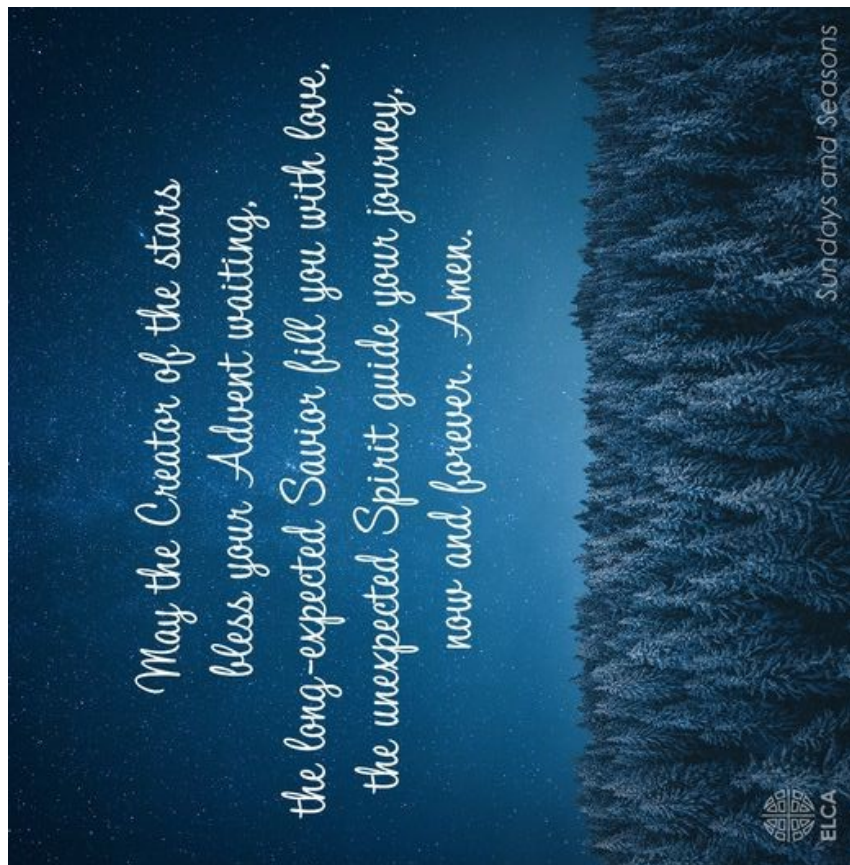


# “Grace Greetings” December 2023



**Grace Lutheran Church**  
521 Providence Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23325



<https://linktr.ee/gracelutheran>

*Grace Lutheran—a community of believers in Christ called to be servants to all people.*



# Grace Lutheran Church

A worshipping community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

[www.GraceLutheranChesapeake.org](http://www.GraceLutheranChesapeake.org)

## December 2023 “Grace Greetings”

### **Mission Statement:**

We are a community of believers in Christ called to be servants to all people.

### **What is the Advent Wreath and How is it used in worship?**

As Christians, we use symbols to express visually the basic tenets of our faith and as reminders of the pilgrimage of our life in Christ. Symbols can have heightened meaning for us when associated with particular seasons of that journey. One such symbol is the Advent wreath.

The Advent wreath has its roots in the pre-Christian practices of northern Europe. People sought the return of the sun in the dark time of the year (at the winter solstice) by lighting candles and fires. As early as the middle Ages, Christians used fire and light to represent Christ's coming into the world. Using this same symbolism, the Advent wreath developed a few centuries ago in Germany as a sign of the waiting and hopeful expectation of the return in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. The wreath, a circle, came to represent the eternal victory over death through Jesus Christ. The evergreens were a sign of the faithfulness of God to God's people, even in death, and the lighted candles were a reminder of the light of Christ brought into the world.

This symbolism can be just as strong for us today. As is the case with all symbols, they speak most loudly to remind us of God's promises of life when they are drawn directly out of our daily experience and environment. One should consider using only natural materials from God's creation when making an Advent wreath. Evergreens come in many varieties and may be treated with a flame retardant substance. Branches of holly, laurel, and other green shrubs, which retain their freshness longer than pine, may also be used.

The circular shape, a symbol of eternal life, is most important. Using an alternative shape, such as a log, would diminish the meaning of the symbol, which is no longer a circle.

