

The Grace Greeter!

**Grace Lutheran Church 2225 Washington Lincoln, NE 68502
December 2021**

A Shoot brings Life

Last year, Israeli scientists harvested dates from seeds that had been dormant about 2,000 years. The seeds, recovered during archaeological digs, were nurtured in incubators and several thrived. One (named Methuselah!) became a 10-foot-tall palm tree.

Horticulturists joked about marketing “dates that Jesus ate,” but there’s another scriptural connection. Isaiah 11, a traditional Advent reading, prophesies: “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots” (verse 1, NRSV). Jesus is the tender shoot that emerged from the humble peasant origins of Jesse, father of King David. From a dynasty that went dormant due to Israel’s sins sprouted a mighty tree, who will someday usher in a reign of peace (see verses 6-7).

Some people and churches celebrate Christmas with a Jesse Tree, remembering how God sent Jesus to sprout life out of death and bring new hope and joy to the world. The Jesse Tree also reminds us that anticipation is part of the Christmas season. I like the word “anticipation” as opposed to waiting. For me, anticipation, is like waiting for the ketchup to come out of the bottle. You know it will arrive but not necessarily when it will arrive. It arrives on its own time. You see signs. You can tap the bottle. But the ketchup lands on your burger in its own time. Or like the song sings, “Anticipation is making me wait”. (It’s a Carly Simon song by the way)

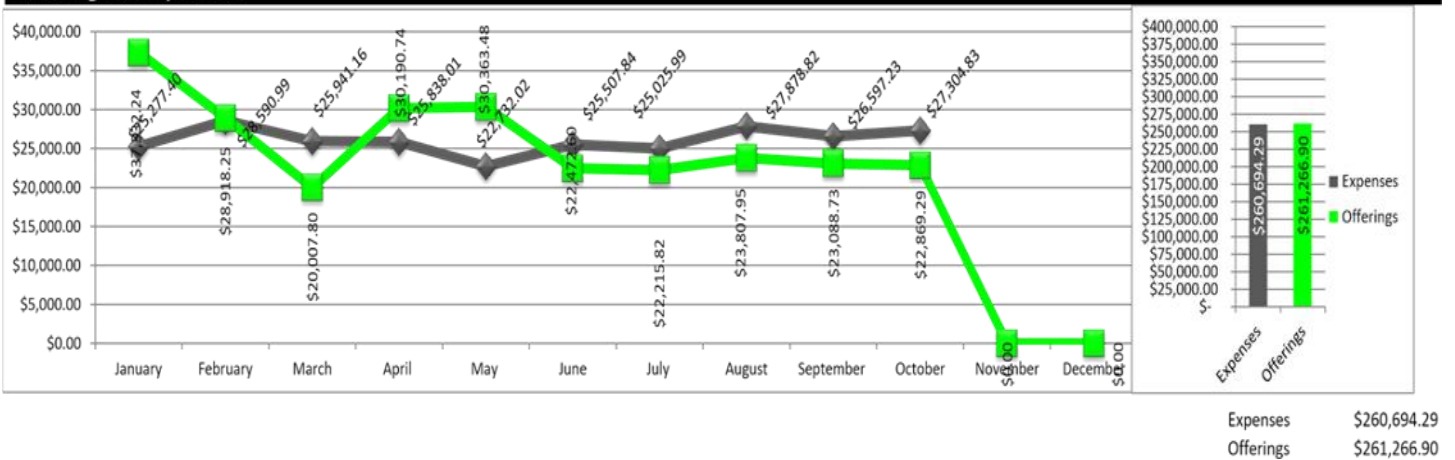
So eagerly anticipate the coming of Christ in your life this next year and be ready to be surprised by the results.



- ♦ **PLEASE CONTACT US!** HIPPA laws do not allow the hospital to notify the church if there is a member in the hospital. The patient or a family member must contact the church office to let us know that about the hospitalization. **During office hours, call 402-474-1505 or email office@egrace.org to let us know. Thank you!**
- ♦ To contact Pastor Eric after office hours, you can call or text him at 308-708-1146 or email pr.eric@egrace.org.
- ♦ The deadline for the next Greeter will be **December 20th**.
- To help us stay connected during our time apart please send an email or letter with any personal update you want to share about yourself or prayer concern for someone else. We will post these under news and prayers in our weekly digital newsletter and/or our monthly newsletter.

