

# First Grace Notes



Interim Pastor: Christopher Staley  
PO Box 143, 615 State Street  
Osage, IA 50461  
641-832-1098

December 2024



Luke 2:12-14 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Dec. 1 - Church  
Christmas Decorating  
& Sloppy Joe meal

Dec. 4, 11, 18  
10 AM Bible Study

Office hours  
Wednesdays-  
Pastor at FGLC  
11:00 - 1:00  
Dec. 4, 11, & 18

Dec. 18- Council  
Meeting 5:30 PM

Christmas Eve  
Service - 3:00PM  
Watts Theatre

Dec 29 & Jan 5, 2025  
No Sunday School

\*\*Please see calendar on the last page  
for more events or scan this QR code  
for the calendar.



The First Grace Lutheran Church Council and Pastor Staley would like to wish our First Grace Lutheran congregational family a blessed and wonderful Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Lord Savior. Please join us for Advent Worship services each Sunday in December along with our Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Service on December 24 at Watts Theatre at 3:00 PM.

Our children will be leading the service and there will be a message from Pastor Staley!

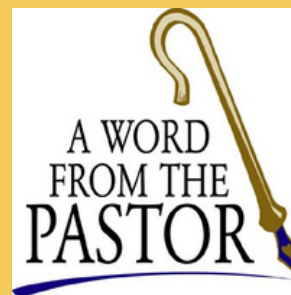


# Merry Christmas!

### Ways to stay connected with FGLC:

\*website: [firstgracelutheran.com](http://firstgracelutheran.com)  
Youtube: First Grace Lutheran Church - Osage  
\*Instagram: @fglc2024  
Facebook: First Grace Lutheran Church

Do you remember when you were very young? If you were like I was then, impatience would have been part of your makeup. Everything had to be done immediately, if not sooner. `Later' was far too long a time to wait, and `tomorrow' was beyond eternity. Did we learn anything as children about patience or is that something that grows on you with each passing year?



There is a little story about a child who found a flask-shaped cocoon of an emperor moth and kept it in a little box for a year, waiting fairly patiently for something to happen. The cocoon of the emperor moth is peculiar in its shape and construction. A narrow opening is left at the neck of the structure through which the perfect moth forces its way out. You would wonder, as this child did, how such a large moth could pass through such a small opening.

Eventually, the time arrived for the moth to escape from its long confinement. The child watched its efforts for hours as it struggled to get out, but it just couldn't seem to make it. Finally, the child's patience was exhausted. Perhaps, she thought, because it had been kept in a box rather than in its natural environment, it had been weakened in some way. The child's compassion overtook her and with the point of some scissors, carefully she snipped the opening to make it larger. And then with perfect ease the moth appeared, dragging a huge swollen body and small shriveled wings. The child watched breathlessly, waiting to see a marvelous transformation take place. But the wait was in vain. It didn't change into a creature of great beauty with exquisitely marked wings, but remained stunted, crawling painfully through its brief life instead of flying through the air on powerful wings.

What the child had failed to understand is that the moth can emerge from its cocoon fully developed only if it has to struggle its way through the narrow opening of the cocoon. Although the child had thought she was helping, she had unfortunately circumvented God's perfect design.

A great deal is said in the Bible about waiting for God, or on God. We so easily grow impatient with God's delays. Much of our trouble in life comes from our restlessness and sometimes reckless haste. We cannot wait for the fruit to ripen, we pick it green. We cannot wait for the answers to our prayers, although the things we may ask for may require many years in their preparation for us. We are urged to walk with God, but at times He walks oh so slowly. It's indeed fortunate that our God is faithful as well as patient because so many times He has to wait for us.

Advent is a time of waiting; a time of waiting for Jesus' return. And it may seem as if he will never come. It is hard, too, to be patient when it seems that the world has been preparing for Christmas for so long: I am pretty sure that I first began seeing Christmas merchandise on display in stores back in August. But our waiting is for a date that is not on any calendar. Our waiting is for Christ's return. The church has been waiting for nearly two thousand years, and we take time during Advent to especially think about what it means to wait, what it means to be patient. Like the child in the story, we think we know what is best, and we want so desperately to help Christ's return happen now, because we know how wonderful it will be. But we wait, not with worry, but with eager longing, knowing that God knows what is best, and that God will care for us and for all creation.

"Be still and know that I am God." (**Psalm 46:10**)

Have a blessed Advent,  
Pastor Staley



# Monthly Matters- Youth News

## Building Our Faith.....

### SUNDAY SCHOOL IS COOL!!



In November, our lessons focused on Creation, Adam and Eve, the Tower of Babel, and Isaiah. Through these studies, we explored how to worship and discern what God desires from us. Meanwhile, our older classes continued their study of the Ten Commandments,



learning how to live according to God's will!

The children have been working diligently to prepare for our Christmas Eve service, where they will share the greatest story ever told! For generations, people have cherished singing the beautiful Austrian carol "Still, Still, Still". This song gently reminds us of that holy night in Bethlehem when God became man to save us from sin's curse. During the service, listeners will be transported back to Bethlehem as they hear heartfelt accounts from those who witnessed the miracle of Christ's birth.

Plan to join us for our Christmas Eve Service at 3:00 PM at Watts Theatre!  
Kids—if you haven't yet had the chance to join us for Sunday School, please do!  
There is so much fun and learning going on! We'd love to see you!