There is no one prescribed color for the candles, although several traditions are current. Four natural colored candles are always appropriate and symbolize the Light for which we wait. Four blue candles matches the blue used for the season, a color representing hope. Some assemblies may have the older tradition of using purple candles, keeping purple as the color for both Advent and Lent. The practice of using a pink candle on the third Sunday in Advent is no longer consistent with the current lectionary. This tradition arose when Advent was regarded as a thoroughly penitential season much like Lent. The third Sunday of Advent was called “Gaudete Sunday”, from the Latin meaning “Rejoice!” It had its roots in the text from Philippians 4:4-6, “rejoice in the Lord always...” These readings are still heard in Year C on Advent III.

Liturgical renewal in the last decades of this century has shifted the focus of these four weeks to one of hope and expectation of the coming of the Christ. This hope looks forward not only to celebrating the child in the manger, but even more to Christ's coming in glory at the end of time—a continuation of the eschatological emphasis of the last Sundays after Pentecost. Candles in rich royal blue are symbolic of this hope. Coincidentally, these two colors, purple and blue, have long been associated with the same ideas: the symbolic colors of royal blood and of longing; the natural colors of the dawn before the sun rises and

the deep shades of midnight.

When determining the size of the Advent wreath, be mindful of your worship space so that the wreath is appropriate to that space. The wreath is not a primary symbol in the same way the font, table and ambo (lectern/pulpit) function, but it needs to be of sufficient size so that it makes a strong statement about the meaning of the season. It may be hung or placed on a table or stand but it is never put on the altar.

The Advent wreath may be lit before the service when other candles are lighted. It may also be lit at another point during the Gathering rite. Blessings for the Advent wreath may be found in Sundays and Seasons. Some assemblies like to accompany the lighting of the Advent wreath with an appropriate song. Consider using a different stanza of the same hymn, such as "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" each week (Evangelical Lutheran Worship #240).

The Advent wreath is also appropriate for daily use in home devotions. The making of the wreath can be a family activity, using materials gathered from the yard or garden. Resources for use of the Advent wreath in the home, including suggestions for assembling a wreath, are among those listed below.

From the ELCA Worship FAQ: [https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/What is the Advent Wreath and how is it used in worship.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2\\_FuwKNCyi4pqpec1Fe61ibhkZX5lqS\\_mklqgbpBRzDrPMYZOaAU4-eE](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/What%20is%20the%20Advent%20Wreath%20and%20how%20is%20it%20used%20in%20worship.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2_FuwKNCyi4pqpec1Fe61ibhkZX5lqS_mklqgbpBRzDrPMYZOaAU4-eE)



Dec 3	<b>1st Sunday of Advent</b>	9am	Sunday School	Dec 13	6:30pm	Advent Soup Supper
		10am	Combined Worship		7:15pm	Midweek Worship (Hybrid)
		11:15am	Craft Group	Dec 17		<b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b>
Dec 4		9am	Food Pantry		9am	Sunday School
		1:30pm	Bible Study (Zoom)		10am	Combined Worship
		7pm	Bell Choir Rehearsal		11:30am	Hanging of the Greens
Dec 5		10am	Threaders	Dec 18	9am	Food Pantry
Dec 6		6:30pm	Advent Soup Supper		1:30pm	Bible Study (Zoom)
		7:15pm	Midweek Worship (Hybrid)		7pm	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Dec 9		8am	Men's Group	Dec 19	10am	Threaders
		12:30pm	Ladies Christmas Lunch	Dec 20	6:30pm	Advent Soup Supper
Dec 10	<b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b>				7:15pm	Midweek Worship (Hybrid)
		9am	Sunday School	Dec 24		<b>4th Sunday of Advent</b>
		10am	Combined Worship			NO Sunday School
Dec 11		9am	Food Pantry & party		10am	Combined Worship
			NO Bible Study			<b>Christmas Eve</b>
		7pm	Bell Choir Rehearsal		<b>5pm</b>	<b>Family Worship</b>
Dec 12		10am	Threaders		<b>7pm</b>	<b>Candlelight Worship</b>
		7pm	Council (Zoom)	Dec 25		<b>Christmas Day</b>
						Food Pantry CLOSED
						Office CLOSED
						NO Bible Study
						NO Bell Choir Rehearsal
				Dec 26	10am	Threaders
				Dec 27		NO Potluck/Bible Study
				Dec 31		<b>1st Sunday of Christmas</b>
						NO Sunday School
					10am	Lessons & Carols

# SUNDAY SCHOOL

## Sunday School

Sundays at 9am

**There will NOT be Sunday School on Dec 24 & 31.**

- The **Elementary School Class** meets in Classroom #1.
- The **Middle & High School Class** meets in the Youth Room.
- The **Adult Sunday School Class** meets in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom.

