

AMAZING GRACE CONNECTIONS

OUR MISSION: faith | family | community



CHRISTMAS
DREAMING IN
Coronatide

DECEMBER 2020

CHRIST'S COMING AND CONNECTING
CREATES A BETTER WORLD.

*"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who
dream."*

Psalms 126:1



Read more on page 3

AMAZING GRACE CONNECTIONS

DECEMBER 2020 ISSUE



WHAT'S INSIDE

Pastor's Article	3-4
Advent	5-6
Annual Meeting	7
Financial Matters	8
Financial Peace University	9
Poinsetta Sale	10
God's Global Banyard	10
Faith Five	11
Thank Yous	12
Getting to Know You	13
Where to Find Us	14-15

OFFICE HOURS

Monday	8 AM-11 AM
Wednesday	8 AM-11 AM
Friday	8 AM-11 AM

Welcome to Amazing Grace Connections,
Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake's
newsletter!

For article submissions and announcements,
please email your submission to
churchsec@graceoflilylake.com by the 15th of
each month to be included in the next
newsletter!

Dreaming, A COURAGEOUS CONTEMPLATION & CELEBRATION



Will you pray with me?

*In this Advent of expectation,
grant us a sense of peace and silence and steady calm,
that the hope within our souls
might be the dreams we dream,
the songs we sing, and the melody of our lives.
And might they enlighten us to follow where you lead
From a stable to a glimpse of eternity. Amen.*

Use of "Those Who Dream" theme and images courtesy of | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



Advent & Christmas

With Grace in 2020



As you most likely notice, we are back to worshipping online only (Xmas Eve exception, see details within). It is not likely we will be able to be back in person through the end of 2020. We are sorry for the way things have gone but we invite you to stay safe, healthy and alive. Join us for weekly services, join our bible studies and other outreach events. Watch our website and app for details. If you have ideas or desire, please volunteer, WE NEED YOU!

ADVENT began November 29, 2020. If you have not gotten, but want, special Advent take-home kit, please contact Pastor to make arrangements to get one at Grace or have one delivered. This gift bag is a special Advent meditation gift for you/ your family. Don't miss out! Bags include a weekly Advent Devotion activity easy for all ages. They also have a fuller Advent Devotion Booklet themed "Those Who Dream", our Advent series that includes prayers, reflections, and activities as well as information about our Christmas giving activities.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES WILL ALL BE ONLINE beginning Sundays 9AM

Get all access through our website! Share with a friend.

November 29th – First Sunday in Advent Sermon Title: Keep Awake (hope)

Theme: Those who dream do not fall asleep to the realities of the world. God prompts us to pay attention to where God's dreams for change and new life are emerging. In Advent, we remember that God's ultimate dream is to be intimately connected to us—to come down and dwell among us. As we keep awake, we join Isaiah and the psalmist in pleading for restoration and for God to draw near

December 6th – 2nd Sunday in Advent Sermon Title: "Prepare the way" (peace)

Theme: John the Baptist calls the crowds into the journey of repentance and transformation. Similarly, we are called to prepare the way for God's message of love and liberation to be shouted, heard, and received. Those who dream make way for righteousness and peace to kiss, for faithfulness to spring up from the ground (Ps. 85:10-11).

December 13th – 3rd Sunday in Advent Sermon Title: "Sow joy (joy)"

Theme: Ultimately, dreams sow joy, even if that joy doesn't immediately spring forth. Sowing seeds into the soil always feels risky and feeble—how can something so small become something so beautiful, so big, and so nourishing? Like Mary, we are called to tend and nurture the dreams God has woven into us.

December 20th – 4th Sunday in Advent Sermon Title: "You are Not Alone; Help to Carry Dreams (love)"

Theme: This week, we recognize what preceded Mary's song of praise: news that was disorienting and bewildering, possibly threatening her life. Together, Mary and Elizabeth find courage and comfort in spite of their unusual circumstances. We, too, are called to carry, support, and encourage one another's dreams.

