or provide transportation to LVR where their children would experience God's Word in daily devotions, singing, and worshipping around a campfire. This grant will span two summers when LVR will partner with Lutheran churches in Denver to arrange sign-up, transportation, and scholarships for 50 children from the inner city, so they could have this mountain-top camp experience. Research shows that the challenges of camp activities are transformational, giving children tools to overcome real-world challenges when they return home.*



The Widow's Mite --- And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.” Mark 12:42-44 ESV



# You Are Invited

To the church Christmas gathering  
Hosted by LLL & LWML

When: Thursday December 1

Where: Grace Lutheran Parish Hall

Time: 6PM

Please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert!

LLL will provide the meat

Love Offering Tree

Come and enjoy the celebration of the Advent  
and Christmas season

Fellowship, laughter, program, singing and food

Program: Blessings from the Manger



# FAITH LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL OF CENTRAL TEXAS

*Faith Lutheran High School of Central Texas seeks to engage young adults in a Christ-centered environment where faith and knowledge grow as one.*

## HOME OF THE FALCONS! "Build Up" - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

### "Faith at Christmas" Program

FLHS students will present a Christmas concert, "Faith at Christmas," on Tuesday, December 13th at 7:00 pm at FLHS. Program will include a collection of choir pieces, handbell pieces, hymns, scripture readings and more. Refreshments will be served following the program. Please join us!!!

\*This event will also be live streamed on Facebook, for those who would prefer to view the sounds of Christmas from home.

### Free Wednesday mornings?

Join us for our weekly Chapel Worship Service every Wednesday, beginning at 10:30 am. During Advent, services will be led by Pastor Dustin Beck.

### Raffle Items

The Spring Raffle is just around the corner. The Board of Directors is currently looking for valuable items or monetary donations to be used in the raffle. Please contact Nikki Kueck if you have something to donate! Thank you!

### Share the Gift of Love

Faith Lutheran High School has a unique role in combining knowledge and God's love in a student's high school experience. We are partnering with families at the intersection of education and faith development. If you would like to support our ministry through a one-time or enduring gift, memorial contribution, or a Thrivent Action Grant, please contact us. Matching funds are currently available!

### Shadow Days

Shadow days are a great opportunity for prospective students to follow us for a day and experience what FLHS is all about. Parents, call us at (979) 242-2889 today to set up a shadow day for your child.

### Scholarship Program

Have you ever had this thought? "Faith Lutheran High School sounds great, but my family can't afford it." We firmly believe that EVERY family desiring a Christ-centered education for their children should have the opportunity to attend FLHS. We have a Tuition Scholarship Program with funds available, and EVERY family who applies (through TADS) will receive some assistance. We'll do everything in our power to make sure that money isn't the reason you don't choose FLHS.

### Amazon Smile

Did you know Faith Lutheran High School is on Amazon Smile? After you select FLHS as the charity of your choice, everytime you purchase something from Amazon Smile, FLHS will receive a donation.

### Gift for FLHS for Christmas?

Would you like to bless FLHS with a Christmas gift? FLHS has created a wish list on Amazon for needed materials for this school year. The easiest way to find it is by clicking on the link on the FLHS Facebook page or website. Thank you for your generous support!

### Thank you!

Everyone at FLHS is blessed by each gift that we receive from our supporters. It's not about the size of the gift, but the cheerful attitude that gives thanks to God (2 Corinthians 9:7). Whether your gift seems big or small, it is greatly appreciated and makes a bigger impact than you know!





# Read Through the Bible in 2022

Grace Lutheran Church, Smithville, TX

“God’s Word is our great heritage and shall be ours forever!” Continue your daily Bible reading during 2022. God’s blessings for you in His Word abound! (Note: On days listed as “OFF,” consider re-reading something from earlier in the week or making up a day that you might have missed.)

