

# Voice of Grace

*We are called to proclaim the Word and celebrate the sacraments.*

*We gather in Christian community for nurture and support. We are sent out in service to others.*



## *A New Year's Prayer*

*"Heavenly Father,  
for this coming year  
Just one request I bring.  
I do not pray for happiness or any  
earthly thing.  
I do not ask to understand the way you lead me;  
But this I ask—teach me to do the thing that  
pleases You.  
I want to know Your guiding voice,  
To walk with you each day.*

*Heavenly Father,  
Make me swift to hear and ready to obey;  
And thus the year I now begin  
A happy year will be,  
If I am seeking just to do  
The thing that pleases You."*

*Anonymous*



## Pastor's Message

Nearly every Sunday, we celebrate the Eucharist.

“Eucharist” comes from the Greek word eucharistia, which means “thanksgiving.”

More often, we say “communion” or more specifically “Holy Communion” for when we gather at the table. The rubrics for our liturgy call it simply “The Meal.”

But in any case, we begin that section of the service with “The Great Thanksgiving.” You may know it as “The Lord be with you/And also with you. Lift up your hearts/We lift them to the Lord, Let us give thanks to the Lord our God/It is right to give our thanks and praise.” We speak it or sing it, depending on the worship “setting” we are using. (Of which there are 10 different options with different music for each during the kyrie, song of praise, communion, etc.)

In our larger denominational church body, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), common practices around the Eucharist have changed through the years. In a relatively short time, less than a quarter-century of sharing in the meal in Lutheran churches, I have seen substantial change in the frequency of celebrating communion. Once a month, then two Sundays a month or every other Sunday and now for quite some time, as I mentioned above, nearly every Sunday.

More seasoned Lutheran worship veterans explained to me the previous infrequency made it a more “special” commemoration. Now it’s swung in most contexts to somewhat of a letdown when we don’t have communion. In the absence of an ordained pastor, a “Service of the Word” is typically held, with a layperson presiding or preaching.

In the Lutheran church, a pastor is typically required to preside over Communion because only the role of the pastor is entrusted with the authority to administer the sacraments of communion and baptism. Converting, if you will, from a less-formal tradition in the Pentecostal church, this took me some getting used to. The practice is rooted in the history of the Lutheran confessions, dating back to when reformers like Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon were still seeking to reform the Roman Catholic Church from within and not as a breakaway from the only Church known in Western Europe.

Now if you ask some Lutheran leaders, you might hear some grumbling about how closely serving communion is guarded. Why are we so concerned about who presides over the sacrament, which is fairly simple to say and do, and yet much less strict about letting others preach? The latter is a much more time-consuming and intensive preparation process, assuming one is taking the task seriously. As one should if they are to assume that function.

But let’s save preaching for another day (say, this Sunday, perhaps?)

I mentioned who can preside at the table but if you have worshipped at Grace, I hope you already know who can come to the table.

Anyone. As the Minister of Word and Sacrament (official title in the ELCA) for this particular expression of the Church, I believe when Jesus instituted the meal and shared it with all who were with him, he meant “all” to mean ALL (Mark 14:23). Judas ate of the bread and drank from the cup (Luke: 22:21-23). If a sinner like that can receive the bread and wine as Jesus’ body and blood, I have no business denying anyone else what, as I usually share in the invitation, God most freely gives.

In the ELCA guideline document “The Ways and Means of Grace,” it is stated that only baptized Christians should receive the sacrament. In practice, unlike days of yesteryear that boggle my mind, no one is “checking cards” or having folks sign in on a book before coming forward to altar. In my own experience, I communed for almost three years at Trinity Lutheran Church on South Whidbey Island before I accepted the invitation to the waters of baptism presented at Pullman Foursquare Church as a junior in college. Compared with the hurtful experience of being denied communion for one of my best friend’s father’s funeral at a Catholic church a month or two after high school



graduation, I believe strongly with this, as with a number of other things, that if I risk erring, I will risk error on the side of grace.

Worthiness to receive the meal is not based on a proper “understanding.” Who truly understands the mystery of God’s real presence in the bread and wine? Should a developmentally disabled person thus be denied? A dementia patient? I believe not and I will not. Thus when even the youngest child reaches out their hand, they demonstrate plenty understanding in receiving the words “for you,” spoken when distributed.

