

our Journey



A newsletter for members & friends
of Saving Grace Lutheran Church.

December 2019

"Established in the Holy Scriptures, our mission is to make Jesus Christ known to all as the one true Savior; Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

DECEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Wednesdays thru December 18

6:15 Contemporary Worship

Saturdays

3:00 pm Traditional Worship

Sundays

8:30 am Traditional Worship

9:30 am Fellowship & Education Hour

(No Sunday School December 22 & 29)

10:00 am Contemporary Worship

Tuesday, December 17th

11:00 am Advent Communion Worship & Lunch

Christmas Eve

2:00 & 4:00 pm Family Worship

8:00 pm Traditional Worship

Christmas Day

10:00 am Worship

*Sundays, 4 pm Christmas Eve & Christmas Day
worship will be live-streamed on our web site.*

Thursday, December 26th

Church Office Closed



Wednesday, New Year's Day

No Worship



Snow Closing Policy

In the unfortunate event that snow/cold/ice make it unsafe to travel to church—we will post an announcement as soon as possible on our website if worship services or activities are cancelled. Our office policy is that if the schools are closed– the office is closed (pastors or staff may choose to come in, but please call first). We also make every effort to be included in media community closing broadcasts and listings.

Advent Holy Communion Worship & Luncheon

Our annual Advent Holy Communion Worship Service & Luncheon will be held on **Tuesday, December 17th at 11:00 am**. This is especially for those who can't always get out to or make it for our regular Christmas Worship services or family celebrations. If you will be attending, sign-up in the office, before worship, or call the church to get on the list. There is no cost (we'll take a free-will offering), but we'd like to get a count for lunch. Please let us know by December 12th if you will need transportation.

Articles for the January newsletter are due to Julie Atkinson in the Church Office by December 16.



5:4 "He shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; 5 and he shall be the one of peace. (Micah 5:4-5a)

A man walking by spotted the boy, and gave him some gentle instruction. "Son," he said, "if you're waiting on the bus, you need to move to the street corner. That's where the bus stops for passengers."

"It's OK," said the boy. "I'll just wait right here, and the bus will stop for me." The man repeated his argument, but the boy never moved. Just then, the bus appeared. Amazingly, the bus pulled over to where the boy stood, and the child hopped on. The man on the sidewalk stood speechless. The boy turned around in the doorway and said, "Mister, I knew the bus would stop here, because the bus driver is my dad!"

Advent is a time of waiting. Kids are looking forward to Christmas and all the gifts. They're asked time and time again, "What do you want for Christmas?" Then they begin to dream about what they'll get. I loved the Advent Calendar; you know the one with the chocolate behind the doors. Every night before dinner we'd light one of the four candles on the advent wreath, then after dinner one of us would open up a new door on the Advent Calendar and get to eat the chocolate. Waiting was the difficult part!

Israel waited centuries for the Messiah, the King to come and bring peace. When he came, he didn't come as they expected. He wasn't born in a palace, welcomed by countless nobility, or born to wealth and a life of leisure. Instead, he was born in a stable welcomed by angels, shepherds and three magi (wisemen). He took up the trade of a carpenter and lived an otherwise ordinary life.

He began his ministry by calling together the disciples and then stood and fed his flock. He taught us that if we wanted to be great, we must be servant of all. (Matthew 20:26-28) It's there we find peace in our lives. We know that Jesus Christ has come and we anticipate the day when he comes again. We wait with anticipation.

We know that Jesus guides our lives today. Through faith and the waters of baptism He is our Shepherd. He feeds us and strengthens us through His Word, as we walk with Him. He reminds us that He brings healing in into our lives. (Isaiah 53:5) He is there to give us peace for today and hope for tomorrow. He brings peace into our lives in the midst of a world in turmoil. Jesus brings hope in the abundant life we are promised here and in heaven forever.

Waiting isn't easy, but it's easier when you know you're waiting for your Dad! He is there for you wherever you may be.

May God bless you this Christmas!

Pastor David Irgens



Reflections from Pastor Dan

Merry Advent and Happy Christmas!

Or, Merry Christmas and Happy Advent? Either way, Advent is here and Christmas is on its way. If you have gotten a chance to read our advent devotionals, then you might not be surprised to hear that I love Christmas music. Christmas is music to my ears. I've always loved the time off from school growing up, spending time with family, receiving gifts, and eating wonderful food. But, over the years I've come to enjoy Christmas music more and more.

