

# GIFT of GRACE

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

### GRACE NOTES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 5, 2022

#### A WORD FROM PT

“Tis the Season to be jolly!” Oh, is it? At the risk of being regarded as snarky, I offer a reflection on what is off kilter with our culture’s celebration of the Christmas Season.

For starters, it is a Season. With respect to our heritage, it is a Season of Twelve Days. So, it is more than a simple celebration of an important birthday. Were it that, a single day might be what’s called for? But it is a celebration of a central mystery of the Christian Faith. I speak here of the *Incarnation*. This is, it is a celebration of the mystery of the Son of God assuming our human nature. It is the birth of our Savior. It is the means of our salvation. It is

the necessary prelude to the Cross and the Empty Tomb.

What is also amiss is the fact that we confuse a sublime joy and great hope with the attempt at being jolly, as in having a jolly good time.

This point is repeatedly brought home to me when I hear of a ‘Blue Christmas Service’ held especially for those having suffered a recent loss. I applaud such services. People grieving are not likely to feel jolly. The only thing I lament is that we need a special service for this. I think the regular Christmas Services should be well tuned for offering comfort and hope.

When we are attentive to the Nativity narratives, we catch the sense of light com-

ing into a very dark world. This is not the full dawn of the new day. Rather it is a lamp in our present darkness (cf. 2Pe 1:19). The darkness continues, but now not without hope and comfort!

Think off just two of the feasts commemorated during the Twelve Days: The Martyrdom of St. Stephen on December 26, and the Slaughter and Martyrdom of the Holy Innocents on December 28. Christmas brings the comfort of hope and a sublime joy amid tribulations in a dark world.

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Tuesday, 1/4**  
11:00am Prayer Gathering

**Friday, 1/7**  
6:30am Men’s Breakfast  
10:00am Service at Care Center

**Sunday, 1/9** Baptism of Our Lord  
8:00am Choir Practice  
9:00am Divine Service of the Word  
10:15am Coffee Fellowship

**Tuesday, 1/11**  
11:00am Prayer Gathering  
6:00pm Church Council at Church

#### KEY ATTRIBUTES OF LCMC & NALC

- *Christ-Centered*
- *Mission-Driven*
- *Traditionally-Grounded*
- *Congregationally-Focused*

**LCMC** (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ)

**NALC** (North American Lutheran Church) ([www.thenalc.org](http://www.thenalc.org))

#### SINCE YOU ASKED...

##### What is the Significance of The Baptism of Our Lord?

John the Baptist came proclaiming a *baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins*. Since Jesus was sinless he had no need to be forgiven. The human race, however, is sinful. And our need for

forgiveness is great indeed. In explaining why he should be baptized by John, Jesus said, *it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness*. In other words, Jesus came to stand with us and accomplish on our behalf all that God requires of us, including repentance and the forgiveness of sins! At his bap-

tism there was a revealing (an epiphany) of the Holy Trinity. And at his baptism, Jesus took our humanity which he assumed in the Incarnation and lowered it in the cleansing water of Baptism. His public ministry would commence with this public rite.

## THIS AND THAT...

The **start up of activities** in the New Year is as follows: the **Prayer Gathering** on Tuesday, the 4<sup>th</sup>; the **Men's Breakfast** on Friday, the 7<sup>th</sup>; **Choir Practice** on Sunday, the 9<sup>th</sup>; and **Confirmation Class** on Sunday, the 16<sup>th</sup>.

The **Church Council** is next scheduled to meet on Tuesday, January 11, 6pm at the church.

Save the date. Our congregation's **Annual Meeting** is scheduled for February 6 im-

mediately on the heels of the Divine Service.

The continued **livestreaming** is for those who cannot otherwise attend in person! It is a good outreach tool and a way for shut-ins to connect.

Don't forget non-perishable **Food Donations** for the Food Basket!

Our **Designated Benevolence** for the month of January is for Tornado Relief in

the Midwest.

We will soon be passing around a six month **Cleaning Schedule**. Please be generous and take a turn and a share in cleaning the church. It gets cleaned on the third week of each month. Thanks.

There are now more electronically generated things from our congregation to share that ever. Newsletters, daily devotions, the Congregation at Prayer, etc. Forward them to others.

# GIFT of GRACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. - Eph 2:8*

## HUMOR DEPARTMENT

### Celebrations

#### Birthdays

Jan 13..... Carol Peterson  
Jan 21..... Elyse Schoonover  
Jan 26..... Marge Wangen  
Jan 27..... Ann Fisher

#### Anniversaries

Jan 6..... T & J Kruse  
Jan 11..... E & P Christensen

### Puns for Educated Minds

- The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.

- I thought I saw an eye-doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

- She was only a whiskey-

maker, but he loved her still.

- A rubber-band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.

- No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.

- A dog gave birth near the road and was cited for littering.

- A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

- Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

- A hole has been found in the nudist-camp wall. The police are looking into it.

- Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.

## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

tbd (to be determined)

**1/9** The Baptism of Our Lord

**Asst Minister:** Mike Meunier

**Reader:** Dan Molstad

**Crucifer:** tbd

**Acolyte:** tbd

**Ushers:** tbd

**Counters:** tbd

**Comm Asst:** Connie Meunier

**Accompanist:** Leslie Duesenberg

**Fellowship:** Heidi Traver

**Livestreamer:** tbd

**1/16** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**Asst Minister:** Karri Bjornstad

**Reader:** Mike Meunier

**Crucifer:** tbd

**Acolyte:** tbd

**Ushers:** David Bjornstad

**Counters:** Connie M/David B

**Comm Asst:** tbd

**Accompanist:** Tom Rislow

**Fellowship:** Ruth and Hannah Scholze

**Livestreamer:** tbd

**1/23** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**Asst Minister:** Tom Rislow

**Reader:** tbd

**Crucifer:** tbd

**Acolyte:** tbd

**Ushers:** Dan Molstad

**Counters:** Dan M/tbd

**Comm Asst:** tbd

**Accompanist:** Leslie Duesenberg

**Fellowship:** tbd

**Livestreamer:** tbd

**1/30** 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**Asst Minister:** tbd

**Reader:** tbd

**Crucifer:** tbd

**Acolyte:** tbd

**Ushers:** tbd

**Counters:** tbd

**Comm Asst:** tbd

**Accompanist:** Tom Rislow

**Fellowship:** tbd

**Livestreamer:** tbd

Gift of Grace Lutheran Church  
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Services held at 9am at:  
642 Western Avenue  
A block north and then  
a block west of King Furniture