



November 2023 Grace Notes



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Tallahassee, Florida

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We look forward to seeing at you to worship, at the service of your choice.

The 9:00 a.m. service is our Contemporary Worship service. The 11:00 a.m. service is the traditional service.

If you're not sure about the Contemporary Service, we encourage you to give it at least one try. You never know how it may touch your heart.

If you are unable to attend our worship service in person, there is a link for online viewing, located in the boxed area of our website at www.gracelutheran.faith.

The Grace Lutheran Church Executive Committee consists of the Officers and the Pastor:

President: Sharon Piepmeier

Vice President: Don Blancett

Secretary: Janet McPherson

Treasurer: Peggy Stevens

Financial Secretary: Dave Grant

Pastor Jennifer Kopacz

Our Committee Chairs are lay volunteers:

Fellowship: Mary Grant

These folks are dedicated to making sure that we make time to join together in fellowship; that we have hopeful, inspiring worship; and that our property is not only safe, but beautiful and well-kept. We give thanks for them, and for all those not mentioned above, who give, or serve, or provide help at Grace and/or in our community.



Pastor's Message

Dear People of God ~

In January of 2009, my husband Rob and I had the opportunity to go to Israel as part of a seminary class I was taking. Rob just went along for the incredible trip, but the students, myself included, had to do readings, lead group devotions, keep a journal and, eventually, write a paper. We started our two weeks up north, in Galilee, and worked our way down until we reached Jerusalem in the south. We stayed in the “Old City,” as it’s called, for the last week of our visit, and took day trips from there to other sites. We have so many wonderful memories.

But recently, as I watch the news of what is happening there right now, I have been thinking a lot about one experience we had that was at once tragic and eye-opening. One evening, our group sat down with representatives from an organization called *The Parents Circle – Families Forum* (PCFF). The group consists of both Israeli and Palestinian people, with a variety of backgrounds, and experiences, and stories. But what they have in common is this: they have all lost family members, many of them children, to the violence that has long plagued the Holy Land. The group is made up of people who are Jewish, Muslim and Christian. *The PCFF* operates under the idea that any hope of sustained peace in the region, and among the people, must begin with a process of reconciliation.

What is amazing is that the people we’re talking about might, under any other circumstances, be considered enemies. They don’t share religious beliefs. They have varying political views. And in everyday life, they would rarely, if ever, socialize with one another. Most of them have, in fact, spent their lives in this place that has been the site of a never-ending tug-of-war over land, and power, and Holy spaces. And yet, in the blink of an eye, they have been united by something even more powerful than all of that put together. Grief; loss; despair. And they – better than anyone – understand that this cycle of violence and death and destruction, will never end if something significant doesn’t change. So, in addition to speaking about their experiences, and pressuring their governments and their leaders to work toward compromise, to agree to negotiate, they have become advocates. They believe that the only way for their world, their lives, and the lives of their loved ones to ever improve is for all sides can come to the table, face to face, willing to talk, to listen, to see one another’s humanity, to recognize each other’s losses, and to do the work of reconciliation.

It has been almost 15 years since we were there, since we had the privilege of meeting these people and hearing their stories. And while I've told this story before, while I've talked about the people I met that evening many times, as I watched the news today, something else hit me. I realized how many more families, how many more parents, and grandparents; children and siblings; aunts and uncles; cousins, classmates and friends, may now qualify to be members of this group. No one is immune from this loss.

While we are thousands of miles away from the chaos and destruction in the Holy Land, we cannot ignore it. People – innocent people – are dying. In Gaza and in Israel. And we, as Christians, have our own deep connection to this land. Our faith is rooted in that place, as well. Abraham is the patriarch of Judaism and Christianity through Isaac, and also of Islam through Ishmael. And the Messiah, the Jewish Jesus, was born and raised in Israel; taught, healed, served, and ministered there. He was crucified and died there; and he was resurrected three days later.