The aforementioned “real presence,” the mystery of God truly “in, around, over and underneath the elements of bread and wine” as the body and blood of Christ while remaining yet bread and wine, differs from the theology of transubstantiation found in the Catholic church. It is also different than the theology of simple remembrance practiced among most other Protestant traditions. Nevertheless, subscribing to a different theology around “how it works” should not prevent one from communing with us. Our practice is known as “open communion,” when we do not hold close to a tighter limit on who can commune in our worship.

There is a lot more which can be said about communion and our practices around it. Maybe I will return to the subject in the next edition of this newsletter. However, I want to bring us back to where I began.

Thanksgiving.

We give thanks to the Lord our God in the meal but for our preparations, I want to express my thanks to Dee Dee and all who serve in our altar guild. They prepare the elements every Sunday and it takes considerable time, energy and knowledge. I encourage you to read Dee Dee’s article in this issue and give some thought to joining their small but mighty number. A bigger team expands our options for celebration of the Eucharist and, of course, many hands make lighter work.

The Lord bless you and keep you in God’s grace,

**Pastor Sean**

## Altar Guild

by *DeeDee Norman*

One of the altar guild’s goals is to provide communion on Sundays and other special days in the church calendar. The wine changes depending on the season. On festivals, Christmas, Easter and whenever the altar is white, we use a white wine. During Lent, we use a dry red wine to symbolize the bitter cup of Jesus’ suffering. All other times, port wine is used. White grape juice is used with red wine and purple grape juice is used with white wine. The colors of the paraments and banners also reflect the changing celebrations and seasons.

Since 2020 there have been many changes as we have tried to present communion as safely as possible. The seven ladies who make communion possible are focused on the reverence involved and the blessing that we share at the Lord’s table. To that end, we have communion using the small glass cups and intinction using the clay chalices. Setup and cleanup is greatly reduced when we have intinction. We are using communion wafers and gluten free crackers with the wine. The assisting minister will be using our pewter pouring chalice to distribute the wine on Sundays when the cups are being used.

We are scheduling communion using the glass cups on the first Sunday of the month. All other communion will be by intinction. We will re-evaluate the schedule later in the spring.

If you have any questions, opinions that you’d like to share, or stories about communion, please call or text me at 570-856-0131, email me at [cnorman535@gmail.com](mailto:cnorman535@gmail.com) or talk to me at church.



## Robin's Story

told by Mike Kosin

When I look around at church on Sundays, I find myself wondering about all the back stories each of us have that tend to remain hidden from the rest of us. Not that there is anything that needs to be hidden. It's just that many of those memories are things that we somehow think can't be all that special or even found interesting by others. Things we've done or people that we have met are just that and, because they did happen or involve us in some way, those memories are just a part of the fabric of our life and therefore must be "normal" somehow. It's only when someone else shows a genuine interest in hearing "the story" are we reminded just how special some of these memories are. My wife Robin has such a story.



A still taken from the movie with Robin front and center, wearing the dark orange outfit and a big smile

In early 1977, Robin was in her first year at Cal State-Long Beach in California, having transferred from Pasadena City College the previous fall. She was a member of the CSULB gymnastics team, having been recruited after turning down a partial scholarship to the University of Alabama for her gymnastics. Having caught the eye of college recruiters, she opted to stay closer to home and attend a college that catered closer to her intended course of study. It was during this time that the gymnastics program was approached by the 20th Century Fox studio, that was embarking on a new movie project called "The World's Greatest Lover," starring Gene Wilder, Carol Kane and Dom DeLuise. They were looking for a group of young women for a scene that involved tumbling and other acrobatic moves in a circus show kind of setting. Robin turned out to be one of six team members from CSULB chosen for the movie. Others chosen came from other Southern California colleges like UCLA.

The shooting for the involved scene took three days on set. Robin recalls it being a lot of sitting around between instruction, practice and takes. She still has a certain fondness for Dom DeLuise, recalling how funny and personable he was. Always taking time to joke around with them and helping to make them feel welcome being there. She was paid \$500 for her three days of work, which for a self-sufficient college student at the time was extraordinary. She adds, "They certainly fed us well!"

Upon being released from filming they were instructed to leave all their costuming and such behind, but many of the girls seemed pretty fond of their dance shoes. Many of those somehow "got lost" during this procedure. Robin thought that the dance shoes were a bit more obvious to "misappropriate" so she opted for the fancy garter that she wore during filming. This item then lived in a box in her sewing supplies for nearly 50 years, its story a nearly forgotten memory until fate and family love stepped in.

