

# AMAZING GRACE CONNECTIONS

OUR MISSION: faith | family | community



*Hindsight,  
Insight and  
Kingdom Might*

JANUARY 2021

**CHRIST'S COMING ENLIGHTENS AND  
TRANSFORMS THE WORLD.**

*"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you." Isaiah 60:1*

*"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 6:*

Read more on page 3

# AMAZING GRACE CONNECTIONS

## JANUARY 2021 ISSUE



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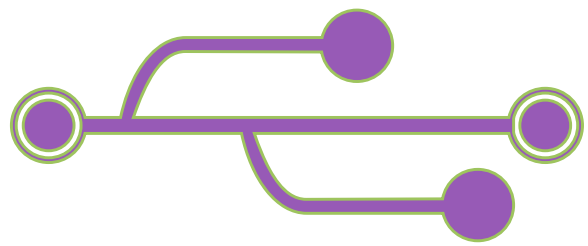
Welcome to Amazing Grace Connections,  
Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake's  
newsletter!

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

### VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

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

# How will you shine in 2021?



WRITTEN BY PASTOR DAWN ROUCKA

They say hindsight is 2020! I am not sure I want to look back at 2020 as that moment of “AHA!” but as a person of faith, a God-follower, it has been a time of epiphany! The word ‘epiphany’ means a moment to suddenly, clearly see or hear something in a new way. It is a moment of pause, time to take a breath; a moment to learn, see the change at hand in the moment of revelation, and respond in some way.

It is (almost) Epiphany! We paused and witnessed again that Christ is born. The Lord of love and life is with us! Epiphany follows the Christmas season and begins following the 12 days of Christmas on January 6th. From the Greek for “appearance” or “manifestation” (epiphaneia), Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Son of God among us as one of us — both fully divine and fully human. Traditionally, in western Christianity it is believed the time when the three kings, or wise men, visited Jesus in Bethlehem, and they saw him and the world’s true nature “manifested” before them. They and others understood, in head and heart, that the world had changed. Our world has changed too. Shifted big time in the past year or so. The past year has been an epiphany in so many ways. Did the “aha!” moments of 2020 challenge you, spur you to action or cause you to hunker down and hide out? Or maybe ALL of the above? All of life is transformation. Epiphanies are ours for the asking and seeing – and then responding -with courage, movement, and attention.



Certainly, new learning is challenging and 2020 had an abundance of new and challenging aspects begging for response. To some things we responded immediately, maybe effectively. To others we are still thinking, dreaming those Advent dreams with shared together in hopes of creating the time and space for God’s Kingdom to be seen more clearly through our lives. What have we dreamed of? What can we claim together as people of faith, leaders of God’s manifestation on earth in this troubling 21st century times? God gives us power to design the future, but do you use that might or just say you might?

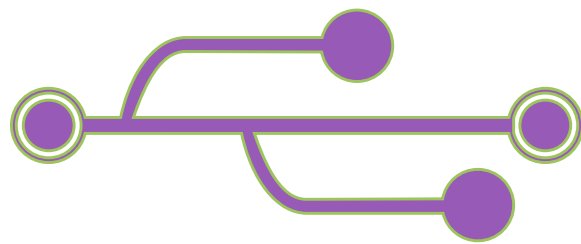
I know many find it difficult to understand God’s claim or call for us – individually or communally. I have, but have learned that often it takes time and a look back to see the trail of our lives and where God has been through it. Have you arrived to today still here? (Obviously, you are reading this!) Have you learned even one thing over the past year? Have you done something new? (And all of us have whether we wanted to or not!) Have you put one foot in front of the other even when you did not know where you were headed?



We will hold our annual congregational meeting at the end of January to talk about what was, and lean together into the unknown-but-God-trusted future. It will be a time to share our hopes and dreaming, a time to proclaim that despite the darkness and fears of the year behind, we go with God or know that God goes with us. We can share what we have learned, and what we might do differently. I invite you to join us and if you cannot be present, share those hopes and dreams and ideas by phone or email before hand. We need your God-given dreams, your insight and light, your Kingdom might. It is community and conversation that clarifies God’s call and how God shapes us.