It just sounds different, doesn't it? You know you're listening to a Christmas tune when you hear it. The songs sound like snow, Jesus, and hot chocolate. But, not every Christmas tune is about Jesus these days. "Baby its cold outside" is a classic Christmas tune, but I'm fairly certain the song has nothing to do with Mary or Joseph, let alone Jesus. So, I'd say that tune sounds like snow and hot chocolate, but it doesn't really have that Jesus ring to it. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with the song—it's a lovely tune. There is just more for the Christian during the holiday season than snow, hot chocolate, and warm fires.

There is Jesus! We remember how he came into the world and that he shows us who God is. Who ever thought a baby child would be the right answer to their problem? Well, thankfully, God knows best and he gives us what we need! Have you ever waited for a child to be born? Maybe you were an older brother, a mother, or an aunt. Every year, we get to practice waiting for Jesus to come again by remembering how he came to Bethlehem. Think of what it must have been like for Mary to be in her final month of pregnancy. Think of the faith Joseph would have needed as he anticipated the birth of his "adopted" son. It's a time of anticipation! God is preparing to provide for our deepest needs.

You see, the snow will melt. The hot chocolate will get cold. Fires will burn out...but Jesus remains the same. On the best of days, this is music to my ears. Christmas and the season's music remind us to listen for this tune throughout the year—Jesus has come to make his home here with us.

Blessings this Christmas holiday,

Pastor Dan

Keep Up With our Kids!

Wondering what our kids are up to at Saving Grace? Check out the Youth and Sunday School Bulletin Board outside of the Education Office. Our Education Director Melissa Corlett changes up this board regularly for those with kids and for those who just like to keep up to date on our programs. There's always something new to discover!



Get your own Advent
Devotional written by
Pastor David & Pastor Dan to

help you reflect as you look with Joy towards
the birth of the Christ child. Copies will be
available in the Narthex as well as posted on
the website.



Parents, do you ever wish that you had a couple of hours with no kids - maybe to go out to a kid-free dinner, or to go out to a movie, or get some errands done without little helpers? **Friday, December 20th** is your opportunity to have a couple of hours to yourself! Just drop the kids off at our Parents' Night Out event on December 20th from 5-7:30pm. Your kids will have a great time playing games, making crafts, and lots more! Supper will be provided for the kids. If you'd like to take advantage of the Parents' Night Out event, just email

Melissa Corlett at
savinggraceeducation@gmail.com
 before December 15th.



Sunday, December 15th

Children's Christmas Program

At both the 8:30 & 10:00 Services

(make sure Grandma & Grandpa mark their calendars too!)

Illumin8 Youth Group

Mark your calendars! Our next meeting is **December 8th at 11:00** in the Fellowship area. We will be discussing the topic of "Why doesn't God answer my prayers?". Don't forget to bring your Bibles!

The Illumin8 Youth Group is open to all youth in 6th through 12th grades.

The question was "To Bean or Not To Bean" and the answer is "To Bean"!

The 2019 Chili Challenge was a success! Thanks to your generous support, the youth raised nearly \$1000 to help support their activities, mission work and future mission trips.

A huge thank you to all who helped make this event possible: the contestants for bringing delicious chilis, the judges for tasting every chili and making the hard decision as to which were the best of the best, those who donated raffle baskets (Mission Outreach, Dani Volz, Pam Bee, the Costley, Leland, and Samuelson families, and Sara Hartwig), and the youth and their families for providing the desserts, serving the chili and beverages, and helping at the event. This event was a success because of your hard work. Also, thank you to all who supported the event through purchasing raffle tickets, event tickets, and those who were able to come out on Sunday.

The competitors (and their chili number):

1. Kathy Berkey
2. Barb Field
3. Bobbi Larson
4. Pat Volz
5. Alissa Geissler
6. Richard Kokemoor
7. Marge Hartwig
8. Bill Cunningham
9. Jamie Gilbertson
10. Rod Alf

The competition was tight, the judges tasted and tallied, and the winners are...

Spiciest Chili: Bill Cunningham

Most Unique Chili: Jamie Gilbertson

Best Overall (and first recipient of the Chili Challenge traveling trophy): Pat Volz

Again, thank you to all who supported this great event! See you in 2020!



Annual Christmas Dinner Party
Saturday, December 14th 4:00 -7:00 pm

Plan to join us for a roast beef dinner with all the trimmings *and* special entertainment by Julie Anderson and the Fabulous Four! We'll also have a 50-50 Raffle, Margaret Crandell will be selling "Kisses", and more! Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased thru December 10th after worship services and in the church office during office hours. Childcare, activities & meal will be available at no cost for kids 12 and under (we need to know how many by December 8th, please.) The proceeds from this Christmas Party will be donated to Sofa's for Service. This is a worthwhile service for veterans that church member Pete Hestekin started.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed for our Annual Christmas Party. We are looking for members to bring appetizers, help set up and/or clean up. If you are willing to help in any capacity, please contact Donna Switzer @ 715 832-1184 or Bobbi McCormick @ 715 456-1509.