Our daughter Kelsey is the band and choral director at Rochester High School here in Washington state. During a break she found herself speaking with another teacher. Somehow in their conversation her mom's "touch with fame in the movies" came up. On a

whim while talking, she Google-searched the movie and was showing him images of movie posters when she came across a poster that none of us had ever seen before. It was an Italian movie poster that showed a picture of the gymnasts in costume with Dom DeLuise, and there was her mom right there in the back row! She wasted no time, immediately made inquiries and the subsequent purchase. The poster was soon on its way from Italy. Once it was here in the States, together with her sister Lindsay who works for FrameWorks here in Port Townsend, a plan was soon hatched to memorialize this in a very special way for their mom.

First, the purloined garter needed to be located and "misappropriated" again. Once that was accomplished, FrameWorks set about coming up with a presentation that did the memory and story justice. With ideas going back and forth between the sisters custom matting, framing and protective UV acrylic "glass" was chosen and custom

sized for their intended application. At roughly 3 x 4 feet, this was no easy task! With both sisters bringing it all together, it was completed on December 23, just in time for Christmas.

And so on this recent Christmas morning, Robin opened this very special gift from her daughters. What a surprise to say the least! The many memories came flooding back. It was special to hear more of this very unique time in her life that occurred long before she and I ever met. I can't wait until we can display it properly in our home. It certainly deserves a very special spot. I am so proud of the women in our family who cherish each other, our memories and the ability to continue making new ones. Love you all!



The Italian movie poster along with the garter worn by Robin in the movie. As acquired, matted and framed by her daughters Lindsay and Kelsey. Robin is in the top row, 3rd from the left.

One picture is of the completed poster with the garter encased underneath. Robin is in the top row, third from the left.

The other picture is a low resolution still taken from the movie itself. Robin is front and center ... the only one wearing orange

## Welcome newly elected Grace Council members

Lois Sherwood, Steve Brantner (second term)  
and Stacy Toner.



## Good for Church, Good for You

by Tammy Rumpel

Here is an opportunity to do some good for the Church while doing some New Year's House re-organizing.



Have you ever been inside of the Cherry Blossom Home Store, located on the corner of Highway 19 and Kearney Street? Evan and Nicole sell a wonderful collection of home furnishings. The cool thing is that they can sell items that you may not need anymore. They can donate your part of the item profit to Grace Lutheran Church!

Do you have furniture, jewelry, art and other furnishings in good condition? Are you ready to release these items to a new home? Email a photo to: [cherryblossomporttownsend@hotmail.com](mailto:cherryblossomporttownsend@hotmail.com). Evan will let you know if it is something that will sell at the store.

They will work with you to arrange for dropoff or pickup. Let them know that you want to donate your proceeds to Grace Lutheran Church.

If you have any questions, give them a call at 360-379-0853, or better yet stop by and see what they have in the store. Selling your extra chair through them has the advantage of that chair selling for a higher price than if you went to all the work of trying to sell that chair at a garage sale.

# GRACE GALLERY

Glora Sutton shares photos of three pet portraits that she recently made for the girl who cleans her house. She said, "It was kind of a challenge to do them. Especially the black and white kitty..."



If you have any photos of your work that you want included in this Gallery section, feel free to submit them to [maryeronen@gmail.com](mailto:maryeronen@gmail.com)

## The Story of Life

*contributed by Linda Gaenicke*

On the first day, God created the dog and said, "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of 20 years." The dog said, "That's a long time to be barking. How about only 10 years and I'll give you back the other 10?"

And God saw it was good.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said, "Entertain people, do tricks and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a 20-year life span." The monkey said, "Monkey tricks for 20 years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back 10 like the dog did?"

And God, again saw it was good.

On the third day, God created the cow and said, "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of 60 years." The cow said, "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for 60 years. How about 20 and I'll give back the other 40?"

And God agreed it was good.

On the fourth day, God created humans and said, "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you 20 years." But the human said, "Only 20 years? Could you possibly give me my 20, the 40 the cow gave back, the 10 the monkey gave back, and the 10 the dog gave back; that makes 80, okay?"

"Okay," said God, "You asked for it."

So that is why for our first 20 years, we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next 40 years, we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next 10 years, we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last 10 years, we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you. There is no need to thank me for this valuable information. I'm doing it as a public service. If you are looking for me ...I will be on the front porch.

