



Grace Lutheran Church, ELCA  
1245 6th Ave. W., Hendersonville NC 28739  
gracehendersonville.com / pr@gracehendersonville.com / 828-693-4890

**December 2020**

**Strategic Vision:** *Grace is a diverse community of faith serving Christ and sharing the love of God.*

**Mission Statement:** *We believe that God in Christ is central to all life and we WORSHIP him through TELLING his story, GROWING in faith, SUPPORTING each other, and CARING for his world.*

**Purpose:**  
*Transforming Lives Through Christ.*

**Core Values:**

- *Being a nurturing family of faith*
- *Growing faith in God the Father, Son & Holy Spirit*
- *Serving others with the heart of Jesus*
- *Seeking unity in Christ*
- *Embracing people seeking Christ*
- *Welcoming cross-cultural, Cross+Generational*

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## **The Joy of Serving: Serving in Small Ways**

Boys and Girls Club 2020

As with all of us, the Boys and Girls Club have had their challenges through Covid lockdown. They have, however, been able to continue serving the community children in many ways. In coordination with the Henderson County school system, the club began to serve the children of essential and frontline workers. When summer came, they opened their doors to summer programs at 50% capacity, all with Covid safety requirements in place. Now that school has begun, there is remote learning for about 200 students per day. The students have remote learning in the morning, lunch, and club activities, including power hour, in the afternoon. The students remain with the same team for the bulk of the day. Being open in this way helps to continue the mission of the club, i.e. "to inspire and enable young people to realize their full potentials as productive responsible, caring citizens" through development in Mind (achieving in school), Body (staying active and eating healthy) and Spirit (choosing positive personal actions.)

In 2019 the club opened the expanded space and was able to increase daily attendance and daily activities with increased security. They hope to be able to serve these increased numbers with all the activities again when this pandemic has been quelled.

In January I was able to attend the celebration ceremony of Henderson County Boys and Girls Club student of the year. Xzavier Jacobs, a very nice, well-spoken young man, has attended the Club since he was eight years old and, as he said, the club taught him that his dreams were not out of reach and it has helped mold him into the man he is today. He is presently attending WC A&T in Asheville and has continued doing volunteer work at the club and with the homeless.

We are so fortunate to have this wonderful, caring organization in our community. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact me, Nancy Engstrom, at [bnksb@morrisbb.net](mailto:bnksb@morrisbb.net).

### **Thrive Clubhouse Christmas Luncheon**

Friday, Dec. 4

As with most events this year, the Christmas dinner with our Thrive members and guests will have a different look. The Lutheran Men in Mission will be preparing a tasty hot luncheon for the Thrive members. Christmas carols will be performed by Kevin & Sue Filson and Christine Smith and shown via video. Additionally, several social ministry members will appear virtually at the

clubhouse with Christmas wishes. We know God is guiding our efforts and perhaps a new celebration pattern will be established.

Christmas blessings to all, Rosaleen Dawes

## Message from Senior Pastor Greg Williams

Pastor Greg Williams – gwilliams@gracehendersonville.com / 828-693-4890 x307

### Christmas, It's a Mystery

I have always enjoyed a good mystery. I am astounded at how Sherlock Holmes was able to notice the tiniest details and weave them into a solution. Striving to solve the mystery as I read captivated me. The surrounding world disappeared as Sherlock's mystery engulfed me.



Reading a good mystery or any well-written book for that matter is a great way to escape reality and enter another world for a time. As we approach the ninth month of the Coronavirus pandemic, I'm eager to escape this world. How about you?

Christmas, I think, offers this escape - if we are willing. Yes, the pandemic and the precautions we need to take will make Christmas different, even difficult this year. But let's consider how the mystery of Christmas could be helpful given our current situation.

I believe Christmas is one of the greatest divine mysteries. There is so much that I wonder about the mystery of God's incarnation. Two questions persistently engulf and trouble me:

- + How much love does it take to set aside the Divine nature and be totally limited in time and space by a human body?
- + What does God's act at Christmas mean for me?

I easily get lost meditating on these two questions. Time and the happenings of the world all disappear as this divine mystery stirs in my soul. The Spirit teaches me something new every time I meditate on this. However, I have discovered two consistent answers.

First, I can never grasp the depth of God's love which is revealed in Jesus. Second, God's love and act at Christmas compel and propel me to grow in loving and serving my neighbor - I am changed and being changed.