American Red Cross

**"In This Season of Giving,
 How About a Pint?"**

Saving Grace Lutheran Church will again be hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive on **Monday, December 9th from 12:00—5:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. A sign-up will be available on the poster near the Fellowship snack line, online @ redcrossblood.org/SGLC, or by calling 1-800-733-2767. *All who have donated blood prior to October 14th are eligible to donate (August 19th for Double Red Cell donors).*

Men of Saving Grace

MEN'S BREAKFAST: Join us @ 7:30 on Saturday mornings for breakfast & fellowship.



Say hello and get to know our newest members!

Laura Wright: Laura was raised in Eau Claire and works for Cigna Health Insurance. She is raising 7 year old Nevaeh and enjoys photography. She is also Ginny Wright's daughter & Becky Pope's sister!

Becky Pope: Becky was raised in Eau Claire and went to Mt. Marty College in Yankton, SD. She works at TTM Technologies and has a son Jack with her husband of 8 years, Nick. Becky loves doing anything outdoors. She is also Ginny Wright's daughter and Laura Wright's sister!

Ruth Clausen: Ruth was raised in Birchwood and taught grade school there and in Minnesota. She has two sons, one in Eau Claire and one in Minnesota. She enjoys quilting in her free time.

Jamie Gilbertson: Jamie was raised in Marshfield and currently lives in Fall Creek. She is an AG teacher at the Augusta High School and enjoys walks, photography and singing. She has already started up a new Bible study!

Jack & Carolyn Daniel: Jack was raised in Illinois and Carolyn grew up in Cumberland. Carolyn recently retired from a career as an RN and Jack was a Waterwell field inspector and volunteers at Mayo. They currently live in Eau Claire where Carolyn enjoys stitchery and reading and Jack enjoys the woods and wildlife.

Barbara Taylor: Barbara was raised in Portage and is a retired Office Manager. She has been widowed since 1972 and has 4 children (3 are living) and 9 grandchildren. You may see Barbara helping out in the church office.



Isaiah 9:6 *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

“What we have said, then, has been about that second faith, which is not only to believe in Mary’s Son, but rather that he who lies in the virgin’s lap is our Savior, that you accept this and give thanks to God, who so loved you that he gave you a Savior who is yours. And for a sign he sent the angel from heaven to proclaim him, in order that nothing else should be preached except that this child is the Savior and far better than heaven and earth. Him, therefore, we should acknowledge and accept; confess him as our Savior in every need, call upon him, and never doubt that he will save us from all misfortune. Amen. “

Martin Luther
(from his 1530 Christmas sermon)

Larger Print Bulletins

We print a limited number of Large Print bulletins each week, mostly for our homebound members. If you would also like a larger print version, please contact Julie in the church office—we’ll put them out in the Narthex each week.



As of November 18, \$584,378 has been pledged to the Capital Campaign, with an additional \$85,088 non-pledge money in the Capital Campaign Account.



January—November 18, 2019 General Operating
 Income: \$374,821 Expenses: \$379,058
 2019 Budgeted Income: \$404,110
 (based on an annual average)
 General Operating Account Balance: \$50,366
 Legacy Account Balance: \$75,555
 Exchange Account + Capital Campaign Balance:
 \$225,478

Deadline for 2019 Donations

For your donation to be included in 2019 giving—please be sure to have it in the church office ***NO LATER than 9:00 am on Tuesday, December 31st.*** Donations received after that time will be counted in 2020.



2019 Church Council
 Kevin Balash, President

Stan Brettingen, Vice President

Patty Dundas, Secretary

Bill Cunningham, Treasurer

Steven Dusick, Wilson Lund,

Dani Volz, Pete Hestekin,

Cindy Joy Fischer, Keith Muchow, Bobbi McCormick

For contact information, please refer to your Church Directory or call the Church Office.

Glad you asked:

If you have an idea, for either the church or the newsletter, a suggestion, or a question, write it down (can be anonymous) and put in the Idea/Question box outside the Sanctuary, or contact Pastor Irgens or a Staff member. We’ll get your answer or share as many ideas as we can each month in “Our Journey”.



Thank You For Your Gifts

Donations made to the church in memory of or in honor of someone will be printed on a monthly basis in the newsletter. Your gifts in times of celebration or remembrance are always important and very much appreciated.