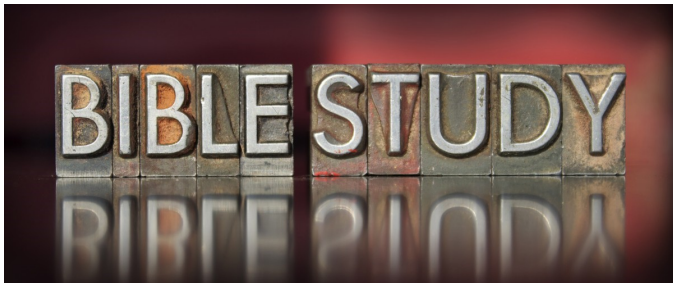
# Hybrid WORSHIP

## Combined Worship (Hybrid)

Sundays at 10am

Join us on site or online. Zoom log-in information is available at

[www.gracelutheranchesapeake.org/news--upcoming-events](http://www.gracelutheranchesapeake.org/news--upcoming-events).



## Monday Bible Study (Zoom)

Mondays at 1:30pm

**There is no Bible Study on Dec 11th or 25th.**

- Join via computer/smartphone/tablet by clicking this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87557721128?pwd=b2J4ektpdGtwWk9NQkJudzllcHBBQT09> Passcode: Grace).
- Join via phone by calling 646-558-8656 and entering the Meeting ID: 875 5772 1128 and Passcode: 152551



## Bell Choir Rehearsal

Mondays at 7pm

**There will NOT be Bell Choir on Dec 25th.**

If you have any questions, please contact Morgan.



## Threaders

Tuesdays at 10am

The Threaders meet on Tuesdays at 10am to make walker bags for people throughout our community. There are jobs for various skill levels: sewing machine operator, button sewer, iron operator, etc. Questions? Contact Jane Jennings or Peggy Barry.



## Advent Soup Supper & Midweek Worship

Nov 29, Dec 6, 13, 20

- \* **6:30pm**—Soup Supper  
(sign up in the Narthex to bring a dish to share)
- \* **7:15pm**—Midweek Worship (Hybrid)

- Join via your smartphone/tablet/ computer by clicking this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/621600567?pwd=OHhzWUFlc0FIQit0MjN5c0IEcINtQT09> (Passcode: Grace).
- Join via your regular phone, by calling 646-558-8656 and entering the Meeting ID: 621 600 567 and Passcode: 672531.



### Craft Group

**Sunday, December 3rd  
after worship (~11:30am)**

Calling all knitters, stitchers, scrapbookers, etc.—let's get together and work on our projects. Bring a bag lunch and meet in the Fellowship Hall after the late worship service. Any questions, contact Sandra Fraenkel.



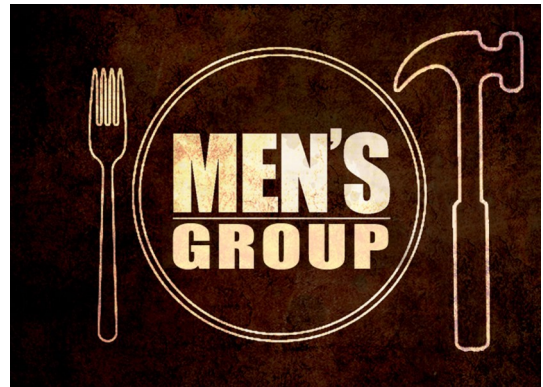
### Food Pantry Christmas Baskets

**items due by Sunday, December 10th**

Help the Food Pantry fill Christmas Baskets for families in our community by placing the following items in the shopping cart in the Narthex:

- ◆ Can Tuna
- ◆ Can Chicken
- ◆ Jelly (NO glass please)

- ◆ Peanut butter
- ◆ Pasta
- ◆ Breakfast cereal
- ◆ Jiffy Mix
- ◆ Can corn
- ◆ Can green beans
- ◆ Can Yams
- ◆ Stuffing mix
- ◆ Any soup (cans or packet)
- ◆ Gravy (can be glass)
- ◆ Boxed mac & cheese



### Men's Group

**Saturday, December 9th at 8am**

Join the men of GLC for potluck breakfast and work around the church.