In 2021 together we will reflect on the God who continually encourages and strengthens God’s people. A few years ago, we played with stars and light in the sanctuary, and handed out “star words”. For those who received Advent bags, you received a set of Star words\* (If you didn’t receive any, please contact me and I will get you some). A star word is simply word printed on a piece of paper with stars or a star-shaped piece of paper. If you have

# How will you shine in 2021?



multiple words, you are asked to choose one and reflect on that word for the coming year. Ponder what significance this word might have in your life and how God might be speaking to you through that simple message.

***"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word."*** Hebrews 1:3



Like any other gift, star word gifts can either be received with joy or discarded and forgotten. To see how God is manifesting in your life, be intentional about your response to your star gift. Will the paper stars be stuffed into a pocket or jammed into the bottom of a purse, never to be considered again? Or will that word be considered an opportunity—a chance to reflect on how God speaks to God's people? What might we learn from one word? What new ideas might evolve, what treasured wisdom might resurface?

Additionally, as we move into 2021 with a sense of hope - whether it be to see beloved family and friends again, a better healthful outlook or a clearer vision of how God is leading us, Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake – I invite us to become Prayer Warriors (Those who while engaged in struggle, hold counsel with the Lord). I plan on holding an All-Congregational Zoom Retreat on a Saturday before Lent (stay tuned) to give us all a tune up in Prayer.

***9 "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."*** 1 Peter 2:9

The Epiphany season is the celebration of God's presence breaking through to shine as a light in the darkness. Our generous, giving God is granting us vision working through our hindsight, insight and empowering us with gifts of Kingdom might for the transformation and healing of the world - how will you get involved.?

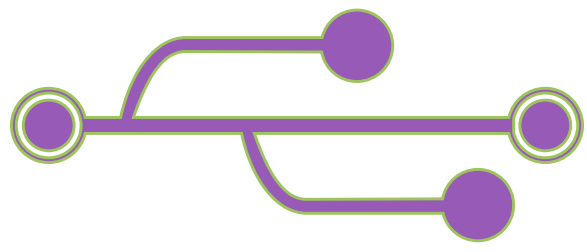
***"For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light"*** Eph 5:8

***\*STAR WORDS – graphics and star word images "Those Who Dream" courtesy of | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org Used by permission.***





# How will you shine in 2021?



This poem spoke loudly to me, and Epiphany calls us NOT to be silent, not to keep the Good News of God in our lives to ourselves. I did not write this, but it is a powerful light.

Singing to the Night Who would have thought the sky could be so pierced, or that it could pour forth such light through the breach whose shape matched so precisely the hole in the heart that had ached for long ages, weary from all its emptying?

And what had once been a wound opened now like a door or a dream, radiant in its welcome, singing to the night that would prove itself at last not endless.

Call the piercing a star. Call it the place the light begins. Call it the point that tethers us to this sheltering sky.

Call it the hope that keeps holding us to this broken, blessed earth, that keeps turning us toward this world luminous beneath its shadows.

Call it the vigil fire kept in that place where every last thing will be mended and we will see one another finally whole, shining like the noonday sun.

—Jan Richardson



**Epiphany Star Available online for all  
ages to color!**



To all of our church family at Grace - we are grateful for all of your contributions = time, talents and financial contributions in 2020. As of Dec. 15, we have received 34 pledge cards, contributions and responses from individuals and families. Thank you all for your prayerful consideration with the Faithful, Hopeful, Loving - Appeal 2021. Your responses will allow the Vision Team to start work on budgeting tasks for 2021.

Thank you for your continued support when making your Amazon purchases by supporting Grace of Lily Lake under the AmazonSmiles charitable program. We anticipate the 4th quarter contribution from AmazonSmiles, to be made in January.

We are planning on having the 2020 year-end Giving statements emailed or mailed by mid- January.

RE: Annual Meeting - January 31 - please watch the bulletin, email notices, and our website for details on how we will be conducting and how you can participate in the annual meeting that day.

