



The BEACON

Shines with Grace Lutheran Church News

December, 2017

Give a smile,
Get one back,
Give a hug
And see the smile...

It's Happening at Grace
Lutheran!

From the Pastor's Desk: Soon and Very Soon



If I had to choose a word to describe myself, "patient" would not be at the top of my list. The ridiculously long red light to turn from the Red Lion Giant onto Lombard Road, the amount of effort it takes to properly file and organize things in my office and at home, the time between when I send what I think is a hilarious text and when Ben actually responds to said text and tells me it's not as funny as I thought it was: all things that remind me that I am a very impatient person. For as long as I can remember I have asked God to give me patience, because it is not one of my gifts. I am a feet-first, finish-my-dinner-in-five-minutes-and-get-on-to-the-next-thing, drive-seventeen-hours-in-one-day-instead-of-taking-two kind of gal. To me, it often can feel like patience is a synonym for "forced unproductivity".

And then here comes Advent. The beginning of a new church year and a liturgical season that is all about waiting, preparing, anticipating, and...patience.

Joy to the world.

Because of my lack of patience and the world tempting me to think it's actually the season of Christmas, I have found myself feeling rather torn. Do I start listening to Christmas music, put baby Jesus in the creche, and deck the halls before Thanksgiving? Or do I hold off and wait for one of the most joyful seasons of the year? This year I have wanted to do both.

A few months ago I was at a Redevelopment Training conference in Denver, Colorado put on by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). It was a time where those who are serving congregations in a prime place to do God's mission could gather and learn how to be better pastors and deacons for the church as it exists in 2017 and attune themselves to the Holy Spirit's song. One of the most memorable and moving parts of this entire conference was a time of worship led by the ELCA's "Glocal Band", a group of musicians from around the country that shared worship music from different countries and cultures. Some of the hymns we sang spoke deeply to me, some

did not quite as much; but one song that both Ben and I could not forget was a piece called "Soon and Very Soon", written and composed by Aisea Taimai. The third verse went:

Peace is coming soon and very soon
Peace is coming soon and very soon

Soon and very soon She's comin'
Soon and very soon

Soon and very soon She's comin'
Soon and very soon

Soon and very soon She's comin'
Soon and very soon

I will dance but won't pretend like She is here
right now

(All rights reserved by Aisea Taimai)

What strikes me about this song every time I hear it is how it calls us to embrace the meaning of Advent: of acknowledging and yes, maybe even indulging, in the dance of the Christmas festivities that have seeped into early December (and even November), while also calling a thing what it is, a practice central to Lutheran (Continued on page 2)

Inside this Issue

Council News.....	2
Pastoral Acts.....	3
Meet Jocelyn.....	3
Advent Mid-Week Services.....	3
Food Pantry Information.....	3
Blue Christmas.....	4
Thank You From the Golden.....	4
Gift Cards Make Great Gifts.....	4
Come Caroling with Us.....	4
What's in the Showcase?.....	5
HOLIDAY PROGRAM INFORMATION.....	5
Community Charity	5
Lutheran Camping News.....	6
T.O.G.S.....	6
Birthdays, Anniversaries & Flowers.....	6
Calendar.....	7

(Pastor's letter continued from page 1)

discipleship, in saying that the coming of Christ is not fully realized yet and that while God's Kingdom is breaking into the world it is not yet perfected. That the freedom, peace, and joy we have now is but a glimmer of what we know God has in store, and that the celebration that occurs in the weeks preceding Christmas are nothing compared to the party that we await on those 12 days of following December 25. Advent, which is from the Latin word *adventus* meaning "arrival", is not just a celebration of the arrival of the Christ child over two millennia ago, but a season where we remind ourselves that we continue to wait for the arrival of Christ, who has promised to come again in glory to make all the wrongs of the world right. As we oft say during Holy Communion: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. It's about getting to celebrate now and practicing that spiritual disciplines of patience, preparation, and waiting.

So this Advent I invite you to live in both of these realities: that over two thousand years ago God decided that the salvation story was coming to its apex when God decided to become embodied in human flesh (incarnate) and arrived the son of an unwed peasant girl from the middle of nowhere. And that Christ, who in his death and resurrection defeated Sin and Death, has promised to come again and make this divine act of love completely perfect.

In other words, go ahead and deck your halls and sing Christmas carols, but also join me in gathering to remember that there is more to come. That there is much to celebrate, but things aren't as cheerful as the storefronts and brightly wrapped gifts might try to make us think they are.

But the Christmas promise is that God loves us and we're going to be ok, because we know that God is perfect and holy, whole presence is coming. Soon and very soon.