### Ladies Christmas Lunch

**Saturday, December 9th at 12:30pm**

Join us for a potluck lunch and fellowship. Friends and family are welcome! Sign up in the Narthex by Sunday, December 3rd. Questions?: Contact Debbie Dougherty, Kathie Rokitski, or Gretchen Stoll.



# Board Meeting

## Preschool Board Meeting

Going forward, the Preschool Board will only meet as needed.



# Council Meeting

## Council Meeting (Zoom)

**Tuesday, December 12th at 7pm**

- Join via computer/smartphone/tablet by clicking this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87468766112?pwd=Z3VnL2RyVkRKdXhXRFFWT2E0ZlcrZz09> (Passcode: Grace).
- Join via phone by calling 646-558-8656 and entering the Meeting ID: 874 6876 6112 and Passcode: 740742.



## Hanging of the Greens

**Sunday, December 17th after worship**

Please stay to help decorate the church for Christmas—many hands make light work!

## The Last Day to Give on Record in 2023

**is Sunday, December 31st at 11am.** All donations received after that time will not be deposited until after the new year and will be recorded on your 2024 giving statement.

## Begin or Update Electronic Giving for 2024

You can sign up to give to the ministries of Grace electronically (once or recurring) via Tithe.ly ([https://tithe.ly/give\\_new/www/#/tithe/give-one-time/475611](https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithe/give-one-time/475611)). Use the same link and sign into your account to update the amount and/or frequency of your contributions for 2024.

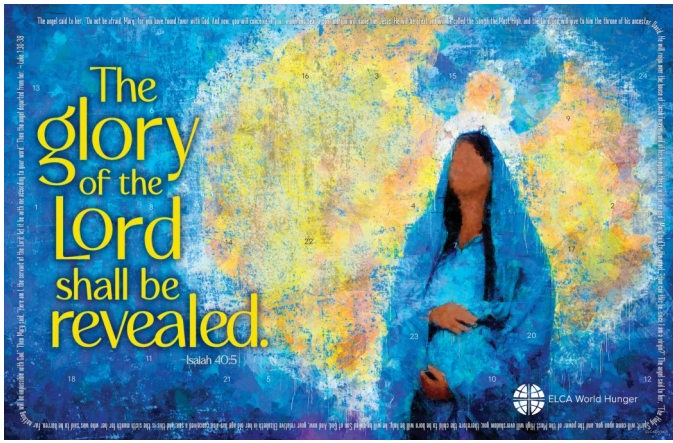


- \* **Dec 24th at 5pm—Christmas Eve Family Worship**
- \* *Dec 24th at 7pm--Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship*
- \* **Dec 31st at 10am—Service of Lessons & Carols**

**We will use the same Zoom information as Sunday Morning Worship for all of these worship services.**

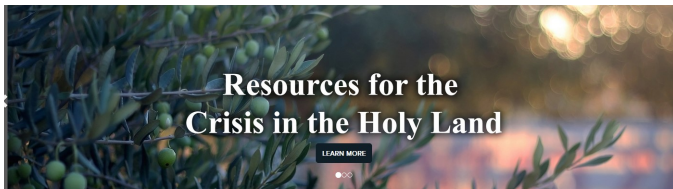
## HOLIDAY CLOSURES

- ◇ Monday, December 25
  - ◇ Food Pantry CLOSED
  - ◇ Office CLOSED
  - ◇ NO Bible Study
  - ◇ NO Bell Choir
- ◇ Wednesday, December 27
  - ◇ NO Potluck or Bible Study
- ◇ Monday, January 1
  - ◇ Food Pantry CLOSED
  - ◇ Office CLOSED
  - ◇ NO Bible Study
  - ◇ NO Bell Choir



**Advent Calendars**

There are Advent Calendars from ELCA World Hunger available in the Narthex.



**ELCA Resources for the Crisis in the Holy Land**

<https://elca.org/crisis-holy-land>

In response to the Hamas attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7 and Israel's declaration of war against Hamas, including the ongoing siege of Gaza, the ELCA offers the following statements from some of our Lutheran and global partners in the region. Included are ELCA resources for a deeper understanding of the context, the humanitarian crises of the current war, and the ELCA's work for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

**ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton Taking Leave of Absence**

On November 9, the ELCA's Church Council Executive Committee approved Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's request for a 4-to-6-month leave of absence. Bishop Eaton's leave starts Nov. 17, 2023.