If you meditate on the divine mystery of Christmas, what might the Holy Spirit teach you? I don't know, but it will be time away from this world that is well-spent.

Pastor Greg Williams



*Connecting faith & finances for good.™*

By directing designated Choice Dollars (\$M) through Thrivent Choice, eligible members recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable outreach grant dollars.

### Grace Lutheran Church

ELS Wolters  
Charles Spangler  
Barbara Fountain

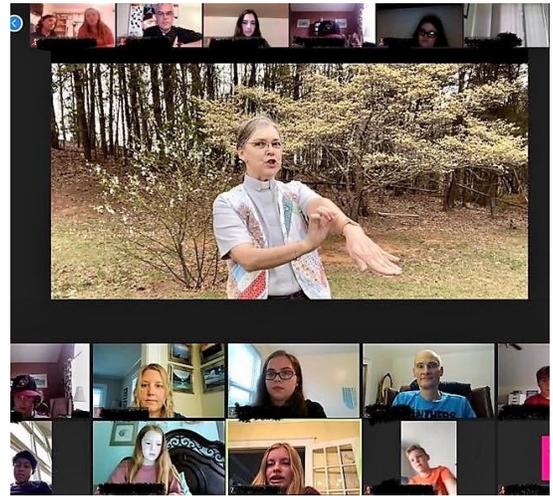
**Thank you for designating Grace for your Thrivent Choice dollars!**

## Grace Youth Ministry

Dir. of Youth & Young Adult Ministry: Anne Monroe – [amonroe@gracehendersonville.com](mailto:amonroe@gracehendersonville.com) / 828-693-4890 x309

### Grace Youth Ministry: North Carolina Synod Leadership and Virtual Confirmation

Technology helps us adapt during the pandemic: once a month Grace Middle School students attend virtual confirmation class with over 100 students and pastors from around the North Carolina Synod. The students learn from various pastors, listen to storytelling from Pastor Mary Canniff-Kuhn, and are led in small groups by a High School Lutheran Youth Organization board member. 6th grade youth Nyles shares this about the virtual experience: *"With challenges that come with 2020 the new 6th grade youth are unable to experience a typical Lutheran Youth Organization gathering. The Synod Confirmation Zoom is another way to celebrate being together. It allows us to learn with other pastors in the state."*



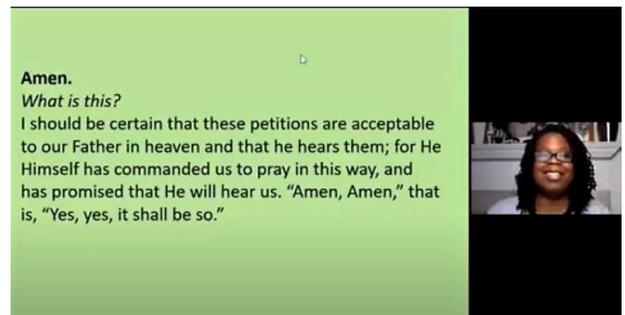
One of our Grace senior students was asked to record a video for the November virtual meeting reflecting on prayer and her faith journey. Nelson was a leader along with Pastor CeCee Mills, Pastor Mary Canniff-Kuhn, and Deacon Tammy Jones West for the session on prayer. Pastor CeCee reminded students: *"Prayer does not have to be perfect in its form. Prayer is simply a conversation with God."* Included here is the text Grace Senior Nelson shared with the Synod confirmation students:



*"Prayer is something that can be really intimidating. I honestly used to be nervous to pray. I thought that I had to say everything perfectly. I thought I had to follow the right format and say the right words for God to hear me. I thought that you had to plan it out before you did it. I've learned that none of that is true. You don't have to pray any specific way. Every prayer is just as important as any other. I've learned that I can just say what I need to say. Really, I don't have to say anything. Sometimes I start to pray and just can't put what I need into words. So, I'll just sit there in prayer. I won't say*

*anything. I'll just know that God is listening. I know that God already knows what I'm going to say. Prayer isn't about being perfect. It's about having a personal relationship with God. It's about remembering and knowing that God is there for you no matter what. Even if I stumble through my words or if I'm praying for something as simple as being thankful for the pretty sky on my way to school. The thought of prayer no longer gives me a sense of dread. It now gives me a sense of peace. Now that I pray how I'm comfortable, I enjoy praying."*

Thank you Nelson for your Synod leadership, and also to the NC Synod for providing this unique ministry opportunity!