Your sister in waiting,
+Pastor Courtney

CHURCH COUNCIL News

November was a very busy month for Council. We held the Annual Congregational meeting on Sunday November 12. The packet of information is still available if anyone missed the meeting and would like to review the agenda and budget for 2018. The budget was passed as listed. This year the budget numbers included more line items than previously as Finance and Council work towards bringing the information more closely in line with our accounting system. We also reviewed the function of the Treasurer as we have moved through the year. This was the first year the position had transitioned into one elected from the current Council members and was uncharted waters for us all. Will Bennett has served us very well this year and many thanks are sent his way for his solid efforts. The Treasurer oversees the finances and communicates between the Finance office, our outside consultant, and the investment and finance Committees. This has been a great transition for us as a congregation as we move closer to being able to complete and internal audit and then outside audit of our finances and get back on track.

Council has also approved the replacement of the folding chairs in the social hall and Spirit Cellar. The current metal folding chairs have a variety of issues and a request was made last year to replace the chairs and after research and discussion we will be replacing the 200 chairs in the next few weeks to months.

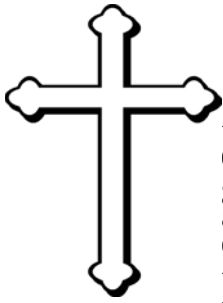
In other news, we would also like to welcome our new church secretary Jocelyn Evans. She began in November and is making fast work of learning her way around the office. Stop in and meet her if you have the chance. Welcome to Jocelyn!



NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE ANNOUNCED

The new Church Council members were elected unanimously at the annual congregation meeting. They are: Jayne Legore, Brian Shaffer, Megan Martinez and Tina Miller. The nominating committee for 2018 is: Sharon Hont, Will Bennett, Jennifer Rudolf, Wendy Miller, Joe Turek and Connie Little. Thanks for your service!


*Morning
Christmas Eve
Schedule*
*We are having a combined
service at 10:00 a.m.*



Pastoral Acts

Darwin Howard was commended to God's eternal care on Monday, October 30, 2017 at a 10:00 a.m. graveside service of Christian burial at Red Lion Cemetery, led by Pastor Courtney. Please join us in continuing to pray for the Howard and Grim families.

Phil Golden was commended to God's eternal care on Monday, October 30, 2017 at a 2:00 p.m. service of Christian memorial at Grace Lutheran Church, led by Pastor Courtney. Please join us in continuing to pray for the Golden family.

Edna Sheckart was commended to God's eternal Tuesday, November 7, 2017 at a 10:00 a.m. service of Christian burial at Grace Lutheran Church, led by Pastor Courtney and Pastor Mark Kopp of St. James Lutheran Church in Columbia, PA. A private interment followed at Falmouth Cemetery in Bainbridge, PA. Please join us in continuing to pray for Edna's family.

Our brother in Christ Regan Strausbaugh died on Monday, November 6, 2017 and lifts up his family in prayer. A service of Christian memorial will be held at Grace Lutheran Church, led by Pastor Courtney, on Saturday, December 9, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. There will be a visitation preceding the service, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Welcome Center/narthex of Grace Lutheran Church.

JOCELYN SPOTLIGHT

Hello Grace Lutheran,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce and share a little about myself. My name is Jocelyn Evans, and I am your new Church Secretary. Prior to coming to Grace I spent the last nine years working in the Special Education Department of a middle school in Maryland. Before working at the school I was a full-time Mom to our three sons, and served as part-time secretary at Pleasant Gove United Methodist Church and then, St. John's United Methodist Church, both in Maryland. My husband, Chuck, and I have been married for 29 years. As I mentioned we have three sons, Charlie, Ryan-Bryce, and Jake. We also have a beautiful daughter-in-law (we prefer "love" rather than "law"), and an amazing three year old grandson, Camden. I look forward to this new adventure and getting to know all of you.



MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES 2017

Wednesdays at 6:45pm

Dec. 6, 13 & 20



HOPE
LOVE
JOY
PEACE

Grace Lutheran Church 220 N. Charles Street Red Lion, PA



IT IS THE SEASON FOR GIVING

As some of you know, Jack has been suffering with stenosis of the spine accompanied by severe pain during the past month. While it has been awful, we look upon this time as a blessing since we were not scheduled to have a Thanksgiving food distribution. Jack is slowly recovering and plans to be up to speed for the Christmas distribution on December 11. Members of Grace have continued to donate health and beauty products but there are still more needed: laundry detergent, 173 needed; shampoo 168 needed; body wash 183 needed and most of all, dish detergent, 257 needed. Turkeys can be donated; however, it is easier for Jack to use your monetary donations to purchase turkeys from the York County Food Bank where all the turkeys are about the same size! Monetary donations have been steady since September, so we will be able to purchase perishables as well as turkeys for Christmas.