December 21st – A LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE for a Service of Remembrance & Lament

An Advent tradition within Western Christianity to come together for the Longest Night, a night around the time of the winter solstice, when there are more hours of darkness than light. A time to come together for prayers and laments, to mourn the losses and griefs of the year, to let the tears flow for the hurting places in our own lives, as well as for our country and our world. Known also as "Blue Christmas,"¹ a Longest Night Gathering is a safe and sacred space to share anguish, to plead with God to remember us, to pray for justice and restoration, even to hope against hope, through our doubts and tears and fears, that "God will set things right all over the earth."²

Advent & Christmas

With Grace in 2020



December 24th –CHRISTMAS EVE “WE DREAM TOGETHER”

PARKING LOT SERVICE at Grace at Thursday, December 24th JOIN US at 3 PM & 5 PM

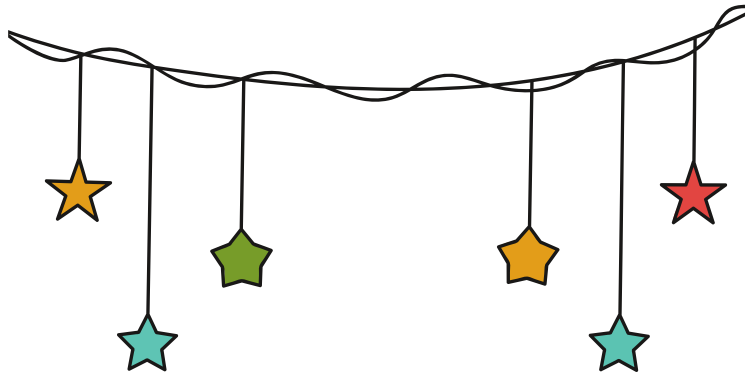
Overall themes: The Christmas story reminds us that we are all dreamers. Like those gathered around the manger, we come to this night each year with awe, wonder, and holy imagination for what is possible. Like Mary, we treasure God’s dream in our hearts and commit to keeping it alive and growing.

December 27th – 1st Sunday after Christmas Sermon Title: “Those who Dream... will not Keep Silent”

Overall themes: God’s dreams are not for us alone. Simeon and Anna could not keep silent—they witnessed Jesus’ divine presence in the temple and were compelled to speak up. Like the prophet Isaiah, we will not keep silent and we will not rest until what has been sown will spring up as righteousness and peace in every nation (Is. 61:11-62:2).

Join us weekly on Sundays for ZOOM at 10AM for our worship

Catch Pastor’s weekly meditations on Facebook Live on Wednesdays begin Thanksgiving week through end of the Year.



See Website for Christmas GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Giving Tree

ELCA Barnyard



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – We need ADVENT & CHRISTMAS Service readers. Please contact Kathy Hooley or Pastor Dawn for reading the lessons during Advent. You will record them online. We can help you do this if interested.

ANNUAL MEETING



We will hold the **ANNUAL MEETING** of our Congregation during Coronatide on **January 31, 2021**. It will be **via ZOOM at 10 AM**. We will have everyone register through chat (as sign-in for quorum) on the day. We hope to have a very strong presence to make important decisions for our ministry and life together. **PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!**

Reports will be available at Grace after January 15th (keep watch for exact date). They also can be sent to each home via email or mail, please let us know if you do not prefer email or cannot get to Grace. **ANNUAL REPORTS are DUE DECEMBER 31, 2020**; send them via email to Cathy Whiteside at Cathy@imotay.com

If you need assistance with a report, we can help you digitize it, but you must let us know; or leave your report in Cathy Whiteside's email box up at Grace.