## Readings for the Month of December

December 1	Proverbs 29	Psalms 133-136
December 2	OFF	
December 3	Hebrews 13	Daniel 10-12
December 4	II Peter 1	Hosea 1-4
December 5	II Peter 2-3	Hosea 5-10
December 6	Jude	Hosea 11-14
December 7	Revelation 1-2	Joel 1-3
December 8	Proverbs 30:1-10	Psalms 137-139
December 9	OFF	
December 10	Revelation 3	Amos 1-4
December 11	Revelation 4-5	Amos 5-9
December 12	Revelation 6-7	Obadiah
December 13	Revelation 8-9	Micah 1-3
December 14	Revelation 10-11	Micah 4-7
December 15	Proverbs 30:11-23	Psalms 140-143
December 16	OFF	
December 17	Revelation 12	Nahum 1-3
December 18	Revelation 13-14	Habakkuk 1-3
December 19	Revelation 15-16	Zephaniah 1-3
December 20	Revelation 17-18	Haggai 1-2
December 21	Revelation 19	Zechariah 1-8
December 22	Proverbs 30:24-33	Psalms 144-147
December 23	OFF	
December 24	Revelation 20-21	Zechariah 9-14
December 25	Revelation 22	Malachi 1-4
December 26	James 1-2	Jonah 1-4
December 27	James 3	Esther 1-4
December 28	James 4-5	Esther 5-10
December 29	Proverbs 31	Psalms 148-150
December 30	OFF	
December 31	Re-read Galatians	

## **From the Congregation President**

Well, Pastor Appel has been gone for about a month now, and the time has come that we work through the process to call God's choice to be our new Pastor. In accordance with our church constitution, I have appointed a Call Committee, consisting of Lisa Stem, June Parker, Tim Wolff, Charlie Johannessen, Jack Page, Brad Zimmerhanzel and myself. I want to stress that it is not the Call Committee's job to make decisions with respect to calling a new Pastor. Rather, we have the responsibility of gathering information, working with the District to ensure they are aware of our specific needs and make recommendation to the voters of the congregation, who will then make all necessary decisions. Our first meeting on November 15 was very productive. Under the guidance of our Vacancy Pastor, Pastor Carl Roth of Grace Elgin, we explored the call process and discussed the various options with respect to calling a Pastor as stipulated by our own Church Constitution, as well as our District and Synod. We discussed at length the pros and cons associated with calling a Pastor from the field, that is an established Pastor, or calling a seminary graduate. Because of the time deadlines with respect to calling from the seminary, we recognized that we likely would not have enough time to do both simultaneously. However, since we have until March 1<sup>st</sup> to submit the paperwork required to call from the seminary, the committee is asking that members of our congregation suggest Pastors to be placed on a potential call list. That will give us a good starting point in the event we decide to call from the field as we gather more information on which to make a final decision regarding what direction to pursue. We are asking that members of the congregation who would like to suggest a pastor to be placed on that list, to submit in writing the name of the pastor and the congregation he is currently serving to any member of the Call Committee or to the church office by December 4. It doesn't have to be anything formal, simply a note or email will do, but it does need to be in writing.

I also would like to encourage everyone to attend the annual "Special Voters Assembly" meeting on December 11 after service. That is the meeting in which we elect officers and board members for next year as well as approve the budget for next year. With that in mind, Ed Randle is actively searching for people to fill the many officer and board positions available. I would encourage everyone to please consider becoming involved and let Ed know you are available to serve in whatever capacity you feel fits you best. The running of the church and its many ministries, depends on members of the congregation "stepping up to the plate" especially in the absence of a full-time Pastor. Your service will be greatly appreciated.

This is an exciting time for our church. Not only do we begin a new church year, but we also begin a new church journey. Let us all remember that it is not the Call Committee, nor the Vacancy Pastor, nor the voters, that lead us this journey, but rather, it is God. God will bring the right Pastor to us in time. We give Him thanks for that.

In Christ,  
**Bernie**