

January 2010

Grace Lutheran Church

Volume 9 Issue 1



**Grace Lutheran Congregational Mission Statement:**

Called together by the Holy Spirit, Grace Lutheran Church is a loving family of believers, growing in Christ through God's Word and Sacraments, and reflecting God's love by ministering to others and sharing His Word with the community and the nations.



If you move or change your phone number, please call the office (232-1516) with your new information so our records can stay up-to-date! Thanks!



How to reach Pastor Dave Suelzle:  
Email: david.suelzle@gracefargo.org

Pastor's study: 297-6885  
Home: 205-1853



Office hours are 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday - Friday.

Deadlines: Sunday bulletin - Wednesday at noon  
Newsletter - 20<sup>th</sup> of the month at noon

<b>Treasurer's Report</b>		
<b>Year-To-Date as of:</b>	<b>10/31/09</b>	<b>11/30/09</b>
<b>Receipts</b>	<b>\$214,528</b>	<b>\$241,006</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>\$232,056</b>	<b>\$257,361</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-\$17,528</b>	<b>-\$16,355</b>

# Mission Possible Update:

Because of your generous donations, the congregation's mission obligations to the Crosspointe Lutheran Church mission start has been met and we are up to date with our ND District mission!



On November 27<sup>th</sup> we began a new church year with the 1<sup>st</sup> *Sunday in Advent*. We had the privilege of dedicating our new paraments in a special service highlighting the significance of each season of the Church year. Many people have asked for a synopsis of the messages which I gave during that service.

### Advent

*Advent* comes from two Latin words meaning *coming* or *arrival*. The “season” begins our Church Year as we look forward to Jesus’ coming into our lives. It precedes the Christmas season where we celebrate God coming amongst us in the Person & Work of Jesus, born in Bethlehem. He also came to us in our baptisms to claim us as His own dear children. He comes to us when we read His written Word every day and He will come to take us to heaven on *The Last Day*!

Jesus came in humility to save us sinners. Advent is a season of repentance. We recognize our sin, confessing it to the LORD and living under His total and complete forgiveness by His grace. In this way we are prepared to meet Him at any moment, yearning to live with Him forever in heaven!!

This is reflected by paraments which are **blue**, representing the **hope** of eternal life we have in Christ and the **anticipation** of receiving it when He comes back on *Judgment Day*.

### Christmas

During the *Christmas* season we celebrate the fulfillment of Old Testament promises concerning our salvation in the birth of Jesus, the Christ. This is why *Christmas Day* is also referred to as *The Nativity of our Lord*. It is a celebration of *The Incarnation*—God taking on human form in the Person of Jesus.

It is a celebration of God taking the initiative to do what we can’t possibly do because of our sinfulness. Since we cannot live the perfect life under God’s Law which condemns us, God came and did it for us through the perfect obedience of Jesus! He redeemed us—bought us back from the power of sin and the devil so that we can live as His children in a perfect relationship with Him!

This is reflected by paraments which are **white** representing **purity**, **holiness**, **glory** and **joy**—all of which are ours only through faith in the Person & Work of Jesus!

### Epiphany

The word *epiphany* comes from two Greek words which mean *revealing* or *shining*. It is celebrated on January 6<sup>th</sup> (*The Epiphany Of Our Lord*). God made sure that the birth of Jesus was made known to many different

people, both Jews (e.g. shepherd with the brightness of God's glory all around them) and Gentiles (e.g. the Magi with the shining of the star leading them to Bethlehem). Thus the focus during the season of Epiphany is on God's salvation **for all people**.

January 6<sup>th</sup> has been called *the Gentile Christmas* because The Magi were Gentiles who came to worship Jesus. The Epiphany season has the theme of sharing God's word with all people and the new life they can have through faith in Jesus!