General Operating Fund

In Memory of Ron Spehle: Nancy Spehler, Cindy Joy Fischer, Spehle Family

In Memory of Bob Flaten: Jean Parkhurst, Joyce Johnston

In Memory of son Jeff Jahnke's 6th Heavenly Birthday: Sharon Risberg

In Memory of Janice Hollingsworth: Larry Hollingsworth

In Memory of Bill Bates: Karn Bates

Capital Campaign Fund

In Memory of Bob & Linda Flaten: James & Nancy Sylte

Television Fund

In Memory of Bob Flaten: John Kevin & Janet Johnson

In Honor of our 64th Wedding Anniversary November 22nd—Congratulations!: Richard & Alice Klingbeil

Music Exchange Fund

In Memory of Audrey Erickson: Peggy Wrzesinski

Soup, Sandwich & Scripture (3S)

Soup, Sandwich & Scripture or 3S as we call it, is on Fridays at 12 noon. All men are welcome as we gather to share a meal, fellowship, and Bible Study. No need to pre-register—just come and bring your friends!

Van Drivers for December

December 1: Wilson Lund

December 8: Dave Roholt

December 15: Gerald Dusick

December 22: Dave Cunningham

December 29: Bob Tietz

Thank you!

Who will you invite to Saving Grace in December? There are flyers on the narthex table with upcoming events available to help you share all that's going on at your church.



Altar Flowers Program

We have an altar flower program with Brent Douglas Flowers. Order flowers in honor of someone or a special event, in memory of a loved one, or just to help beautify our Sanctuary. Bouquets are \$15 each. Sign up in the book near the front door (*please print!*) or in the office.

Hospital Visits

If you are in the hospital and would like a pastoral visit, be sure to let the hospital know you are a member of Saving Grace. Better yet, call us or have a family member call us when you are or will be in the hospital. Due to HIPAA laws we are limited in the information we can obtain from health care facilities. The best way to reach Pastor David or Pastor Dan is to call the church office during business hours or call the emergency cell phone (715.797.1000) on weekends or evenings.



WHITE ELEPHANT PARTY

Our annual White Elephant Party is coming up soon! It will be on **Friday, December 6th at 6:00 pm**, hosted by Allan & Ruth Hofland at their home. Please come, bring a wrapped "white elephant treasure" and an appetizer to share. It's always a fun time & we look forward to seeing you there! (call Ruth if you have any questions)



We send worship bulletins to each person on our homebound list. If you or someone you know should be added to this list, please contact the church office.



Saving Grace Church Mission Outreach Committee

Gifts this month went to:

Food Scrip Cards for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner at Saving Grace.

A basket for the Chili Challenge raffle benefitting our Youth.

An addition to the donations from worship services to Teamwork Africa in order to pay for a year scholarship for a Starfish Kid.

A donation to Hope Gospel for the new Renewal Center for Women & Children.

Enough funds added to the donations for Dr. Chris Marare of Agape World Outreach to purchase a well in Nigeria.

Additional funds for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

A gift for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota: The Pine Ridge Reservation is home to the lowest life expectancy, and a number of the poorest communities in the United States, with an 80 % poverty rate. The average life expectancy on Pine Ridge is 66.81 years, the lowest in the United States. Oglala Lakota County, contained entirely within the boundaries of the Pine Ridge Reservation, has the lowest per capita income (\$8,768) in the country, and ranks as the "poorest" county in the nation. 42.4% of the population was identified as being younger than 20 years old in the 2010 U.S. Census.

Statistics produced by the Oglala Sioux Tribe paint a bleak picture about the health of the reservation:

- Tuberculosis: 800% higher than America as a whole
- Infant mortality: 300% higher than America as a whole
- Teen suicide: 150% higher than America as a whole
- Approximately 85% of Lakota families are affected by alcoholism
- Approximately 58% of grandparents of Lakota families are raising their grandchildren
- Approximately 50% of adults over the age of 40 have diabetes

Our Youth went on a Mission trip a few years ago to Pine Ridge Reservation, a Christian community, and it was a memorable experience. We hope our gift shows our continuing support.

A few years ago, the Mission Committee started a "pay it forward" fund at The Plus. The owner gives free slices of pizza to the homeless, but often pays for them himself because there are not enough donations. We plan to hold our December meeting at The Plus, have some pizza, and give him a check.

Our regular donations were also made to Ephrem & Starfish Kids

We are always open to ideas and suggestions for Mission from our congregation members. Just place your requests/suggestions in the Mission mailbox (in the church office), the Idea/Question box in the hallway, drop off in the Church Office, or contact a Mission Committee member.