Update

Offerings & Expenses



2022 Giving Envelopes

You can pick-up your box of 2022 offering envelopes after December 19th in the atrium. Unfortunately our offering boxes were delivered to a church in Tennessee by mistake.

Watch, Wait, and Wonder: A Midweek Series for Advent

Services will be held in the chapel from 5:30 to 6:00 pm on December 1st, 8th and 15th. An abbreviated service will also be recorded and posted on our Facebook Live Worship page on that same Wednesday. The sermon portion will be a discussion based on the following readings and questions:



Readings:

Week 1 - Mark 13:33-37

Week 2 - 2 Peter 3:8-15a

Week 3 - Isaiah 61:1-3; 10-11

Week 4 - Luke 1:26-55

Questions:

Week 1

What word, image, or phrase stands out for you in this reading?

What will you watch and pray about this Advent?

What will help you stay awake?

Week 2

What word, image, or phrase stands out for you in this reading?

What in your life requires patience?

What are you waiting for?

How might you prepare the way of Christ's coming?

Week 3

What word, image, or phrase stands out for you in this reading?

Where will you look for God's glory?

Where do you engage in wonder at God's creation; in wonder at the love, grace, and forgiveness of Christ; in wonder at the transforming work of the Holy Spirit?

Week 4

What word, image, or phrase stands out for you in this reading?

The angel said to Mary, "Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God." Where might you leave fear behind?

How will you magnify the Lord this week?

Where has God lifted up the lowly, filled the hungry, and helped with mercy?



December 24th
Candlelight Service
6:30 PM
Nave

**December 25th
Communion Service
10:00 AM
Nave**



**December 26th
Lessons and Carols
9:00 AM
Nave**



Members of Scouts BSA Troop 30 - Girls

Members are selling Christmas wreaths to help pay for their summer trip. The 18 inch Fir wreaths cost \$30 each. Please contact the church office and leave a message for Curt Mann if you are interested in purchasing a wreath. Thank you!



Christmas Giving Tree



A Christmas Giving Tree can be found in the narthex to purchase food items for Christmas boxes to be distributed to families of students at Prescott Elementary. Thrivent will support this ministry with a generous gift. Deadline for donations is December 15. Thank you for your donations.



Lincoln Lutheran Choir presents
A Celebration of Carols

Sunday December 12th
2:00 Rehearsal
3:30 Sing Along
Grace Lutheran Church

Singers: email lincolnlutheranchoir@gmail.com
to receive your packet of carols



Outreach Callers

Patty Plambeck is wanting to organize a small team of members who would be willing to call and check on other members of Grace. If interested please voicemail (474-1505) or email (pr.eric@egrace.org) Pr. Eric and he will send your name to Patty.

The family of Betty Shaw wishes to express their sincere thanks and appreciation to Grace Lutheran Church and her Church Family for all the support and help following her death. Your many acts of kindness and sympathy continue to be a great comfort to us in our time of sorrow.

Thank you again., Alta Sharp (Betty's daughter)



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



The Gathering Place

Coronavirus safety protocols continue at The Gathering Place, with meals still being distributed on the porch after containers of food are filled inside the house at 1448 E Street. Comfort food was on the menu when Regina and Steve Paschold assisted on November 15th. The newly hired kitchen manager, Angelyne, prepared macaroni and cheese from scratch. There were also hot dogs, tossed lettuce salad, and apples or mandarin oranges. The daily count of individuals served is usually a few more than 100.



Thrivent News

The Grace Lutheran Thrivent Financial group will meeting in the staff conference room following the worship service on December 5th. Anyone is welcome to attend.