Keep in mind, that money given to our church Food Pantry by government sources can only be used to purchase state and federal foods. All of the extras we provide such as perishables and health and beauty aids have to be funded privately by our members of Grace Lutheran and other organizations who help us. The cost of 250 gallons of milk costs over \$1000! Our clients depend upon the generosity of Grace Lutheran for providing food, clothing, toys, books, bedding, household items, etc., and most of all respect. This Christmas distribution will insure that there will be food on the table and presents for family members as well as for the clients themselves. Please mark your calendar and come to assist the Sanctuary Set-Up at noon on Sunday, December 10 after worship, or to help with the food distribution on Monday, December 11. The joy you will experience will outshine any present you have ever received. Hope to see you there.

Blue Christmas

Thursday, December 21 @ 7:00pm

Christmas isn't easy for everyone. Whether you're grieving the loss of a loved one, dealing with depression, or facing health challenges, know that you are not alone. Join us in celebrating the birth of Christ, our Light in the darkness, in a way that gives us time to remember our loved ones who have passed and pray to God for comfort and healing. This service will feature the opportunity to light candles for our loved ones and to be prayed with and anointed with oil.

Grace Lutheran Church
220 N. Charles St. Red Lion, PA

HERE WE GO A CAROLING!

Ding dong, merrily on high, the Christmas bells are ringing! Who doesn't love standing in the freezing cold and disturbing the peace – I mean, singing Christmas carols! Join us for a jaunt around town for Christmas caroling on Friday, December 15, starting at 7:30 p.m. We will meet at Grace, and then sing for about a half-hour before returning for some hot chocolate and cookies! Help us spread the Advent cheer while getting in some extra steps for the week.

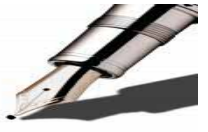


BOOK CLUB

The book club is taking a holiday break, but will be back in January. We need time to read all the books we get for Christmas! If you would like to join us in January, please let Jen Rudolf or Geri Jacobs know so we can get you a book.



Thank You.



"The family of Phil Golden would like to thank all the people of Grace Lutheran who helped with his memorial service. We would like to especially thank Pastor Erzkus, Tom Smith, Gerald and Connie Heiss, Peggy Gardner, and the people who prepared the meal after the service. A special thank you to Rodney Barnett and members of the choir for their beautiful music."

GIFT CARDS

We have Giant, Weis and Jerry's Great Valu store cards in denominations of \$50. They make great gifts! You may stop in The Welcome Center any Sunday and buy them or you may call Dee at home 244-0083 and she will have them ready for you. Dee can order \$ amounts besides the \$50. Why not think of a stocking stuffer in any amount. It takes 7 days to get them. Make checks payable to 'Grace Lutheran Church.'



HOW TO SUBMIT TO THE NEWSLETTER

We welcome all submissions to the newsletter. The newsletter is a great place to ask for help, publicize an event you are planning in the church, tell people about something you or your family are doing, thank members, celebrate a victory. The possibilities are endless! The vision for the newsletter is to communicate between members in a clear and interesting format. If you would like to submit to the newsletter or help in any way, here is what you can do:

*If you are comfortable with computers, you may email Chris Jacobs at: knndsis1@yahoo.com. Please make sure your document is either a .doc or .pdf file. If you are including digital artwork, make sure it is at least 300KB in size.

*If you prefer paper, just drop off your submission in the mailbox marked 'newsletter' outside the office door. The mailboxes are located on a table across the hall.

Please keep in mind that the deadline for submission is the 20th of each month for the following month's newsletter. If you have pictures or graphics that complement your submission, include them along with directions or suggestions on their use. Please include your contact information in every submission so the editor can get in touch to clarify or fact-check. If you are interested in a monthly submission or article, we welcome that as well.



OUR NEW TEDDY BEAR PROJECT

Teddy Bears this year are being replaced by monetary donations that will be given to the after-school program at Mazie Gable Elementary School. Select children spend time each week with mentors who help them with homework, who provide an afternoon snack and who model responsible and compassionate behavior. We feel that this worthy program can help meet the child's educational and emotional needs so much better than a Teddy Bear. Please mark an envelope with After School Program and place your gift in the collection plate. Last collection will be Sunday, December 31. Thank you for your support and your prayers for the children of our community.



WHAT'S IN THE DISPLAY CASE?



Keith McCleary has joined our team and he gives our cabinet a new look. Our Christmas Showcase will be a display of Christmas items old and new. Maybe a nativity - maybe carolers. Take time and look for a SURPRISE!