## Via de Cristo Top 10!

*by Miriam G. Gaenicke*

1. A genuine walk of faith because I knew absolutely nothing about these upcoming activities, schedules, etc.
2. Expanded my Pacific Northwest social circle of Lutherans
3. Solid refresher of timeless Lutheran theology and how it applies to our modern daily lives
4. Proves the staunch importance of hospitality toward others
5. I'm naturally adventurous and wanted to see what VdC entailed
6. Strong emphasis on global VdC Community via letters, cards and prayers
7. Intellectually stimulating
8. Endless support from Grace Lutheran Church/VdC Members
9. I knew The Rev. Coe & Janet Hutchison... high quality event!



10. Why NOT?!

## On The Value Of Post-Sunday School Learning

by Sharon Dembro

Most of us at Grace were in Sunday school/confirmation class a good many decades ago. The landscape of faith was presented to us in terms our grade-school minds could grasp. We learned the basics – the very important basics – and that was, for the most part, the end of our delving into the profound mysteries of our faith. If we continued as faithful Lutherans, we then heard weekly sermons meant to increase our understanding and we were fortunate. Quality preaching has always been important in the Lutheran church. What the 15- minute sermon could not do, however, was answer the questions it might have stirred in us, allow us to interact with other listeners, hear their viewpoints and deepen our relationships or grill the expert – our pastor – to go deeper than a 15- minute sermon allows.

I wonder if we would be satisfied with a grade-school understanding of any other important aspect of our lives, let alone the most important of all: How am I to live? What is the purpose of my life? What happens at the end of it? What's it all about, anyway?

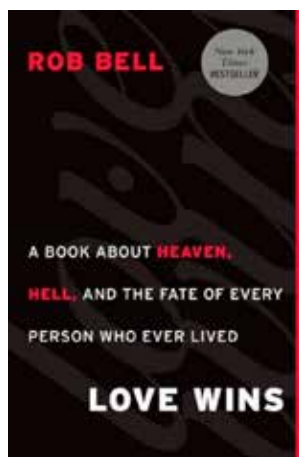
Also, our faith is not static, has never been static. The views of those who devote their lives to the study of scripture evolve over the decades. They can broaden, they can have implications for our own understanding and relationship to God and to our brothers and sisters, but we're mostly unaware of that evolution.

At Grace we have the opportunity to go beyond Sunday school. It's called Christian Education Hour.

We recently read "Love Wins - A Book About Heaven, Hell And The Fate Of Every Person Who Ever Lived." Quite a title! It addressed questions such as:

- Where is heaven?
- Who gets to go there?
- Where is hell?
- Who gets to go there and when?
- Does God get what God wants?
- What does love really mean?

This book shifted my understanding in a liberating, joyful way ... opening up dimensions of my faith that I hadn't wanted to think about too much. It's not long, it's written in everyday language. It's a \$15.99 investment you won't regret!



Our current Christian Education Hour study is the Gospel of Luke. Pastor Sean is putting Luke's words in perspective: Who actually wrote those words? Who were they written for and why? How are they the same or different from the other synoptic gospels? How were they influenced by the struggles of the very early church? What about inconsistencies with the historical record?

We're blessed to have a pastor who is good at this! Take advantage of that! Join us! Bring those questions! Gift yourself this hour in the sanctuary—we start 15 minutes after the postlude. Expand your faith horizon!

## Lover of Christ

by Jerry Schnell

*"The beauty of the world is Christ's tender smile for us coming through matter. He is really present in the universal beauty. The love of this beauty proceeds from God dwelling in our souls and goes out to God present in the universe. It is also like a sacrament."*

The author of the quote is Simone Weil, who was born in Paris in 1909 to Jewish parents who were not active in their faith. Simone grew up to become a woman who valued most of all the love of Christ, beauty and truth. She was also recognized as a genius, mystic, author, philosopher, psychologist, and a controversial academic and political figure.

In her pursuit of truth and beauty, she often spent time in churches and claimed that during one church service Christ himself "descended and took her." This experience changed her life dramatically but she refused Christian baptism. She kept a diary and corresponded with many people. After her death (at age 34), many of her letters and diary entries were published.

I believe I read "Gateway to God" in about the mid-1980s. It changed my life. There can be no doubt Simone loves Christ. She also has many profound thoughts about love, truth and beauty. At the same time, she has astounding ideas about the role of AFFLICTION in following Christ's path. Simone's writings are readily accessible in book-stores, libraries and online.

*May the clouds in your life be only a background for a lovely sunset. — Irish Saying*

# Orphan Update

by Sharon Dembro

I spoke with Kenneth on December 30. He gathered the children on December 23 for their Christmas lunch and to receive their gifts of a blanket and shoes. He personally delivered gifts to those unable to attend because of transportation difficulties. The children loved their messages from Grace!