**Amen.**

*What is this?*

I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and that he hears them; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way, and has promised that He will hear us. "Amen, Amen," that is, "Yes, yes, it shall be so."

**Invite a new member to your circle!**

**A Message from Our President: Vicki Marthaler**

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the town  
Joseph was searching, walking streets up and down.  
And Mary was patient, so meek and so mild,  
While Joseph was seeking a place for the Child.



In Bethlehem children nestled all snug in their beds  
And grownups were busy. "There's no room" they said.  
When even the innkeeper brusquely sent them away  
Joseph was wondering, "Where they would stay?"



He thought of a cave in the side of the hill.  
"Let's go there," Joseph said "It will be quiet and still."

And there in the cave in a cradle of hay  
The Savior was born on that first Christmas Day.

The Father was watching in heaven above  
And sent for His angels, Messengers of His love.  
More rapid than eagles God's bright angels came  
Rejoicing and eager to announce! To proclaim!



"Now fly to the earth where My poor people live.

Announce the glad tidings My Son comes to give!"

The shepherds were watching their flocks on this night  
And saw in the heavens an unearthly sight!

The angels assured them there was nothing to fear  
"For unto you is born!" they said, "The Savior is here!"

They hastened to find Him and stood at the door  
And Mary invited them in to adore.



He was swaddled in cloths from His head to His feet  
And never did shepherds see a Baby so sweet.

He spoke not a word, but the shepherds all knew  
He was telling them secrets and blessing them too.



Then softly they left Him, the Babe in the hay  
And rejoiced with great joy on that First Christmas Day.

Mary heard them exclaim as they walked up t

"Glory to God in the highest! Peace to all of good will!"

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS**



**For additional information about this and other ministries of the Women of the ELCA, see the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or contact our president, Vicki Marthaler (218-849-5683).**

**Boys and Girls Club**  
Annual Gift of Giving Party

Sponsored by Grace Lutheran Church and First United Methodist Church, this party's function is to allow children from the Boys and Girls Club the opportunity to pick Christmas gifts to GIVE to their parents or guardians.

Last year's party was a huge success due to all the donations and many volunteers from Grace Lutheran as well as First Methodist. I know some have already asked what will happen this year. As much as we would like to have the Gift of Giving Party, due to Covid19 restrictions, it is not feasible to have 300 children and over 200 volunteers over a couple of nights.

However, the leadership team does not want the children to think that we have forgotten about them this year. It was decided that 1 or 2 pieces of activity equipment could be purchased for the club, possibly a gaga pit for the younger children and a volleyball fixed standard for the upper grades.

A letter will be composed to let the children's families know that we are sorry this event can't take place this year, but we truly hope to have a party next year.

If you would like to make a monetary donation towards the gifts for the Club, make your check out to Grace Lutheran and put Boys and Girls Gift of Giving Party in the memo line. You can mail your gift to Grace or drop it in the mail drop outside Grace's front entrance.

Thank you for your continued support of this worthwhile ministry.

Questions? Contact Sandi Brust at 828-772-6898 or [wbrust@yahoo.com](mailto:wbrust@yahoo.com)

<p><b>Peter Mayer's FREE Online Concert – Donations Benefit ELCA World Hunger</b> Wednesday, Dec. 9, 8 p.m.</p>
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Stars and Promises IS MOST CERTAINLY HAPPENING! To accommodate what has been a most different, difficult and unexpected year, we have chosen to do it in a most different and unexpected way. We will be premiering **Stars and Promises "The Unexpected Gift"** as a live stream.

The theme for this year's streaming concert is "The Unexpected Gift." We have enjoyed the special gift of coming to your town for over 20 years for Christmas. This time this show comes to you free of charge for four showings in December. Your presence, tips/donations and generosity will be instrumental in making a difference, as well as covering production costs.

View on the ELCA Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Lutherans/>

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## **Memorial Garden Committee's 2020 Annual Report**

The Memorial Garden Committee, as directed in the constitution of Grace Lutheran Church, is responsible for the management, use and operations of the Memorial Garden - the structure located just outside the church's sanctuary – close to the bell tower. The trustees are selected by the Congregation Council and report quarterly to the Council and annually to the congregation. A brochure describing the Memorial Garden and information is in the rack in the entrance hall and is provided to new members in their packets.

The Committee's plan to expand was completed three years ago and we now have 720 niches in place. The total reserve cost for a niche is \$1200 with \$300 of this amount being applied to the church capital fund.