THE LUTHERAN FOOD PANTRY

List of this month's needed items (***is a high priority item*):

- ****Fruit juice** (large bottles or boxes/packets)
- ****Boxed instant mashed potatoes**
- ****Peanut butter**
- ****Jelly**
- ****Port and Beans**
- Boxed breakfast cereal
- Ramen noodles
- Canned meats (chicken, tuna, etc.)
- Instant oatmeal packets
- Canned fruits (pears, peaches, pineapple, fruit cocktail)
- Canned vegetables (especially peas & mixed vegetables)
- Condensed soups (chicken noodle, tomato, vegetable, cream of chicken, cream of mushroom)
- Saltine crackers
- Canned beans (chili, kidney, pinto)
- Canned tomatoes
- Canned meals (spaghetti & meatballs, ravioli, etc.)
- Pancake mix & syrup
- Spaghetti sauce
- Macaroni & cheese
- Breakfast bars (Pop Tarts, granola bars, oatmeal/fruit bars)
- Snack items (small packages of cookies, nuts, fruit-flavored snacks, etc.)
- Personal care items (shampoo, bar soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes)

PANTRY HOURS:

Please bring your donations to St. Andrew's Lutheran at 1015 Lancaster Ln between the hours of 8-3 Tuesday through Friday.

Birthdays

First Name	Last Name	Date
Elizabeth	Krueger	1-Dec
Jacob	Krueger	1-Dec
Carley	Weixelman	1-Dec
Larry	Clymer	2-Dec
Steve	Reckling	3-Dec
Donald	Carnes	7-Dec
Katie	Fritchie	8-Dec
Betty	Maun	10-Dec
Marsha	Foster	13-Dec
Noah	Guern	14-Dec
Raymond	Guern	14-Dec
Christopher	Andersen	15-Dec
Dustin	Haider	15-Dec
Dean	Ossian	17-Dec
Sam	Ihrle	18-Dec
Elizabeth	Garza	21-Dec
Lois	Moss	22-Dec
Jack	Reighard	22-Dec
Seth	Riemann	22-Dec
Cynthia	Watchorn	22-Dec
Gladys	Meyer	23-Dec
Robert	Stimbirt	25-Dec
Irene	Moore	26-Dec
Scott	Drake	27-Dec
Ashlyn	Jensen	27-Dec
Chris	Schroeder	27-Dec
Mark	Billings	29-Dec
Ronald	Most	30-Dec

Wedding Anniversaries

First Name	Last Name	Date
John	Lunde	Dec 14, 1986
Joyce	Lunde	Dec 14, 1986
George	Sturgeon	Dec 16, 1967
Norma	Sturgeon	Dec 16, 1967
George	Foster	Dec 22, 1973
Marsha	Foster	Dec 22, 1973
Dustin	Haider	Dec 31, 2008
Rachel	Haider	Dec 31, 2008

DECEMBER



**October Council Meeting
Tuesday, October 12, 2021**



Present via Zoom/in-person: Neil Larson, Doug Krueger, Cindy Eberspacher, Connie Thorson, Carla Ingersoll, Jan Branting, Roger Potts, Amy Knobbe, Pr. Eric Leshner

Absent: Glatha Rathjen

Neil Larson called the council meeting to order at 7:00 PM (meeting in-person and online)

Opening Prayer: Neil

Approval of Council Minutes:

Roger moved to approve the September church council meeting minutes as submitted. Doug seconded. Motion passed.

President's Update/Correspondence: Considering placing an advertisement in the newsletter for the Near South Neighborhood Association. Neil will find out sizes, rates and report back. The Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan was forgiven. Credit to Sage for doing a ton of paperwork for this.

Staff Reports:

Pastor Eric's Report: submitted

Director of Music Report: submitted

Financial Secretary's Report: submitted

Treasurer's Report: submitted

Doug made a motion to accept the reports as submitted. Jan seconded. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Finance/Stewardship – Letter to members went out; Stewardship Sunday is October 17. Initial budgets needed from committees before council meets Oct. 24 to review and approve.

Worship & Music – report submitted; met virtually. Proposed using one type of wine year-round. Anne gradually reintroducing choir and expanded bell choir music into services. Meeting in November to discuss decorating the nave for the holiday season, keeping it simple.

Parish Ed – did not meet; Sunday School not meeting in-person

Congregational Life – report submitted; met in-person / virtually. Discussed tentative fellowship activities for 2022; volunteers needed to keep in-touch with shut-ins and our congregation during Covid.

Property – report submitted; email correspondence. Thanks to those who repaired the lights and cleaned the sky lights. Two additional cameras were installed inside the church building and one on the outside to cover the east entrances and parking lot.