One of our young scholars, Aggrey Mwogeza, told Kenneth he vows to beat Dagalous Luggya's academic achievements (Dagalous is now on a government scholarship to medical school). Aggrey has completed his national O level exams with results due in January. Kenneth is sure he will receive top marks. He will enroll Aggrey in the same school Dagalous attended - St. Joseph of Nazareth High school - a top quality school. Though more expensive, it's a good investment as the school will prepare Aggrey to ace his national A level exams in order to qualify for a government scholarship to either engineering or medical school.

Starting in 2025, schools are requiring uniforms. This will add an additional cost of \$50 per year per student.

Here are a few photos of our young scholars with their Christmas gifts. Many thanks for making such a difference in these young lives!



Aggrey



Dagalous



Fatifh



Joash



Maria Conceptor



Albert



Azizi



Steven

## A Blast From the Past!



Pastor Coe Hutchison, Mark Dembro, Claus Janssen, Jim Little, Harlan Wolff, Alex Brown, Tom Larsen, Jane and Konrad Schwencke, Linda Wolff, and Lois and Jim Sherwood gathered at the Scout Cabin to honor Alex Brown at the Eagle Court of Honor.

*This undated photo was submitted by Linda Gaenicke.*



## Fish Fry Friday

*by Linda Gaenicke*

Growing up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin generated many memories for me. Among them was the Friday fish fry. Living in a majority Catholic neighborhood, the local taverns offered fish fries on Fridays. These meals were served with fries and a salad. The price was always reasonable and it brought in more customers. There were six taverns in a 2-block radius of my home. These taverns had family rooms where families could come in and enjoy eating and visiting with friends. At that time, taking your children with was not frowned upon but part of the culture. Being Lutheran, my family was not going to miss out on a good fish fry.

One of the tavern owners was looking for a way to generate a little more income and decided to offer a crab dinner. Now the fresh crab had to be flown in and even at that time was very expensive. Reservations were made for the meal and the crab ordered. Cookbooks were inspected as to what seasonings to use.

The night of the dinner arrived and patrons were beginning to arrive for the feast. The huge pot was lifted onto the stove and the cooking began.

*(Story continued on last page)*

## Grace Helps!



Don Fristoe and Pastor Sean served up a meal with soup from hospital chef Arran Stark and donated by the Port Townsend Sunrise Rotary Club following its Community Bowls fundraiser November 23 at the shelter.



A donation of socks from Chuck and Barbara Thompson made their way to the sock drive for those unsheltered locally. Quimper Mercantile served as a donation site for the drive led by the Port Townsend Sunrise Rotary Club.



Pastor Sean co-chaperoned his daughter Liana and the "Wacky Wednesdays" youth group with Pastor Tony Brown from Trinity United Methodist Church in late August. The girls did a service project at a former church building being converted to a community center in East Wenatchee. They also stopped on the way home to enjoy a couple hours in Leavenworth.



Our talented Quilters turn this into oh so many beautiful quilts and send them out to those in need!



The four photos below were provided by Bianca Yapul Alvarez. They were taken during the Christmas meal event in the eastern Dominican Republic, which is supported in part by Grace Lutheran.



## Happy New Year

*What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?  
(Micah 6:8)*

The year 2024 was a difficult one for me and probably for most of us. It was a stressful time in so many ways. Some of us lost loved ones. Some faced hardship. Election years are always troublesome in one way or another, and 2024 was certainly no exception. Now it's time to say goodbye to the old year and hello to the new one.

I am fearful of the future. Daily Mr. Trump gives me cause to worry. One incident occurred recently when I visited the local OlyCAP food truck in Port Hadlock. A representative from OlyCAP was on hand to tell visitors that due to Mr. Trump's recent federal funding freeze it was not known if the truck could be there the following week. This struck me in particular as it obviously affects those who need help on an almost daily basis. It may seem like a small thing but it is an example of how his actions trickle down.

What can one do? I have no answers. But there are resources such as the Faith Action Network (FAN) – website is [fanwa.org](http://fanwa.org). Another is the website of our national ELCA Lutheran Public Policy Office in Washington, D.C.

The New Year traditionally is a time to make resolutions. Why not make one to appreciate what is good in our lives: our church, our family, our friends, our neighbors and last but certainly not least, our world. Why not work toward a better understanding of each other, and to finding peace?

Blessings to you,  
**Mary**



## God's personal grace

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father” (Galatians 1:3-4).