However, rather than being a place of peace and hope and joy, a center of religious celebration, it is a place of discord and violence and fear. We are – literally – so close together, and yet so far apart. We will, of course, continue to pray for the people of Israel & Gaza, and all who are impacted by the violence there. But we must also continue to pray for peace in this place. In this Holy Land. Pray for the peace that we, as followers of Jesus desire. But even more importantly, for the peace that God desires.

If you want to know more, you can visit *The Parent Circle – Family Forum* website: <https://www.theparentscircle.org/en/pcff-home-page-en/>. And if you wish to support the people impacted – on all sides – by this violence, please visit *Lutheran Disaster Response* at www.elca.org/Lutheran-Disaster-Response.

May the peace of Christ be with us, and with the people of the Holy Land.

Pastor Jenn

Community Ministry and Outreach at Grace

The Community Ministry and Outreach Committee is sharing the community service ministries/programs that members of Grace are involved. There are many opportunities to be involved in service. If you are interested in participating in any of these programs, please reach out to the respective contact person listed below.

Christmas Connection - November/December 2023 - Contact: Teresa Wooten woot34@hotmail.com

For Christmas Connection, we will again obtain a large family or two to support for Christmas gifts such as clothing and toys. Cards containing information about characteristics of recipients and gift requests will be available in the narthex. Information will be provided about delivering gifts to church and distributing them to families through Christmas Connection.

**Relay for Life – Spring 2024 – Contact: Teresa Wooten
woot34@hotmail.com**

Grace has supported Relay for Life for many years and contributed over \$100,000 to the American Cancer Society. Cancer has affected many of our members, and supporting this fundraising effort is a continuing need. In the past, Grace participated in-person at the Relay for Life walk sites, enjoying camaraderie, creating meaningful display booths, and successfully raising funds. After setting up virtual teams during pandemic years, we hope there will be sufficient interest for Grace to participate in-person once again for the Spring 2024 walk.

**Manna on Meridian – monthly plus every 3 or 4 months - Contact:
Penny Rosinko gprusinko@gmail.com**

Manna on Meridian is a program that helps families have enough to eat. Food distributions take place every third Saturday from 8:00 – 10:00 AM.

Grace will be the lead church every 3rd or 4th month in 2024, which includes the responsibility of bagging food items prior to the distribution. Grace members are invited to participate in the monthly food distributions plus preparation activities when Grace is the lead church. Manna is a coalition ministry of Faith Presbyterian Church, St. Stephen Lutheran Church, St. Paul's UMC, and Unitarian Universal Churches.

**KidSafe [Lutheran Social Services of North Florida (LSSNF)] –
ongoing - Contact: Pastor Jenn, Board Member
pastorjenn@rocketmail.com**

KidSafe plays an important role in helping to reduce childhood injuries and death in the local communities of the Big Bend area of North Florida by providing adaptable safety seats to families with low incomes. The Safety Seat it provides meets all safety standards and adapts to the growth requirements of the child from 5 to 100 pounds. Each seat costs the agency \$125. The KidSafe Board raises funds to provide the seats and oversees the relationships with other not-for-profit agencies, such as Kids Incorporated, that identify and verify the eligibility of clients who receive the seats. KidSafe has ongoing fundraising needs and opportunities to serve on or work with the KidSafe board.

**Meals on Wheels – ongoing – Contact: Mark Storey
off.line@ix.netcom.com**

Several members of Grace participate in Meals on Wheels, a program that delivers hot meals to home-bound seniors daily. The program, operated by Elder Care Services, has been serving seniors in Tallahassee since 1972. The visit of Meals on Wheels volunteers also serves as a safety check. Volunteers may be the only face these seniors see all day. Volunteers usually deliver meals to a small number of seniors one day a week. There is an ongoing need for volunteers, and training is provided by Elder Care Services.