If you regularly do a report, but have less to report this year, we would still like a simple recording of the fact that Corona changed our lives. Please turn in your reports to Cathy Whiteside by December 31, 2020.

~~~~\*~~~~\*~~~~\*~~~~

## Annual Reports due – December 28th

send to Cathy Whiteside by/on December 28th. If you need re-typed, leave copy in Cathy's box.

## Annual Meeting – January 31st



To all of our church family at Grace - we grateful for all of the contributions = time, talents and financial contributions in 2020. As of Nov 22, we have received pledge cards, contributions and responses from 30 individuals/families. Hallelujah! Adding a note, if you have not returned a response, please take the time to pray for Grace and how your commitment will be a part of the **Faithful, Hopeful, Loving - Appeal 2021**. We appreciate your response by December 11th for our forward planning tasks for 2021.

Due to not being able to gather for indoor worship during most of November, we have not been able to collect Noisy Offering to help offset some of the costs of the TV monitors purchased for our indoor worship. Thank you for your consideration in sending an extra donation towards this expense (expenses necessary for moving back indoors). A special note of thanks to the families that donated the cost of the TV mounts and for the ethernet wires for the TV connections. Others have contributed sanitizing wipes, disinfecting cleaner and paper towels which are all welcome contributions ~ thank you !

Your Giving statements were emailed or mailed and if you have not received your's, please contact Cara Turner at [financial.secretary@graceoflilylake.com](mailto:financial.secretary@graceoflilylake.com). December is a time for reflection (and what a year 2020 has been!), and review -- if you were able to keep your 2020 commitment or in making final contributions at Grace for 2020. Grace is grateful for all of your contributions.

Peace to you in this Advent Season ~ Christmas Blessings to All ~  
Tricia Painter, Treasurer

Finance Team: Dottie and Paul Mantsch, Cara Turner

Please remember when you are shopping on Amazon, to sign-in under AmazonSmiles and select Grace of Lily Lake as your charitable organization.

Here is the link:

"Grace of Lily Lake" link is: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-2806605> "

Thank you for your participation in this program and in supporting Grace of Lily Lake. Each quarter our donations received from this program have grown from \$5, to \$16 and to \$25.

-

#### Thrivent Choice Dollars

Eligible clients with membership can recommend where Thrivent distributes some of its charitable grant funds. These recommendations are shared by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches. 2020 Choice Dollars must be directed by March 31, 2021



# financial peace university



## Financial Peace University

Financial Peace University will help you control your money, instead of living the other way around. Ramsey Solutions provides biblically based, common sense education and empowerment that give HOPE to everyone in every walk of life.



This program will begin January 5, 2021. It will still be a virtual course - people can take the online video at their own pace and then join a small group gathering on Zoom to discuss the learnings and encourage the practices. This is great for people of teens and up and families.

Come learn practical godly ways to deal with money and start your year building your future. Sign up here!

**SIGN UP AT [fpu.com/1124141](https://fpu.com/1124141) NOW!**





# 2020 *Poinsettia Sale*

This year we will do things a bit differently at Grace. I know many of you enjoy having the poinsettia plants that adorn our altar at Christmas time and taking them home or giving them as gifts. So I think that, this year, we will purchase 2 plants for the altar area at Grace and then take orders for plants for you to have in your home or give away, even to one of our “stay at home friends”.

The price remains at \$10 per plant and they are the same size as we always get - 5-7 blooms in a 6.5” pot. Each poinsettia will come with the pot wrapped in a dark green pot cover, with a care tag, and enclosed in a protective paper sleeve. We have had such good luck with these in the past years – they have been lovely!

We will need your phone order soon (to Kathy or Jan) and plan to have a “drive thru” pickup at church, (where you can pay) hopefully about 2 weeks before Christmas. Please make checks payable to Rebecca Circle and have cash or check in an envelope. There will be further instructions, to each family that orders, as the time nears.

This sale is being sponsored by the Rebecca Circle, so if you have questions or to order, please call Kathy Hooey at 630-341-2293 or Jan Docherty at 630-292-3122.

Thank you so much for your past participation and we pray that your holiday preparations will bring a smile to your face and to your heart. God Bless!



## *God's Global Barnyard*

The Rebecca Circle at Grace Lutheran wholeheartedly agreed at their last meeting to continue with the holiday ELCA Global Barnyard Project. At the end of December, 2019, Grace members and friends gave \$1,585.00 which provided a fish farm, goats, honeybees, pigs, and an entire working family farm which even included a cow.

And so at this 2020 holiday season, we want to think again about giving the gifts that make a difference in our world. These are gifts that “grow the church” – “fight hunger” – and “transform lives.” In order to bring specific information to you, the Rebecca Circle asks that you:

- 1) Watch for a display table at church;
- 2) Read the Grace monthly newsletter;
- 3) Check your mail for information; or
- 4) Call Jan Docherty (815) 901-0910 or Kathy Hooey (630) 365-2293

Please consider making a difference this holiday season. God gives us many opportunities to share and to love.

Six months into the Covid and we are still learning many things. One thing we know for sure regardless is that we have to revamp our Christian Education processes for now and for in the future. We want to structure a supportive and engaging for all ages. It is a challenge to do that during the times we are face-to-face, now an even greater experiment. Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake is proud to introduce to you:

## FAITH 5

**FAITH 5**, developed by Dr. Rich Melheim, a Lutheran pastor and the founder of Faith Inkubators, is a five-step ritual that's being applauded across the U.S. for instilling a sense of security and optimism. It is a 20-30 minute soaking in God's word and care for members of your family and friends. We are going to ask families to share in it together nightly; and we are going to partner up willing singles and pairs to have some study buddies so that we can nurture our faith and create a caring, close-knit faith family that even the Waltons might envy.

**FAITH 5** connects church to home, faith to life, and friends/family members to one another in a powerful way. In essence Faith5 does is an easy-to-follow formula that covers some important basics and empowers even the least confident discussion leader. It doesn't hurt that Faith5 loads in a huge fun factor as well. So who is in?

The **FAITH 5** steps are:

- Step One: Share highs and lows. Name something good and bad you experienced today. Can't think of a personal one? Check out the headlines from the news and teach empathy and compassion for the broader world.
- Step Two: Read a verse/story from your Bible. This could be something you choose as a family/group or one of the weekly lessons from our service or picked popcorn style at random from the Bible.
- Step Three: Talk about how the verse relates to highs and lows. Unpack the verse a bit. What does it mean in your own words? How might it relate to where you are today in your highs and lows?
- Step Four: Pray for one another's highs and lows, for your family, and for the world. Simply talk to God, thank Jesus for the good, and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in specific problems.
- Step Five: Bless one another. Trace the sign of the cross on one another's forehead or palm as a reminder that you belong to God and to one another.

At Grace, we will engage in Faith 5 until at least the end of 2020 as we plan and structure our regular split levels Christian Education programs (i.e. Sunday School, Confirmation, Bible Studies, VBS, etc.). We will be holding an ALL Grace **FAITH 5** monthly at our second Sunday Zoom Fellowship. Confirmation students and their families are expected to engage in **FAITH 5** as a family and on monthly Zoom, as well as participate in regular Zoom classes. (Times/Dates TBA)

If you are interested in participating in FAITH 5 and would like a partner or be willing to have more in your family/group, please contact the church office and we will pair you up. Learn more at: [www.Graceoflilylake.com/Christian Education](http://www.Graceoflilylake.com/Christian Education)



November 29th – First Sunday in Advent Readings: Mark 13:24-37 | Isaiah 64:1-9

December 6th – 2nd Sunday in Advent Readings: Mark 1:1-8 | Isaiah 40:1-11

December 13th – 3rd Sunday in Advent Readings: Luke 1:46-55 | Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 | Psalm 126

December 20th – 4th Sunday in Advent Readings: Luke 1:26-45 | 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 | Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

December 24th – CHRISTMAS EVE Readings: Luke 2:1-20 | Isaiah 9:2-7

December 27th – 1st Sunday after Christmas Readings: Luke 2:22-40 | Isaiah 61:10-62:3



**Our appreciation and gratitude to individuals who have donated their time, talents,  
and resources in various ways:**

- ~ Ken Kusch for his expertise in 'hiding' the electrical cords for our new TVs in the sanctuary. He also installed the touchless /motion detected light switches in bathrooms on the upper and lower levels - they automatically turn off too! Appreciate your expertise on this Ken! Also, "Thank you Cara" for networking with your husband to have this done.
- ~ Linda Smykowski for the donation of the air filters for all of the HVAC systems -- appreciate your helping with this task and finishing the last of the mowing for the season - hopefully? Again, thanks to John Verner on this weekly task during the summer and for his continued attention to our church grounds.
- ~ Ian Engberg for getting the water tanks refilled after our annual sprinkler system inspection (use of the fire truck to do it too!).
- ~ Cathy Whiteside for coordinating the use of church as the local Polling site on Election Day -- prepping, cleaning and clean-up -- your familiarity with all these tasks made for a smooth election day for our community, even with all of the COVID protocaol too
- ~ Margaret Swanson and Cathy Whiteside for helping with the 2 Stewardship mailings - on short notice too -- valuable helping hands on behalf of Grace