“Grace” was a typical Greek greeting. “Peace” was a typical Hebrew greeting. By using both of these terms together (v. 3), Paul suggests a single community in which Gentiles (non-Jews) and Jews together are part of the same family of God.

In his commentary on Galatians, Martin Luther reflects on the simple phrase “who gave himself for our sins” (v. 4). Luther first emphasizes the verb “gave.” Jesus is the giver, not demander or judge. And what does Jesus give? Not a new law, but the gift of himself!

Next Luther emphasizes the pronoun “our.” It's not enough just to say that Jesus gave himself for the sins of the whole world. That's true but it doesn't go far enough. For Luther, this message – this gift – is very personal. Jesus gave himself for “our” sins – for yours and for mine.

*Excerpted from “Galatians: Christian faith and Christian freedom” by Kathryn A. Kleinhans, January/February 2017 Gather magazine.*

*Fish Fry story continued from p. 9*

The first sign of trouble came when the bartender stepped on something that crunched under his foot. Then a child screamed out... then another scream and people started to move about rather quickly. A waitress dropped a tray with a loud bang.

There were crabs crawling all over the tavern and family room floors: mad crabs that pinched and scrambled under tables and chairs, trying to get into women's purses.

It seems that no one told the cooks that you needed to boil the water *before* you cooked the crabs. The kitchen was a comical sight of two women with large cooking spoons trying to get crabs back into the pot. The crabs were hanging on the spoons, the prep table, the towels and some making a run for the door. As fast as they returned them to the pot, they crawled back out again.

Things calmed down and the crabs were picked up and rinsed off, This time cooked the correct way. That was the first –and last –crab dinner. Our usual Friday fish fry nights returned and without trauma.

I have never tasted any fish fry that could compare with those that were served in our taverns. The neighborhood is gone and the taverns are gone. Only fond memories remain.

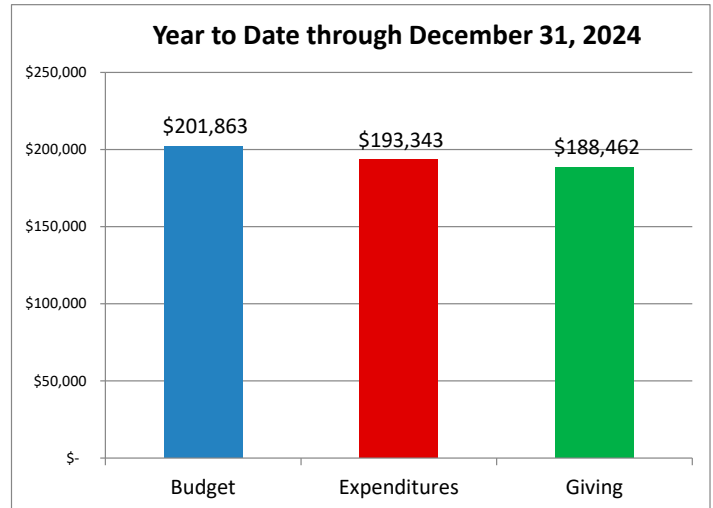
How do I know all this?

My mother was one of the cooks helping out that night!



## Grace Financials

### Grace Lutheran Church



*Let's fill this up.*

### Mark Your Calendar

Worship: Sundays at 10:30 a.m.  
Quilting: Mondays at 10 a.m.  
Prayers Against Cancer: Last Thursdays of the month, 2 p.m.  
Lectionary Study: Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m.  
Real Life 101: Fourth Saturdays at 11 a.m.  
Men's Bible Breakfast: Fridays at 8 a.m., (The Roadhouse)  
Via de Cristo Reunion: 2nd & 4th Friday evenings at 5:30 p.m.  
Council: 3rd Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.

#### Grace Council

**President:** Al Smith  
*alsmithinpt@gmail.com*  
**Vice President:** Lois Sherwood  
**Secretary:** Stacy Toner  
**Ministers:**  
**Resources (Treasurer):** Dennis Struecker  
**Facilities:** Steve Brantner  
**Social Concerns:** Don Fristoe

#### Grace Staff

**Pastor:** The Rev. Sean Janssen  
*revseanjanssen@gmail.com*  
**Office Manager:** Crissy Dunlap  
*gracelutheranpt@gmail.com*  
**Organist/Pianist:** Elise Sinclair  
**Choir Director:** Jeannie Oneppo  
**Editor, Voice of Grace:** Mary Ronen,  
*maryeronen@gmail.com*  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/GraceLutheranPT](https://www.facebook.com/GraceLutheranPT)

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