Here is our December Sunday School Schedule:

*(\*\*Note a few time changes, we will meet a bit earlier to get in a good practice 😊)*

Sunday, December 1            No Sunday School

**Dec. 1st Christmas Decorating after Worship! Sloppy Joe lunch**

Sunday, December 8            9:00-10:15 AM Sunday School

Sunday, December 15            9:00-10:15 AM Sunday School

WEDNESDAY, December 18    Dress Rehearsal-@ Watts Theatre

5:30 Pizza, Rehearsal to follow. Pick up at 7:30 PM

Sunday, December 22            Dress Rehearsal@Watts Theatre 8:45-10:15 AM

**\*\*Please drop kids off at Watts Theatre, we will walk back to church for Worship.**

Sunday, December 29            No Sunday School

Sunday, January 5, 2025        No Sunday School|





**FOOD BANK COLLECTION-** We are having a canned food drive for the Mitchell County and North Cedar Food Bank! We are collecting needed canned foods, non-perishable items and cash donations through December 1st. Help us help our neighbors by sharing with others what God gives us!



***It's a TEAM effort! Our 2025 Mission Trip is officially planned! We'll be heading to Waynesville, North Carolina, to assist in recovery efforts following the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene. Our work week is scheduled for June 8-14, 2025.***



***If you'd like more information about the trip, please reach out to Julie.***



**A big thank you to everyone who has donated to the Miracle Tree through First Grace. You are amazing! Our Confirmation classes will be lending a hand with wrapping on December 11th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. If you'd like to join us, come on down! We'll be meeting at Shop On State.**

**Additionally, the Miracle Tree is looking for DRIVERS to help deliver gifts. Deliveries are scheduled for Wednesday, December 18th from 4:00pm until done! (This is a great thing for adults to do to help out while the kids are practicing for the Christmas Eve Service!)**

**Contact Debbie Goodale if you can help!  
Your help would be greatly appreciated!**



First Lutheran in St. Ansgar warmly invites everyone at First Grace to their Christmas morning worship at 9:00 AM. There is also a free Christmas dinner at noon. Reservations are required: Please call Karen at 641-713-2095 or 641-390-0611

# First Grace Highlights

## Call Committe Update

The committee has been working on the church profile which is almost completed. The committee also worked on an employment package for a new pastor to include salary, benefits & housing and gave the church council an estimate of what it would take to employ our own pastor. Next they will work on having the video ready and profile ready to submit by the February 2025 council meeting.

## Building Update

The new Building Team consists of Becky Wagner, Jeff Huftalin, Theresa Schaefer, Paul Danzow and Hakkon Rosendahl. This team will work to present a plan to the congregation. Our lease with the Senior Center expires in May, so the council is looking into options and will report to the congregation.

## Hot Beef Sundae Fundraiser



What a wonderful turnout for our Hot Beef Sundae Building Fundraiser! We raised \$3,400 for our building fund!!



## Property Committee Update

- We will purchase some shelving and totes for extra storage.
- Plans are to insulate the utility room and leave the bathroom and storage room doors open to allow heat into these areas rather than running a portable heater.
- We may need to look at purchasing some small heaters when it gets colder.

## Can Collection



The can trailer in St. Ansgar has gone south for the winter months! It will be back in the spring. Please use the Osage trailer for your cans or call the church phone number (832-1098) and leave your name, number, and address and we can come pick them up.

## Time and Talent Sheets

If you have not yet filled out a Time and Talent sheet, please do so the next time you are at church for a committee meeting, Bible Study, while attending church or picking up your child from Sunday School. They are on the small table in the Sanctuary as you walk in, and are due by December 17. The basket to return them to is also on the small table. Thank You!!

## Helpers in December:

### READERS:

Dec. 1- Tracy Walk  
Dec. 8- Jayne Olsen  
Dec. 15- Bryce Demuth  
Dec. 22- Jessica Hemann  
Dec. 29- Lori Valasek

### COMMUNION ASSISTANTS:

Dec. 1- Jeff Olsen  
Dec. 15- Jeff Huftalin

### TREATS:

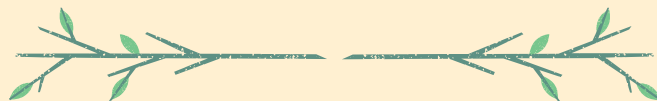
Dec. 1- Daniele Dorsey  
Dec. 8- Heather Huffman  
Dec. 15- Jessica Hemann  
Dec. 22- Beth Pearson  
Dec. 29- Ashley Rosendahl

### Weekly Attendance:

**Nov. 3- 139**  
**Nov. 10- 126**  
**Nov. 17- 122**  
**Nov. 24- 93**

**Monthly Giving for November: \$7240**


**Building Fund November Giving: \$4,480**  
**(including fundraiser meal)**



FIRST GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH		641-832-1098
PO Box 143, 615 State Street, Osage, IA 50461		email: firstgracelutheranchurch@gmail.com



# December 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 Decorating 12:15 Sloppy Joe meal	2	3	4 *10AM Bible Study *11AM-1PM Office Hrs. *7PM Confirmation	5	6	7 Pastor's day off
8 9:00AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship	9	10	11 *10AM Bible Study *11AM-1PM Office Hrs. *6PM Miracle Tree Wrapping *7PM Confirmation	12	13	14 Pastor's day off  9AM-Noon Confirmation kids & anyone who would like to join in bell ringing for the Salvation Army
15 9:00AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship	16	17 Time & Talent Sheets Due	18 *10AM Bible Study *11AM-1PM Office Hrs. *4PM Miracle Tree deliveries *5:30-7:30 Pizza & Rehearsal at Watts Theatre *5:30 Council Mtg. *7PM Confirmation	19	20	21 Pastor's day off
22 8:45AM Sunday School- rehearsal @ Watts Theatre 10:30 AM Worship	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 3PM Watts Theatre	25 Christmas  No regular church activities	26	27	28 Pastor's day off
29 NO Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship	30	31	January 1			Pastor's day off

\*\*Jan. 5, 2025- NO Sunday School