Peace to you in this new year ~

Tricia Painter, Treasurer

Finance Team: Dottie and Paul Mantsch, Cara Turner

# ANNUAL REPORTS

(Yes! It is that time already!)

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 were DUE DECEMBER 31, 2020; contact Cathy Whiteside at [Cathy@imotay.com](mailto:Cathy@imotay.com) immediately if you still need to turn something in or need assistance with a report.

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.

**Annual Meeting – January 31st**

**10 AM via Zoom**

# From Tim Polk Homeless Ministry Head



This is Tim from Bridge to Life Homeless Ministry in Elgin. Ginger and Rob have been bringing donations from your Church to us to distribute to our homeless friends. Our friends live outside 24/7, 365 days a year, sleeping sometimes on the ground, in tents, in cars, in the woods, in parking garages and other numerous places wherever they can rest. I can't put into words to express our joy and gratitude for your generosity of your donations from you and all of the people who gave. You all have blessed us and reminded us to know it takes the Church body to serve Our Lord Jesus Christ. We all have different gifts that we received from God. You have organized a wonderful Christ centered ministry collecting and donating items that our homeless friends are in desperate need of. That is hard work! Thank You so much for loving Jesus the way you do.

Bridge To Life team delivers the items and meals every week to where our homeless friends live outside on Sundays between 1pm and 8pm, and sometimes during the week all year and we let our friends know it ALL came from Our Lord Jesus Christ. We let them know Jesus Christ desires a personal relationship with each and every one of them and we pray with them when they allow, and pray for them on our own when they don't allow us to pray for them, and we pray together for them on a regular basis. We listen more than we talk. Our friends are not heard, very sad but true. Each of our friends have a story just like we all do, I can't express to you how precious our homeless friends are.

We are all equal at the Cross of Jesus Christ, and we do our best to remind each of our friends of that, and do not ever judge them. We desire friendship relationships with each and every one of them. We do our best to encourage and give each of our friends hope in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We give Jesus All The Glory and Praise for each one of our friends, Jesus gives us the grace and compassion and the words to say to our friends. On our own we cannot accomplish this. I know you have asked for pictures. I do not allow pictures because we respect our friends privacy and we honor them with that promise.

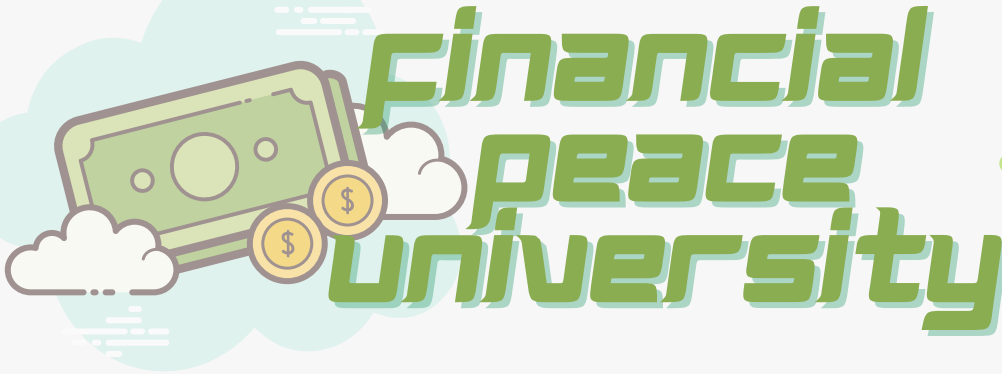
We are Blessed to have each one of our homeless friends as our friends and some are brothers and sisters in Christ. Please keep us in prayer to keep planting seeds in our friends hearts of Jesus Christ love for them and for Our Father God to draw them to Him by the Grace and Love of The Holy Spirit. The foundation of the Bridge To Life Homeless Ministry is Matthew 25:30-46.

Lord Jesus Christ blessings to you and your ministry team.

Thank you so much for all you do.