NEW YEARS EVE

New Year's Eve up-date: hard to imagine that it is that time again but here we go at grace providing a safe, warm, and welcoming place for families to come to celebrate the beginning of a new year. As usual, the time is from 5-9:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve. We plan to have free food, crafts and entertainment. About 600 people visit our church on that evening so we do need helpers in the kitchen, to help with crafts and making the famous hats or just greeting revelers at the doors. We open our doors earlier than any other venue because we are geared to family entertainment so we are asking for you to donate one hour of your time on that evening. More would be fantastic but we understand that there are outside activities that may pull you away. This will be Pastor Courtney's first experience with New Year's Eve at grace so perhaps you want to come to see her reaction to the wildness.

GRACEFUL WOMEN

Fragrances of Christmas is the topic of the Graceful Women's December 7 meeting. Wendy Mummert will take your olfactory senses on a sentimental journey that will trigger warm Christmas memories. Members should also bring a \$5 gift to exchange.



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T.O.G.S. NEWS



The TOGS will be selling cookies as a fundraiser. They will be making these yummy goodies on Sunday, December 3 after the late service. Once they are done, be sure to stock up. You can never have too many cookies around Christmas time. Proceeds benefit the big trip.

LUTHERAN CAMPING

On December 9, The Lutheran Camping Corporation is having a program called, 'Advent Day Apart.' Join us at The Wittel Farm, for a day of Bible study, worship, and prayerful reflection as we seek to prepare for the coming of the Christ.



Throughout the day, Pastor Victoria Larson will guide us through prayer practices, Bible study, and conversation grounded in the "O Antiphons," the seven titles for Christ reflected in the ancient hymn O Come, O Come Emmanuel. Walking together through the verses of this beloved Advent carol, we will prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord with joyful anticipation. It is from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., with the program beginning at 9:30 a.m. The cost is \$15 and registration is online at <https://www.lutherancamping.org/events/advent.php>.

Each month, *The Beacon* reports who is sponsoring the flowers in the Sanctuary.

December's flowers are sponsored by:

- 03 – Chris Schell
- 10 – Grace Lutheran Church
- 17 – Jud Stauffer
- 24 – Dennis Walters
- 31 – Linda Anderson

December Celebrations



- 02 Grant Stanley
- 02 Sharon Stein
- 03 Carol Coeyman
- 03 Grayson Frey
- 05 Keith McCleary
- 05 Emeline Osterhaus
- 05 Ofelia Osterhaus
- 07 Madison Ruth
- 08 Carolyn Noll
- 08 Andrea Sprenkle
- 10 George McCallum
- 11 Karen Traina
- 13 Kevin Shaffer
- 15 Cindy Strobeck
- 16 Blaine Howard
- 17 Josie Flory
- 17 Jamie Golden
- 17 Hazel Hammers
- 18 Angie Kicas
- 18 Krista Kiehner
- 18 Gary Krout
- 21 Samuel Hont
- 21 Brayden Markley
- 25 *Our Savior*
- 26 Christine Jacobs
- 29 John Jones
- 30 Sandra Stauffer
- 31 Paul Vigna



Wedding Anniversaries

- 26 Tom & Dee Kerr
- 27 David & Shelley Fishel

The Beacon is brought to you by:

- Chris Jacobs, Editor/Staff Writer**
- Jennifer Rudolf, Layout/Staff Writer**
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- Richard Rhine, Proofreader**
- Dee Kerr, Proofreader**
- Germar Rudolf, Webmaster**

December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 Noisy Offering 9:00 am - : Spirit Cellar Worship - Contemporary Worship 10:45 am - : Worship Service - Traditional	4	5	6 6:45 pm - 7:30 pm: Midweek Advent Worship	7 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm: Graceful Women	8	9 11:00 am - 12:00 pm: Memorial Service for Regan Strausbaugh
10 9:00 am - : Spirit Cellar Worship - Contemporary Worship 10:45 am - : Worship Service - Traditional 12:00 pm: Sanctuary Set-up	11 9:00 am - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm: Food Distribution	12	13 6:45 pm - 7:30 pm: Midweek Advent Worship 7:00: Finance Committee	14 6:30 pm : Church Council Meeting	15 5:00 pm: Wedding 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm: Christmas Caroling	16
17 9:00 am - : Spirit Cellar Worship - Contemporary Worship 10:00 am - 10:30 pm: Cross+Gen Sunday School 10:45 am - : Worship Service - Traditional	18	19	20 6:45 pm - 7:30 pm: Midweek Advent Worship	21	22	23
24 10:00 am - 11:15 am: Joint Advent 4 Worship 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm: Christmas Eve Contemporary Worship 10:45 pm - 11:45 pm: Christmas Eve Traditional Worship	25	26	27 6:30 pm - 7:00 pm: Ringers by Grace (Bell Choir) 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm: Senior Choir Rehearsal	28	29	30
31 9:00 am - : Spirit Cellar Worship - Contemporary Worship 10:45 am - : Worship Service - Traditional 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm: New Year's Eve at Grace						