The Church Council appointed former bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, the Rev. Michael Burk, as Presiding Bishop Pro Tem to care for the responsibilities of the presiding bishop during her leave of

absence. We give thanks for Bishop Eaton's tireless dedication and leadership and pray for her during this time of rest and rejuvenation.

**2023 Congregational Council**



Bob Masters  
President



Beth Woodard  
Vice President



Mike Olson  
Secretary



Walt Anderson



Tom Casey



David Cooper



Debbie Dougherty



Faith Longworth



Fred Schleede

**From the Council**

Greeting's to all Grace members from your Church Council. The church season of Advent is just around the corner and personally for me is my favorite time of the year, both at Grace and in Chesapeake.

Updates from our recent Council meeting are as follows:

- Work continues on ironing out the details of how our transition of Pastor Leslie reducing her call to three quarters time and church Secretary Jody working 4 days a week, to reduce our financial shortcomings, starting Jan 2024 and how this will affect the day to day operations at Grace. Stay tuned to learn how each and every member will be able to step up in their own way to help maintain the ministry outreach here at Grace.
- Pastor Leslie was contacted by a representative with Church World Service Resettlement Office which is a non-profit organization that aids refugees, asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, and immigrants and is looking to establish a location in

Chesapeake. They were given a tour of our Education wing and are possibly interested in renting out a section of it for office work for 3-4 staff members. More details of this will be forthcoming.

Thanks to the following for their new and ongoing elected positions:

Nominating Committee

- Sandra Frankel
- Marlene Hubert
- Kurt Longworth
- Monique Schroeder

Church Council (3 year term)

- Brandon Breitsprecher
- David Cooper
- Fred Schleede

Church Council (1 year term)

- Debbie Dougherty

Preschool board (3 year term)

- John Hawk
- Kathie Rokitski

2024 VA Synod Voting Members

- Ed and Quita Opperman

Thanks also to Mike Olson who is completing his third year on Council and has been serving as Secretary!

Peace and God's Blessings to All.

Bob Masters

2023 Council President

**THANK YOU for your generous financial support of God's mission!**

In **October 2023**, Grace Lutheran received **\$12,664.96** in giving to the General Fund. Because of your generosity, we were able to:

- Support Pastor Leslie in attending the VA Synod Gathering of the Ministerium
- Gather for the Blessing of the Animals
- Hosted the Fall Flea Market
- Support Jody (our church secretary) in taking some vacation time
- Celebrated the Installation of VA Synod's Bishop Phyllis Milton
- Hosted a Red Cross Blood Drive
- Supported Pastor Leslie in attending the VA Synod's required annual Boundary Training and a couple of other continuing education events.
- Collected coats for local schools.

(to name just a few) with **\$13,734.31** of expenses and generous gifts of time and talent.

**Year to date (through Oct 31st), we have received \$159,960.43 for the General Fund and have had \$173,531.29 in expenses from the General Fund. The balance (as of Oct 31st) is \$45,327.76.**



60th Anniversary Potluck



Cake from the 60th Anniversary Potluck





## **Order Poinsettias**

to adorn the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve.  
*You will be able to take home the plants you ordered  
AFTER ALL Christmas Eve worship services are over.*

**Each plant is \$11**

Please return this order form & payment  
(cash or check payable to "Grace Lutheran Church")  
to the office **by Sunday, December 3rd.**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone # and Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Numbers of Plants** \_\_\_\_\_ **x \$11 per plant = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedication(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# God's Global Barnyard

An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need. Animals provide food to eat, fertilizer to grow crops and offspring to sell at the market. With one gift, you can help a family escape the cycle of hunger and poverty for good.



## Cow

A cow's milk, meat, fertilizer and calves can quickly strengthen a family's financial security.

\$500



## Chicks

Chicks begin laying eggs at just a few months old, offering nutritious, protein-rich meals for families who are hungry.

\$10



## Goat

Fresh milk from a goat is very nutritious and can be used to make products like yogurt and cheese to sell at the market.

\$50



## Honeybees

Bees pollinate plants and boost crop growth — helping the wider community. Soaps and candles can be made from their wax and sold at the local market.

\$20



## Pig

Within months after birth, piglets grow to weigh over 200 pounds — bringing a big payoff at the market.

\$30



## Fish Farm

A fish farm and training in good business economics can provide a lifetime of meals for a community.