**Support for Leon County School Children – current interest -
Contact: Kris Albers kris.albers@yahoo.com**

Grace has worked with W. T. Moore Elementary School in the past to provide resources to support student success. Recently several members of Grace, including Pastor Jenn, attended a Leon Public Schools meeting to encourage partnerships between organizations and schools to enhance student instruction and learning. There are many ways that help can be

provided. The Grace Women's Group is looking at possibilities for engaging in support for Leon County School students.



Music Notes

“What to Watch”

The Nutcracker – The Tallahassee Ballet

Saturday, November 18 and Sunday, November 19

Lee Hall Auditorium, FAMU, 1601 S Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

Ticket Prices: \$10-\$30

Performance times: varies depending on date

Pas de Vie Ballet's The Nutcracker is an artistically rich performance that has thrilled audiences of all ages for over 30 years. Travel to exotic lands as the dancers transform Lee Hall Auditorium into a winter wonderland. Experience the creative artistry, original choreography and high energy of Pas de Vie Ballet.

Elijah – Tallahassee Community Chorus

Sunday, November 19th, Performance time: 4:00 pm

Ruby Diamond Concert Hall, Florida State University, 222 S. Copeland Street.

Ticket Prices: \$25 Adults; \$20 Seniors; (62+); \$10 Students. Please purchase tickets in advance, as limited tickets will be sold at the door to mitigate crowding.

The season opens with Felix Mendelssohn's greatest oratorio, Elijah. Experience this powerful work with 200 voices raised in song, accompanied by live orchestra and soloists. Depicting the Old Testament story of the prophet Elijah, the work features dramatic action, with stunning chorales and arias, and a fiery chariot! Prepare to be electrified!

LAY READER SCHEDULE

November 12: 9:00 Mary Grant; 11:00 Tina Frese

November 19: 9:00 Janet McPherson 11:00 Abi Hudson

November 26: 9:00 Sharon Piepmeier 11:00 Brent Kallestad

December 3: 9:00 Bill Pomidor; 11:00 Marilyn Harper

December 10: 9:00 Kathy Gatzlaff; 11:00 Jan Peterson

December 17: 9:00 Mary Grant; 11:00 Kathy Sanguinet

December 24: 10:00 Paul Schneider; 5:00pm Bill Pomidor

December 31: 9:00 Janet McPherson; 11:00 Paul Schneider

COMMUNION ASSISTANT SCHEDULE:

November 12: 9:00 Mary Grant; 11:00 Randi Buehner, Mary Eichin
November 19: 9:00 Janet McPherson; 11:00 Marilyn Harper, Abi Hudson
November 26: 9:00 Sharon Piepmeier 11:00 Paul Schneider, Kathy Van Loo

OFFERING COUNTER SCHEDULE:

November 12: Janet Blair, Jim Nelsen, George Ohlin
November 26: Randi Buehner, Dave & Mary Grant

Calling the Men of Grace

The Men's Ministry Group meets the third Monday of each month, beginning at 11:45 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 20.

Women's Group is Meeting Again

Please join us every fourth Tuesday in the Fellowship Hall. The next meeting is November 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. when we will discuss the group's purpose and grow in faith. We would love to see you there!



Happy November Birthdays

November 1

Malcolm McMillan

November 2

Lyyli Van Whittle

November 9

Paula Slade 11/09

November 10

Suzanne Davignon, Debby Stubing

November 11

Linda Fish, Carla Leanillo

November 18

Stephanie Tice

November 21

Sallie Robinson

November 22

Laura Brown, Buddy Dewar

November 24

Linda Ahlquist

November 25

Erin Farrell

November 27

Mary Grant

November 29

Michelle Humowiecki Rodenberg

November 30

Kris-Tena Albers, James Bolling



*Have a topic to share for the December, 2023
Grace Notes? Feel free to send Nick Gandy an
email at ngandyman@yahoo.com. Your input is
always welcome.*

Grace Lutheran Church | 2919 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL 32308

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