Social Ministry – report submitted; email correspondence; Thanksgiving boxes – gathering names and food items; may open this up as an outreach project.

Memorials – email correspondence; enough funds to purchase a better camera for online services; red bud trees cannot be purchased until Spring 2022.

Roger made a motion to accept the reports as submitted. Doug seconded. Motion passed.

Business:

Camera – purchase of better camera that has live streamlining built-in, set-up in the balcony. Roger will check if we can purchase on a trial basis.

November Budget Meeting venue and format – Constitution by written ballot for people to go on council includes in-person count and a virtual (Zoom) count. A quorum would include both in-person and virtual attendees. Will announce Annual Congregational meeting in newsletter arriving November 1st, meeting held November 21. Held in nave following church service. A Zoom invite will be extended prior to the Sunday meeting.

Thanksgiving Eve Service – Discussed ideas from other Lincoln churches. Decided to keep on Wednesday, November 24 at 6:30 PM.

Outreach Call Volunteers – Circle 6 and Congregational Life have been meeting to create a plan to call or visit members – both shut-ins and those not attending church. Importance of staying in contact with all church members. 10-15 volunteers are needed, a

script would be provided.

Extra October Budget Meeting – Brief meeting after church to approve the budgets and employee salaries before the Annual Congregational Meeting on November 21. Copies of budget proposals will be available to all congregational members by November 7 at North entrance.

Other – Suggested that a flyer be posted near East Entrance as a reminder that doors to building are locked at all times.

Closing Prayer - Neil

Being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Connie Thorson, Secretary

The Gift of Gifts

One of my favorite Christmas movies is “The Bishop’s Wife.” It doesn’t get much better than David Niven, Cary Grant, and Loretta Young, Christmastime, and the Episcopal Church all wrapped up together in a pretty Hollywood bow. In his midnight Christmas Eve sermon (which was miraculously penned by Cary Grant in his role as the angel), David Niven, playing the part of The Bishop, delivers a beautiful statement about gifts and the time of year. *“All the stockings are filled,”* the Bishop says, *“all that, except one. And we have even forgotten to hang it up. The stocking for the child born in a manger. It’s his birthday we’re celebrating. Don’t let us ever forget that.”*



This has been a year of gifts. And like the gifts from well-meaning friends and relations, the gifts of this year have come in shapes, sizes, and looks that are different than we might be expecting or wanting. The gifts have been harder to recognize, but they have been just as abundant, perhaps even more so in a year marked by need, tragedy, and uncertainty. I spent this Christmas with friends and family in a different way than I usually might: some of us were gathered together, socially distanced and masked, while some of us were participating through screens and across great distances. Still, we shared stories, opened presents, sang carols through our masks; and at some point, particular to each individual, we realized that the real gift of Christmas this year was that we were sharing the day together.

As the Incarnation reveals its love and joy in us and among us, we remember the gifts we have been to each other through this year – the phone calls and video chats just to check in; the ministries that we have enabled with our gifts of time, talent, and treasure; the ways we have changed our plans, our lives, our lifestyles to keep each other safe. These are the gifts that fill that empty stocking, the ones that overflow from the least expected places, the presents that bring comfort and joy to our neighbors. And in making these gifts to the world, we herald God from whom all gifts flow and who gave the world the most precious of gifts.

May you continue to be a gift to each other in this season and throughout the coming year.