Activities of the Committee have been constrained due to the virus. Since December 1, 2019, there have been four interments and nine niches reserved. Two niches were returned to the Church. This now leaves 120 niches not reserved. This should provide sufficient niches for about fifteen years based upon past experience.

Over the years we have made changes in the Garden to minimize maintenance while retaining a welcoming appearance. Our Garden Maintenance Team is led by Sandra and David Litogot

and all members participate. They check and cleanup the garden as scheduled by the team's chair. Alan and Janet Harms coordinate activities involving the engraving of plaques for the niches. Last fall the Committee reviewed the general landscaping and decided to make significant changes that will bring some added color to the garden. Triangular earthen sections at corners of the walls have been cleared and now have flower pots with drip irrigation. Stone matching the walkway was placed over landscape cloth to reduce weeding problems. Plants were selected when the pots were installed. Rod Hansen is the lead for the landscaping.

Recently we have experienced a number of resignations and the Committee is down to only eight people. With the travel schedule of members, we are experiencing some problems to oversee the interments as we require two members for this activity. We are currently seeking Grace members who would be willing to join this Committee.

Currently the Memorial Garden Committee includes Trustees: Jerry Liedl and Rod Hansen (co-chairs), Alan and Janet Harms, Rick Rehn and Tom Morgan plus Members: Sandra and David Litogot. Pastor Williams is Staff Liaison.

## **Grace's Foundation's Annual Report**

November 15, 2020

Dear Grace Members,

The Foundation's purpose is to conduct religious, charitable, and educational ministries in agreement with principles of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The bylaws of the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Foundation require an annual meeting of this corporation during the annual congregational meeting of Grace Church. The bylaws are kept in the church office and are available for you to examine. All members of Grace are also members of the Foundation Corporation, and are entitled to one vote on each matter under consideration.

The Foundation was incorporated in 1991 with \$7900. The approximate net assets as of 10/30/20, were \$2,460,448. Grants are made from the earnings on the principal. Since 1991, the Foundation has distributed outreach grants totaling \$624,830 including \$62,000 in 2020.

In addition to outreach, the Foundation maintains seven funds designated for higher education and scholarships. To date, 224 scholarships have been awarded to young adult members of Grace, 49 scholarships have been provided to Blue Ridge Community College students, and including seminarian support, the cumulative distributions total \$297,250, of which \$26,000 has occurred in 2020.

The Foundation's investment committee is comprised of Hal Derrick, Roger Christensen, Rod Hansen, Bill Daleure, and Tom Kasischke. Foundation assets are invested with Vanguard according to our Investment Policy Statement parameters. Administration of education awards was conducted by scholarship committee members Catherine Langsdorf and Caroline Patterson.

Combined annual distributions approximate 4% of the rolling average of the previous three year end 12/31 net asset value balances.

Designated funds can be established by a contribution of \$25,000 within a period of twelve months. The purpose of the fund must be approved by the board of directors. We encourage you to consider establishing such a fund benefiting a cause that is dear to you. The Foundation received no new charitable donations in 2020.

Effective January 1, 2021, we are asking current Foundation board members with expiring terms this December 31<sup>st</sup> to continue serving into 2021 to provide continuity during Covid 19.

The Foundation board of directors thanks all who have established funds in the past. In 2021, we will continue to educate Grace members regarding opportunities for legacy giving.

2020 Board of Directors – Rev. Greg Williams, Ex Officio	Terrell West, Council President
Tom Kasischke, President	Rod Hansen, Secretary
Hal Derrick, Vice President	Caroline Patterson
Terry Andersen, Treasurer	Roger Christensen
	Bill Daleure
	Catherine Langsdorf