Tim





## 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 giveHOPE 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!**



# 2021

## Epiphany

Epiphany is the season of revelation. We learn a lot about God, Jesus and God's purposes for humankind. We hear the call of God's chosen to lead and guide and learn what baptismal living means. At Grace we will likely continue to worship Online, learning to claim and loudly proclaim God's presence among us even while we are apart. We will learn for ourselves how God is guiding our lives, perhaps through the practice of using our Star Word gift or joining the congregational prayer retreat. What will be your AHA! Moment during this enlightening season?

**ALL Epiphany SERVICES WILL ALL BE ONLINE beginning Sundays 9AM**

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

[Join us weekly on Sundays for ZOOM at 10AM for our worship with this link!](#)

## Online Only Worship

As you most likely notice, we are back to worshipping online only (Xmas Eve was the exception). It is not likely we will be able to be back in person before Easter but we will take it week by week as the vaccines roll out and people follow prevention protocols. 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!**

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 Incubators, 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.

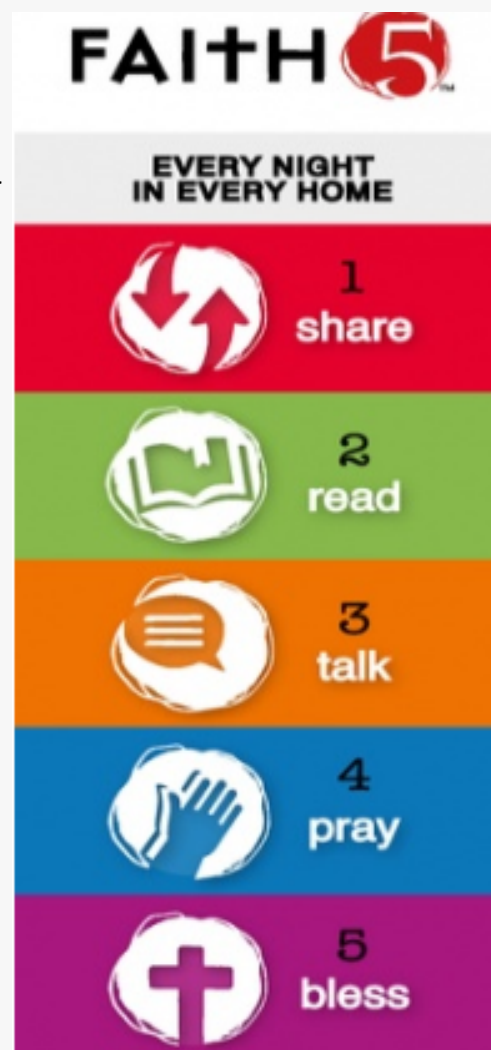
**FAITH 5** connects church to home, faith to life, and friends/family members to one another in a powerful way. In essence Faith5 does is an easy-to-follow formula that covers some important basics and empowers even the least confident discussion leader. It doesn't hurt that Faith5 loads in a huge fun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



January 3, 2021 – 2nd Sunday of Christmas – Isaiah 61:10-62:3 & Luke 2:22-40

January 6, 2021 – Epiphany of Our Lord – Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12

See SPECIAL SERVICE by 2019-2020 ELCA Bishop classes including Bishop Curry of Metro Chicago

January 10, 2021 – Baptism of Our Lord – Genesis 1:1-5 & Mark 1:4-11

January 17, 2021 – 2nd Sunday of Epiphany – 1 Samuel 3:1-10 & John 1:43-51

January 24, 2021 – 3rd Sunday of Epiphany – Jonah 3:1-5, 10 & Mark 1:14-20

January 31, 2021 – 4th Sunday of Epiphany – Deuteronomy 18:15-20 & Mark 1:21-28





Thank you for participating in Christmas GIVING  
OPPORTUNITIES

Giving Tree

ELCA Barnyard (Update from Jan D.) before Christmas total was  
near \$3500, highest total ever. Thank YOU!