\$250

**Give through your congregation by visiting**  
**[ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts)** or by sending a check to  
ELCA Good Gifts, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.  
Please indicate your gift in the memo line of your check.


# ★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!

Dec 2 Susan Stillman  
 Dec 6 Tara Moeller  
 Dec 8 Gayle Graham  
 Dec 9 Kyleen Calkins  
 Dec 9 Susan Graham  
 Dec 17 Rodney Haberkorn  
 Dec 29 Marlene Hubert  
 Dec 29 Mason Weed  
 Dec 30 Jordan Bennett  
 Dec 31 Carmen Fraenkel



Dec 5 Mark & Suzanne Bergsten  
 Dec 19 Rey & Rachel Lizan  
 Dec 28 David & Quina Pritchard  
 Dec 30 Casey & Kyleen Calkins

To add/correct any birthdays or anniversaries. Please email [Secretary@GraceLutheranChesapeake.org](mailto:Secretary@GraceLutheranChesapeake.org)



**PASTORAL CARE**

Please contact Pastor Leslie if you are in need of a pastoral care, hospital, or Communion visit.

# PRAYER LIST

## We Pray for Our Members

Walt Anderson	The Kilian Family
Elaine Babb	Bob Masters
Joe Babb	Charlotte Maurer
Suzanne Bergsten	David Pritchard
Vickie Graif	Kathie Rokitski
Hunter Headings	Gwen Scherman
Jan Howell	Monique Schroeder
Leonora Jones	The Shalibo Family
Jack Justice	Rose Mary Sidam
Sharon Justice	Ted Van Horn
Betty Keefer	Thomas Washington

## We Pray for Our Friends

Bill Anderson	Bill Manke
Joyce Adkins	Nano Masters
Bill Babb	Robert Miller
Richard Bowell	Katie Milliner
Sarita Bowell	Danny Owsley
Scott Bowler	Patricia Petro
Laura Braugh	Stephan Pleli
Jody Bryant	Geri Pitts
Sandy Crutchley	Tommy Reeck
Debbie Dornberger	Leah Rosario
Madison Garriott	Lisa Sanders
Blair Getz	Sheila Silvey
Jenell Gordon	Nick Sims
Lettie Groshel	Larry Smith
Claude Hamilton	Samantha Strother
Brian Hubert	Tim Theis
Chris Jones	Deb Thompson
Henry Kappes Jr	Dianne Van Pelt
Murray Leffers Jr	Tina Wilson
Jude Lightfoot	Kristin

The Military & their Families  
 Our Food Pantry Clients  
 ELCA Missionaries & YAGM students  
 All who mourn

**In an effort to keep the prayer list up to date, please update Pastor Leslie monthly regarding your friends/family on the list.**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>3</b> 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9am Sunday School 10am Worship 11:30am Craft Group	<b>4</b> 9am Food Pantry 1:30pm Bible Study (Zoom) 7pm Bell Choir	<b>5</b> 10am Threaders	<b>6</b> 6:30pm Advent Soup Supper 7pm Midweek Worship (Hybrid)	<b>7</b> 8pm AA	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 10am GS Troop 490
<b>10</b> 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9am Sunday School 10am Worship	<b>11</b> 9am Food Pantry 1:30pm Bible Study (Zoom) 5:30pm Preschool Board (Hybrid) 7pm Bell Choir	<b>12</b> 10am Threaders 7pm Council (Zoom)	<b>13</b> 6:30pm Advent Soup Supper 7pm Midweek Worship (Hybrid)	<b>14</b> 8pm AA	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 10am GS Troop 490
<b>17</b> 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9am Sunday School 10am Worship 11:30am Hanging of the Greens	<b>18</b> 9am Food Pantry 1:30pm Bible Study (Zoom) 7pm Bell Choir	<b>19</b> 10am Threaders 7pm Good Mourning	<b>20</b> 6:30pm Advent Soup Supper 7pm Midweek Worship (Hybrid)	<b>21</b> 8pm AA	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9am Sunday School 10am Worship  <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> 5pm Family worship 7pm Candlelight Worship	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> NO Food Pantry Office CLOSED NO Bible Study NO Bell Choir	<b>26</b> 10am Threaders 6:30pm American Sewing Guild	<b>27</b> NO Potluck or Bible Study	<b>28</b> 8pm AA	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9am Sunday School 10am Worship						

# December 2023