This is reflected by paraments which are **green** representing **new life** and **growth** in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

### Lent

The season of *Lent* begins on *Ash Wednesday* and continues 40 days through Holy Week. It is a period of time when we focus on repentance, recognizing our sins and how they are the cause for Jesus's suffering and death on the cross. The season of *Lent* culminates during *Holy Week*:

- *Palm Sunday* was the day on which Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey as many people praised Him.
- *Maundy Thursday* was the night upon which Jesus instituted *The Lord's Supper* and was arrested. However, before He was arrested He gave His disciples a new command—to *love one another*. *Maundy* is the Latin word for *command*.
- *Good Friday* was the day upon which our Savior *took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows . . . was considered stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted . . . was pierced for our transgressions . . . was crushed for our iniquities*. It was "good" in the sense that His *punishment . . . brought us peace and by His wounds we are healed!* (cf. Isaiah 53)

During this season we use **purple** paraments, representing both **royalty** (i.e. Jesus is our King and Lord) and **sorrow** over sin with its accompanying **repentance**.

### Easter

The word *Easter* is actually a word which means *spring*. The Christians used this word to describe the *Resurrection of our Lord*. During the season of *Easter* we focus on the new life victory which Christ won over the devil. In Genesis 3:15 God promised the devil: *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel*. In the *Easter* season we celebrate the fulfillment of this promise through Jesus' resurrection from the dead!

We also recognize our new life connection with Jesus according to

His promise in John 14:19—*Because I live, you also will live.* We also have victory over death by faith in Him!!

Jesus' resurrection is kind of like “the icing on the cake” of our faith—without it our faith is no good. In Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven we recognize Him according to His claim—**He is Lord of all!!**

This is reflected by paraments which are white representing purity, holiness, glory and joy—all of which are ours only through the Person & Work of Jesus!

### Pentecost

On the *Day of Pentecost* we recognize Jesus' giving His Holy Spirit to His Church so that we can spread the Gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus alone throughout the world. *Pentecost* comes from two Greek words meaning *fifty*. The *Day of Pentecost* as recorded in Acts 2 occurred 50 days after the *Resurrection of our Lord* (i.e. Easter Sunday). Through the giving of the Holy Spirit Jesus' disciples were filled with boldness, strength and courage to live a new life and grow in faith as Jesus Christ was proclaimed in the midst of harsh persecution.

This is reflected by the red paraments for the *Day of Pentecost* which represent zeal (i.e. fire) and martyrdom (i.e. blood).

The *Day of Pentecost* concludes the first half of the church year with its focus on the events and ministry of our Lord Jesus. The second half of the church year contains the . . .

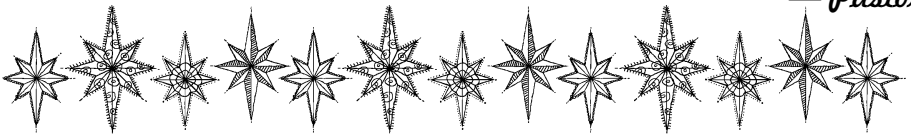
### Sundays after Pentecost

During the *Pentecost* season we focus on the work of sanctification—how the Holy Spirit works His good works in and through His Church (that's us!) every day of our lives. It is the Holy Spirit Who brings us to faith in Jesus, keeps us in that faith and empowers us for works of service for the LORD in our faith. (cf. The meaning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Apostles' Creed)

It is the Holy Spirit Who is constantly calling us through God's Word to offer our lives—all that we are and have—back to God in humble service to Him so that what Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 might be accomplished—*let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

This is reflected by paraments which are green representing new life and growth for all people in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

— *Pastor*



Dear LYF & Grace Members

WOW! The youth have been working really hard for the trip to the National Youth gathering. Thanks to the generosity of our church family, we have made 2000 dollars towards the trip.

We are really blessed. God has shown us over and over what is really important. We can always put our trust in HIM!

As the New Year begins, we can be assured that God will bless and keep us always. May we always focus on HIM.

May the Lord bless and keep you, now and throughout the new year!

Love in Christ!