**"I do not cease to give thanks for you..." Ephesians 1:16**

God's blessings to all of you! I do not stop giving thanks for the wonderful, amazing, conscientious, caring people of Grace. I have learned so much about you and your God filled spirits this year and I cannot thank you enough. I especially need to lift up the gratitude I feel for George Theros and all the effort he has put in to keep us going in worship and so many other ways. And many thanks to Gloria for all her work and for lending us so much of George. Also with thanks to Cheyenne for her dedication despite working another FT job. To Trish for her detail thinking and willingness to try new things and stick to them until she gets and answer. To the whole worship planning team -

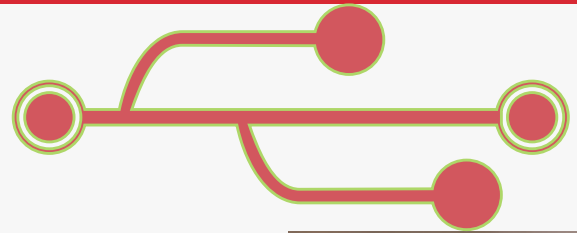
THANK YOU!

- Pastor

***Please consider turning in your 2021 Commitment Card today - online, in the mail or drop it by church today.***

# Getting to Know You

BILL AND LORI U'REN



Bill and Lori were married on October 4th, 1969 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Elgin, Illinois. We were introduced to each other by mutual friends. Both of us were raised on small dairy farms in north central Wisconsin 20 miles from each other. We attended different schools and did not know each other until we met in Elgin in 1968.

Bill had a twin sister that died in infancy. He attended a one room schoolhouse near his home in Angus, Wisconsin through sixth grade. The family moved to Elgin in 1957. Bill graduated from Elgin High School in 1963. After graduation he worked at the First National Bank in Elgin. He was drafted into the Navy in 1965 and discharged in 1967. He returned to work at the First National Bank and in 1971 started working at the Kane County Bank and Trust in Elburn. He worked there for 30 years.

Lori and her older sister both attended the Weyerhaeuser, Wisconsin school system. Lori graduated high school in 1962. We were active in all the dairy farm activities including milking cows morning and night, bailing hay, etc. After graduation I moved to Chicago and worked as a typist for a steel company and attended Bogan Jr. College. I met a classmate there that said she knew of a nursing school that I could attend and afford.....Cook County School of Nursing. I graduated in 1966. After working at Cook County Hospital for a year I attended Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. I had to return to work for financial reasons and started working at Sherman Hospital in Elgin. I obtained my bachelor's degree going to NIU part time.



Bill and I began dating in 1968 and were married in 1969. We lived in West Dundee until 1975. Our daughter, Peggy was born in 1971 and our son, Lance in 1974. In 1975 we moved to a home on Empire Road near Lily Lake. We joined Grace Lutheran Church around that time. In 1993 we moved to a new home in Elgin, closer to Lori's work and Bill's mother. Bill's mother passed away in 2001 and we moved to Lake Havasu City, Arizona in early 2002. I worked at Havasu Regional Medical Center and Bill started his retirement. We would stay in Arizona September through mid-April and spend summers with our daughter and family in Elgin.

In 2014 tragedy struck. Our son-in-law passed away. We sold our home and moved back to Elgin to help our daughter and grandchildren. We purchased a two-story larger home so our grandchildren could finish school in Burlington Central School District. This year, 2020 the last grandchild graduated, and we sold our home and moved to a ranch home in South Elgin.

We enjoy golfing and bowling and spending time with our family. Our daughter has remarried and lives in Danville, Indiana. Our son and family live in Seattle, Washington. Visiting unfortunately is very limited due to the covid pandemic. With the recent restart of Sunday services, we are happy to see our Grace family

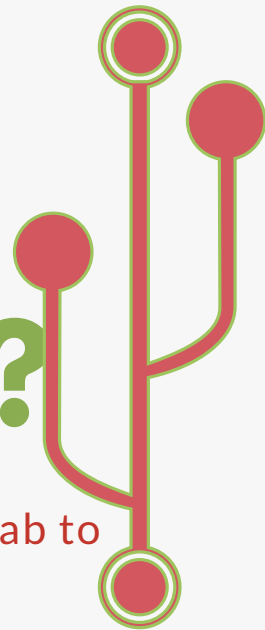
## BIRTHDAY

**A special birthday reminder.** Pastor Norm and Darlene Nelson moved away from our area to their new home in Rockford some time ago, but they will always be in our hearts. Pastor Norm is 94 this year and Darlene is **TURNING 90** on December 9th. Thought you might like an opportunity to send wishes and prayers to her for this special day.

Their address:

Rev. and Mrs Darlene Nelson  
1639 Meadow Circle  
Rockford, IL 61108

# LOOKING FOR WHERE TO FIND US?



**WORSHIP** – on our website every week! Click the media tab to find every current and past service!

**FELLOWSHIP** – on Zoom - check weekly eblast for weekly particulars

**BIBLE STUDY** – Zoom each Tuesday at 9 AM. Contact Pastor Dawn for details.

**PRAYER** - By appointment with Pastor Dawn 847-331-0373 or reach through [Pastor@graceoflilylake.com](mailto:Pastor@graceoflilylake.com) or each Friday morning with and for others through Zoom meeting - *contact Pastor for details.*

# LOOKING FOR SOMETHING ELSE?

While we are apart and you have a need or a question, here is who to go to:  
Financial questions or how to give – Tricia Painter  
Building questions – Kurt Redemann  
Other questions - [churchsec@graceoflilylake.com](mailto:churchsec@graceoflilylake.com)





DO YOU WANT YOUR ARTICLE IN THE NEWSLETTER?

**SUBMIT BY  
DECEMBER 15,  
2020**

**YOUR ARTICLE WILL APPEAR IN OUR  
JANUARY EDITION!**

Submit by emailing your article to [churchsec@graceoflilylake.com](mailto:churchsec@graceoflilylake.com). All submissions welcome. Share your voice with us!



**AMAZING  
GRACE  
CONNECTIONS**