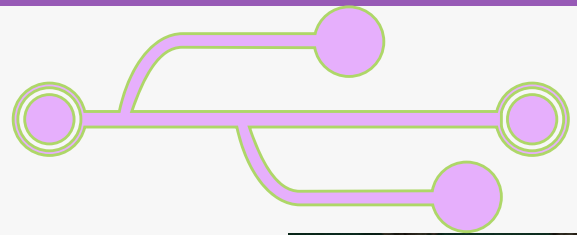
THANK YOUs -

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

God's blessings to all of you! – THANK YOU! Thanks for the  
Christmas cards sent to me and Ken, thanks to the Docherty's for  
the lovely holiday fruit basket. Pastor

# Getting to Know You

THE ADAMS FAMILY



Renee and I both grew up in Mt. Prospect, Illinois. We met in 1987 but didn't start dating until 1988. A few years later we were married in St. Raymond's Catholic Church. Renee is Catholic and I'm Lutheran. We were actually approached to help teach Pre Cana classes geared towards interfaith marriages. We moved to Itasca, Illinois, where Glenn was born in 1995. Looking for a larger home, we actually bought a lot and contracted to build a house in Wauconda. The development was told by the city it couldn't continue the expansion due to an outdated infrastructure that needed improvement to accommodate the population growth. Thank God because we would not have found the home we live in now. It's much nicer than Wauconda would have ever been. At the time it was called Elgin Countryside. A few years later Ariel was born. Both of our children went to the local public schools and did well. Both kids were involved in sports and Renee and I assisted with coaching and keeping the books for baseball. Ariel played softball and then developed an interest in mixed martial arts. We currently have and love our two dogs, Roxy and Luther. Four cats also belong to our pack, Bella, Molly, Baby and Blue. All the cats are rescues.



Renee became a licensed Cosmetologist after high school. She has worked at home a hairdresser since moving to our present home. She also spent many years being a "Lunch Lady" in the Burlington School District. Having a love for animals she went back to school and earned a Veterinary Tech Certificate. She has spent the last few years work working full time as a Vet Tech in addition to taking care of her hairdressing customers.

Glenn joined the Navy in 2015 and has one more year before he will be honorably discharged. The plan for now is for Glenn to join me in business or seek a position using his IT knowledge that he acquired in the military. Ariel's in college and plans to become a dental hygienist.

We actually learned about Grace from our onetime neighbor, Trish Painter. We attended a couple of services and then approached Pastor Rex to see about the possibility of becoming members. It was not difficult and definitely worth it. When they were younger, the kids attended Sunday School, which Renee taught for a while. I was asked to play drums in the praise band years ago and really enjoyed being part of it.

Let us hope our country can get back to what it was before the pandemic. A new normal is something I worry about and not on board with, not only for my family but all Americans. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year! God bless America!

Mark S. Adams and Family





# 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 or each Friday morning with and for others through Zoom meeting - *contact Pastor for details.*

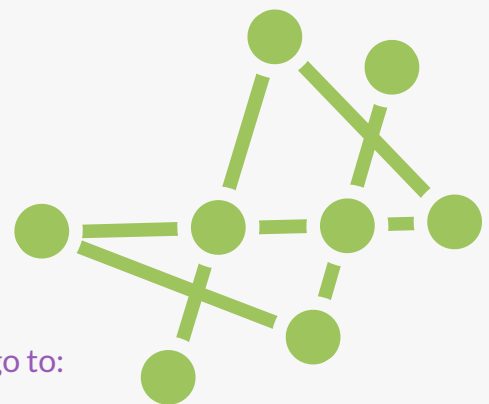
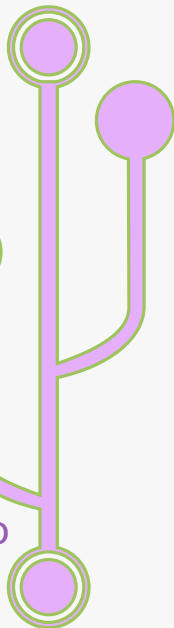
# LOOKING FOR SOMETHING ELSE?

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



DO YOU WANT YOUR ARTICLE IN THE NEWSLETTER?

**SUBMIT BY  
JANUARY 15,  
2020**

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

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



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