Jane

Things Coming Up!

January 9-10 - Senior LYF Zone Ski Retreat at Buena Vista outside of beautiful Bemidji! Meet at Beautiful Savior at 2 pm on the 9<sup>th</sup> and we will return about 8:30 pm on Sunday. Cost varies depending on ski/snowboard rental but includes lift tickets for Saturday evening and Sunday, lodging, late night pizza and pop on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. You will need to provide for 3 meals (Saturday & Sunday supper and Sunday lunch). Registration forms, complete with all the information, are available from Jane or the office. Please let Jane know asap if you are going!

January 23 - Junior LYF are going bowling! Meet at church at 5 pm and we will go from there - bring \$10.





## January 2010

Serve the Lord with gladness!  
Psalm 100:2

It's January! It's time to break out the new calendars and planners; time for resolutions and fresh starts! I don't know about you, but I'm always in need of a fresh start. It seems like I'm always making mistakes, or saying or doing the wrong thing, or saying and doing nothing when I should be doing or saying something! I'm so glad that as Christians, we don't have to wait for January 1<sup>st</sup> to have a fresh start. Martin Luther reminds us that "the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever." Titus 3:5 also reminds us that "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit". For those of us in Christ, fresh starts are daily—or even more often—occurrences! Praise God for that!

Jan Brelje  
LWML President

### January events...

Tues, Jan. 6: 7:30 pm - Tuesday Circle at Jan Maus' home

Sat, Jan. 9: 9:00 am - Saturday Circle at Church

Sat, Jan. 23: 9:30 am - Potluck Brunch and Willing Hands workshop. Please bring a brunch dish to share. We will be working on various craft and sewing projects to benefit those in need.

Circle Assignments:

Set-up - Tuesday  
Serving - Saturday  
Clean-up - Thursday

January Project: Lutheran Braille Workers, Hazen, ND

Missionaries:

Paul and Ali Federwitz

Sarah Longmire

Andy and Stephanie Jones

Faith Fretham



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*"I can do everything through Him who gives me strength" Philippians 4:13*

December 2009

Dear Association Member,

Throughout the years, Grace Lutheran School has been blessed by many faithful parents and supporters who greatly sacrificed to make a Christian education possible for the many children who have traveled the hallways. This sacrifice has included the time, talents and treasures of the hundreds of individuals. These blessings in human form have made the ministry at Grace possible.

At this time in our history, Grace Lutheran School has come to a crossroads. With the development of the Association, the coming of a new principal and the changing circumstances in our greater Fargo community, there are many ideas which have been discussed as to how we can prepare your school to face the opportunities in the years to come. It is vital that we develop a strategic plan to insure that we are not wasting the personal or financial resources bestowed on us by our Heavenly Father. St. Peter addressed this when he wrote: "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10)

For this reason, we welcome your input at a special strategic planning forum to be held on Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the school gymnasium. The president of the North Dakota District of the LCMS, Dr. James Banek, has agreed to come and lead this forum in an effort to assist us in developing a 3 to 5 year strategic plan for Grace. Using his wide experience in the area of growth planning, he will guide us in eliciting all ideas and organizing them in such a way that will give the governing board direction for the next several years.

In order to make this meeting a success, we need YOU! Your ideas, thoughts, dreams and prayers are all important. Each person brings unique knowledge, experience, and wisdom to the process. It is hoped that by bringing 120 to 150 people together, we will get a true unified sense of the direction needed for our future.

If you are willing to attend, we ask that you let us know so that we can adequately plan for lunch as well as seating. You can do this by contacting the school office, contacting your church's board members, or by contacting your association church's office prior to January 21<sup>st</sup>.

We look forward to your attendance.

In His and Your Service,

  
James F. Krupski, Principal

## SERVE: WHO? ME?

Ah, ah, ah... I'm too busy. Ah, ah, ah... How can I find the time? Ah, ah, ah... Well, if I don't someone will. Sound familiar? We just finished the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now we begin the journey to his death on the cross and resurrection by which He gave all of us eternal life.