< December 2021 >

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:15–10:45 AM: Lincoln Literacy 9:30 AM–2:00 PM: Family Gathering 5:30–6:00 PM: Advent Worship 6:00–7:00 PM: Bell Choir A Practice 7:00–8:00 PM: Bell Choir B Practice	2 9:00 AM–12:00 PM: Quilting	3	4 2:30–4:30 PM: Recital 5:30–6:15 PM: Worship
5 9:00–10:00 AM: Worship 10:15–11:15 AM: Adult Choir 10:30–11:30 AM: Thrivent Meeting 3:00–5:00 PM: LLC Rehearsal	6 9:15–11:15 AM: Lincoln Literacy 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 7:00–8:00 PM: Scouts BSA	7 9:30–10:30 AM: Al- Anon meeting 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 6:30–7:30 PM: Cub Scouts 7:00–8:00 PM: Committee Meetings	8 9:15–10:45 AM: Lincoln Literacy 5:30–6:00 PM: Advent Worship 6:00–7:00 PM: Bell Choir A Practice 7:00–8:00 PM: Bell Choir B Practice	9 9:00 AM–12:00 PM: Quilting	10 3:00–6:30 PM: Suzuki Group	11 1:00–2:00 PM: Danish Sisterhood 5:30–6:15 PM: Worship
12 9:00–10:00 AM: Worship 10:15–11:15 AM: Adult Choir 11:00 AM–3:00 PM: Birthday Celebration 2:00–3:00 PM: LLC Rehearsal 3:30–4:30 PM: LLC Concert	13 9:15–11:15 AM: Lincoln Literacy 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 7:00–8:00 PM: Scouts BSA	14 9:30–10:30 AM: Al- Anon meeting 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 6:30–7:30 PM: Cub Scouts 7:00–8:00 PM: Wildlife Rescue 7:00–8:30 PM: Council Meeting	15 9:15–10:45 AM: Lincoln Literacy 1:00–2:30 PM: WELCA Group 3 5:30–6:00 PM: Advent Worship 6:00–7:00 PM: Bell Choir A Practice 7:00–8:00 PM: Bell Choir B Practice	16 9:00 AM–12:00 PM: Quilting	17 4:00–9:00 PM: BNRR	18 5:30–6:15 PM: Worship
19 9:00–10:00 AM: Worship 10:15–11:15 AM: Adult Choir 1:00–6:00 PM: Recital	20 9:15–11:15 AM: Lincoln Literacy 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 5:00–6:00 PM: Gathering Place 7:00–8:00 PM: Scouts BSA	21 9:30–10:30 AM: Al- Anon meeting 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 6:30–7:30 PM: Cub Scouts 7:00–8:30 PM: WELCA Group 6	22 9:15–10:45 AM: Lincoln Literacy 6:00–7:00 PM: Bell Choir A Practice 7:00–8:00 PM: Bell Choir B Practice	23 9:00 AM–12:00 PM: Quilting 3:00–7:00 PM: Family Gathering	24 9:00 AM–3:00 PM: Office Closed 6:30–7:30 PM: Christmas Eve Worship	25 10:00–11:00 AM: Christmas Day Worship
26 9:00–10:00 AM: Lessons and Carols Worship 10:15–11:15 AM: Adult Choir	27 9:15–11:15 AM: Lincoln Literacy 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 7:00–8:00 PM: Scouts BSA	28 9:30–10:30 AM: Al- Anon meeting 4:00–6:00 PM: Lessons 6:30–7:30 PM: Cub Scouts	29 9:15–10:45 AM: Lincoln Literacy 6:00–7:00 PM: Bell Choir A Practice 7:00–8:00 PM: Bell Choir B Practice	30 9:00 AM–12:00 PM: Quilting 3:30–4:30 PM: Family Gathering	31 9:00 AM–3:00 PM: Office Closed	

Grace Staff & Council

Rev. Eric Lesher

Senior Pastor

308-708-1146

pr.eric@egrace.org

David Sage

Parish Administrator

office@egrace.org

Anne Melang-Thoren

Director of Music

anne@egrace.org

Jennifer Aliwarga-Carlson

Assistant Organist

Robert Stimbert,

Custodian

2021 Church Council

Neil Larson

Carla Ingersoll

Connie Thorson

Jim Krueger

Glatha Rathjen

Jan Branting

Amy Knobbe

Doug Krueger

Roger Potts

Cindy Eberspacher

Connie Thorson

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Congregational Life

Social Ministry

Parish Education

Memorials

Property

Stewardship/Finance

Worship/Music

Current monthly council minutes and reports are available in the narthex.

Contact the church office to get connected to a council member.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER

The Chancel of Grace will be decorated in the traditional, festive manner for Christmas services.
Your contribution of a Poinsettia will make this possible.

☐ I wish to order a Poinsettia for Christmas, \$10.00 is enclosed

In honor of _____

In Memory of _____

Given by _____

Deadline for this order is December 19.

Return this form and payment to the basket in the narthex or outside the church office or by mail.

Grace Lutheran Church
2225 Washington Street
Lincoln NE 68502
402-474-1505
office@egrace.org

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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