2020 Stewardship Pledge Cards

It's not too late to return your Stewardship Pledge Card for 2020. Just place in the envelope provided and mail to the church, drop it in the collection plate at worship, or drop it off in the church office. Thank you for helping us plan and budget responsibly for the next exciting year at Saving Grace!



Scrip



Perfect for Gift Giving!

“Scrip” is gift cards for many of the places you shop very day. They make wonderful gifts for any occasion and are great when you’re shopping for your holiday celebrations. Scrip cards are always appreciated and are a great way to help financially support Saving Grace and our mission. And it doesn’t cost you a dime! We have scrip cards for your favorite merchants including **Grocery & Drugstores, Gas Stations, Departments Stores, and Restaurants.**

As of November 17:

YTD Rebates: \$ 12,724

Scrip Balance: \$ 39,171

Scrip is sold prior to Saturday & Sunday services and in the office Monday-Thursday.



Christmas Caroling

Wednesday, December 18th, 5:00 pm

Join the Choir and Confirmation Kids as we go Christmas Caroling! We’ll meet at the church, then carpool to a local senior living center or two to share the good tidings!

All are welcome!

Luke 2:10 *And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.*

Thank You!

A special thank you to John Ruesch for building out the new improved audio/visual booth. Your help (especially on short notice) was very much appreciated!

Reverse Advent Calendar

Share your blessings this season!

Each day add these or other non-perishable food items to a box. Bring to the church on or before December 29th and we’ll deliver to our local food shelf.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| December 1 | box of cereal |
| December 2 | peanut butter |
| December 3 | stuffing mix |
| December 4 | boxed potatoes |
| December 5 | macaroni & cheese |
| December 6 | canned fruit |
| December 7 | canned tomatoes |
| December 8 | canned tuna |
| December 9 | applesauce |
| December 10 | canned sweet potatoes |
| December 11 | cranberry sauce |
| December 12 | canned beans |
| December 13 | dessert mix |
| December 14 | box of crackers |
| December 15 | package of rice |
| December 16 | package of oatmeal |
| December 17 | package of pasta |
| December 18 | spaghetti sauce |
| December 19 | chicken noodle soup |
| December 20 | tomato soup |
| December 21 | can corn |
| December 22 | can mixed vegetables |
| December 23 | can carrots |
| December 24 | can green beans |





December 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 9:30 Fellowship, Sunday School, Bible Study	2 5:30 pm Mission (at The Plus) 6 :30 pm Dave Ramsey Class	3 10 am Staff Meeting	4 10:15 Clearwater Care Ctr. Worship 5 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 Worship	5	6 9 am –12 pm Helping Hands (Fellowship Hall) 12 pm 3S 6 pm White Elephant Party	7 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 3 pm Worship
8 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 9:30 Fellowship, Sunday School, Bible Study 11 am Illumin8 Meeting	9 12-5 Blood Drive 4:30 Management	10 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Reading Club 5 pm Worship & Music 7 pm Dartball	11 2:30 pm Lake Hallie Worship 5 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 Worship	12	13 9 am –12 pm Helping Hands (Fellowship Hall) 12 pm 3S	14 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 3 pm Worship 4-7 Christmas Party
15 Kid's Christmas Program 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 9:30 Fellowship, Bible Study	16	17 11 am Advent Worship & Lunch	18 5 pm Christmas Caroling 6:15 Worship	19	20 12 pm 3S 5-7:30 pm Parent's Night Out	21 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 3 pm Worship
22 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 9:30 Fellowship, Sunday School, Bible Study	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship 2, 4, 8 pm	25 Christmas Day Worship 10 am	26 Office Closed 9:30 am Oakwood Worship	27 12 pm 3S 6 pm Wedding	28 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 3 pm Worship
29 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 9:30 Fellowship	30	31				

Calendar is subject to change. Please refer to your weekly bulletin announcements for updates.

Contact Information

2124 Eastridge Center, Eau Claire, WI 54701 Office Phone: 715-514-3552, Emergency Cell: 715-797-1020

Pastor David Irgens: prirgens@saving-gracechurch.com

Associate Pastor Dan Doran: pastordansglc@gmail.com

Julie Atkinson, Office Manager: office@saving-gracechurch.com

Melissa Corlett, Education Director: mcorlett2013@gmail.com

Beth Joosten, Music Director: music@saving-gracechurch.com

Website: www.saving-gracechurch.com



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YouTube Channel – Saving Grace