## Birthdays

Brandon Buman	12/1	D'Anne Martin	12/9	Warren Weber	12/22
Robert Frederiksen	12/1	Lot Acosta	12/14	Joyce Eddy	12/23
Gary Kester	12/1	Els Wolters	12/14	William Pryor	12/25
Javier Zaragoza	12/2	Suzanne Gibbs	12/15	Emily Roseler	12/25
Kemper Gibson	12/3	Ken Loken	12/15	Marjana Morava	12/26
Barry Pierce	12/3	Karen-Eve Pfozter	12/15	Ella Sochia	12/26
Dorothy Schuette	12/3	Layne Kasischke	12/16	Lauren Sochia	12/26
Gunner Kaddouri	12/4	Caren Geiler	12/17	Edward D'Avanzo	12/27
Simons Michels	12/4	Joyce Hallberg	12/17	Ann Harrison	12/27
Judy Prasil	12/5	Thomas Matthews	12/17	Jane Nelson	12/27
Tom Southard	12/5	Patti O'Neil	12/18	Timothy Meadows	12/29
Thelma Williams	12/5	Bernard Sochia	12/18	Susan Albers	12/30
Brayden Howard	12/6	Cheryl		Eleonore Kloiber	12/30
Lesley Darrah	12/8	Redenbacher	12/19	Friedel Sharadin	12/30
Marie Scarlett	12/8	Jaiden Davis	12/20	Kenneth Ring	12/31
Gregory Williams	12/8	Samuel Elliott	12/20		
Linda Bowman	12/9	Kameron Kaddouri	12/20		
Isabella Christensen	12/9	Sue Filson	12/22		
Philip Klein	12/9				

## Anniversaries

Norris & Cricket Crigler	12/2/1978	Kevin & Becky Havener	12/16/1989
Pamala & Richard Wingrove	12/3/1994	Jim & Darla Krause	12/19/1964
Tom & Karen Bowman	12/6/2000	Ken & Kitty Etterman	12/22/1962
Paul & Dorothy Schuette	12/7/1957	John & Myra Glowacki	12/22/1962
Jan & Johanna Dokter	12/9/1971	Phil & Linda Rymer	12/23/1967
Bill & Marisol Gollnick	12/9/1995	Terry & Jane Andersen	12/26/1981
Henry & Pat Schwenk	12/10/1977	Jim & Judy Oneacre	12/27/1965
Aaron & Evelia Solano-Miraflores	12/10/1994	Dick & Carol Miley	12/28/1971
Alfredo & Alesandra Oviedo	12/12/1974	Roger & Gabriele Wirt	12/29/1977
Ed & Judy Lichtenhagen	12/15/1956	Tom & Donna Southard	12/30/2000



1245 6<sup>th</sup> Ave W  
Hendersonville, NC 28739  
\*\*\*Return Service Requested\*\*\*

## Advent & Christmas Services

Celebrate with us virtually!

**Wednesday Advent Services** - Our virtual Wednesday evening Advent worship services stand as a reminder for us to slow down as the world around us rushes headlong toward Christmas. Advent worship offers us a time of reflection and prayer as we prepare our hearts to welcome the Christ child.

**Holden Evening Prayer** - We gather virtually together in the quiet beauty of the sanctuary for worship. This service invites us to slow down, center our spirits, and reflect on the miracle of God becoming human in the birth of Jesus. Our meditations will be centered on a reading from the Old Testament book of Isaiah.

**Posada** - This virtual service reminds us of the hope Mary and Joseph experienced seeking a place to stay in Bethlehem. It is a witness to the hope in our growing cross-cultural congregation.

**Wednesday, Dec. 2, 6 p.m. - Holden Evening Prayer.**

**Wednesday, Dec. 9, 6 p.m. - Posada**

**Wednesday, Dec. 16, 6 p.m. - Holden Evening Prayer**

### **Christmas Eve Family/Bilingual Worship with Drive-Up Communion – Thursday, Dec. 24, 10 a.m.**

Our virtual bilingual (Spanish & English) service is oriented to children and families. The Family Christmas Eve Service beautifully blends the nativity story from the Books of Matthew and Luke with numerous familiar Christmas carols led by organ and praise instruments as children bring the story to life. All children and children-at-heart are invited to stream this service! Holy Communion will be offered. Assisted by the youth of Grace, the service will be led by Pastors Greg Williams, Ken Langsdorf and Alfredo Oviedo. The service will continue with Drive-Up Communion distribution from 11:15 a.m.-Noon.

### **Christmas Eve Traditional/Candlelight Worship with Drive-Up Communion – Thursday, Dec. 24, 6**

**p.m.** Our virtual traditional candlelight worship service will celebrate the birth of Christ in word, music and sacrament of Holy Communion. Hear the Christmas story, sing familiar carols, and listen to special music by the Grace choirs. The service will continue with Drive-Up Communion distribution from 7:15-8 p.m.

**Christmas Day Service – Friday, Dec. 25, 10 a.m.** Grace will virtually celebrate the birth of Christ with liturgy and a carol-fest service. Hear the Christmas scripture readings, a Christmas message, and join in singing favorite carols.