As we gather in a congregation of believers, lets all consider what we can do within our church to help us accomplish our mission of bring the Word and joy of our Lord to others. Each of us has many gifts and talents which can be used to serve in our church. All you have to do is take the first step.

Take for instance helping usher. What an easy way to meet our members and put faces to names. Not to mention the joy of a smile and a greeting to start the day. Do you and your family have an hour to serve once every 1-2 months? Sound overwhelming?

How many have children? What better way to grow with your children in the teaching and learning more about the Lord Jesus Christ. The Board of Christian Education and Sunday School programs are ideal. What about the youth program? Volunteer to chaperone and become active with their activities. Does this sound like a fun way to grow in Christ's love?

These are just a few small examples of what can be done to serve. Our Stewardship board handed out and asked our membership to fill out a survey to identify your talents and how you might be able to serve. Please consider filling that survey out and handing it in at the church office.

Remember, many hands make for small tasks. If we wait for someone else to step forward because we are unwilling or we think we are too busy, we may be missing the wonderful joy of serving, the joy of creating new friendships, the joy of being part of our children's growth in the Lord or the joy of maintaining one of the most beautiful classic churches in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

1 Peter 4:10: Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

George Cusher  
Congregation President



23rd Annual North Dakota District  
Men's Winter Retreat  
January 15-16, 2010  
"Islam on the Rise!  
Should You Care?"

Presenter: Rev. John Loum, St. Louis

at Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads 7 miles west of St. John, ND

begins with supper Friday night at 6:00 pm

and ends Saturday at 3:30 pm

Cost: \$65

(includes 3 meals, lodging, speaker, sleigh ride, etc.)

To register: call 1-800-289-2992 or

E-mail: shcr@utma.com

Come, grow, find joy, and praise our GOD



Grace Lutheran Church has received the official nominating ballot for the Synodical offices of President, First Vice-President and other Vice-Presidents in line of succession. Each voting congregation of the Synod may nominate one or two ordained ministers for the office of President, one or two ordained ministers for the office of First Vice-President, and up to four ordained ministers for Vice-Presidents Two through Five. An ordained minister may be nominated for more than one position, but may not be nominated more than once for the same position. May God bless this nominating process by which we as a Synod endeavor to know and do His will. Questions? Talk with George Cushner, congregational president.



**NOMINATIONS**



*Thank  
You*

Pastor and Ronda would like to thank everyone for their many expressions of love this Christmas season through the greetings, goodies and gifts. To celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior is a privilege which we

enjoy everyday as we experience His rebirth and renewal in our lives through His Word and Spirit daily! In gratitude we say:  
*Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!* (2 Corinthians 9:15)

# NEW AND IMPROVED!

Happy New Year!

Have you looked up the word “new” in your Bible concordance? Just reading the portions of verses listed there is a very affirming, encouraging experience. The message they give can be summed up in one phrase: What Jesus brings us is always “New and improved!”



Some verses talk about the new song that He has put into our mouths. We no longer sing the blues; we have a song of rejoicing, words that extol our Savior and relate to others the greatness of our Lord.

There are verses that remind us that there’s nothing ahead of us that Christ hasn’t faced before us. Nothing that we encounter in this new year will surprise our God, Who has all things under His control.

We read that we are new creatures with new hearts and spirits, new lives and attitudes. Even though our sinful human nature wrestles with our spiritual nature and often seems to win, we are assured that, in spite of what we do and say, we are still new, made new by Christ’s atoning work on the cross.

That work, of course, is what ushered in the new covenant, a covenant based on grace rather than the Law; that work puts into effect the new command which is to love each other as Christ has loved us.

We no longer give or serve because the Law commands it, but because Christ commands it and how can we not respond to that wondrous love that caused Him to give and to serve to the ultimate!

So Happy New Year! It’s not only new, it’s improved!