



January 2023 Grace Notes



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Tallahassee, Florida

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We look forward to seeing at you to worship, at the service of your choice.

The 9:00 a.m. service is our Contemporary Worship service. The 11:00 a.m. service is the traditional service, which follows the pattern we have used for the last year.

If you're not sure about the Contemporary Service, we encourage you to give it at least one try. You never know how it may touch your heart.

This is an exciting time, as we continue to move forward in praise and thanksgiving to God, and to reconnect with one another as the family of God.

If you are unable to attend our worship service in person, there is a link for online viewing, located in the boxed area of our website at www.gracelutheran.faith.

Pastor's Message

Dear Beloved of God ~

Every year, January 6th is celebrated as the Epiphany of Our Lord. If you were to look the word



up in the dictionary, one of the definitions you'd find is, "a moment of sudden revelation or insight." And I would imagine we've all used the word in that context – whether talking about ourselves or someone else. It's not all that odd a thing to 'have an epiphany.'

What it means for us as Christians goes even deeper. Because in the context of our faith, Epiphany (with a capital "E") is about the moment that the Magi, (the sages, scholars, wise folks) who originated somewhere east of Israel, arrived at the home of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. We hear, in the story of Jesus, about a bright star that led them to the place where Jesus was; about the gifts they bring of gold, frankincense and myrrh; and about their worship of him upon their arrival. We wrap it up nicely in the total "Nativity of Our Lord" package. The three wise men are in our Creche scenes, along with that bright star. We sing 'We Three Kings' as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Well, here's some other things that may be an epiphany for some among us:

First, Matthew's gospel is the only place where we hear about Magi, and he doesn't tell us how many there were. We've assumed, since there were three gifts, that they were brought by three people. But it could have been more, or less – we just don't know. That part isn't in the biblical account.

We also don't know for sure if all the Magi were men. It is entirely possible that women were among their number. I know there are jokes that, if the Magi had been women, they would have brought things that a new mom would actually find useful, and they would have arrived much sooner. But while Matthew's gospel uses the term 'Wise Men,' there are other translations that simply say "astrologers" or "Magi" - meaning a priestly caste of ancient Persia. Which doesn't rule out the possibility that it was a mixed group.

Finally, whoever they were, whatever their make-up, in numbers and gender, they probably arrived long after that holy night when Christ was born. If they were traveling from quite far away, it would have taken time for them to get there. And Matthew's gospel hits a bit at this when it tells us, "*When [the Magi] saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.*" (Matt 3:10-11a). They were in a house, not a stable. It's likely this was the place they lived, full time. And Jesus may have been as much as two years old at the time.

So, why am I telling you all this? Well, first of all, I find it fascinating. I didn't always know this stuff, either. I think it makes the story of the Magi all the more wondrous, to imagine that they undertook a journey of great significance, and of great length, on nothing more than faith and hope. I think it's so affirming to imagine, as well, there may have been many of them – not just three – but loads, leaving their lives behind to take this journey. I feel much more drawn into the story when I think that there may have been someone like me, someone I might recognize as sharing similar blessings and obstacles, among the group.

But I'm also sharing it because I think it does, in fact, reflect the faith journey that all of us take. Some of us may see the star, the light, earlier than others. Some of us may have been raised from a young age to look for the light, to recognize the presence of God in the world. Others may not have heard those stories, or not been told about God's love and light. Others may have experienced such darkness that they can't even imagine light. The darkness may have completely overwhelmed them and blinded them to any light at all.

The 'good news of great joy that is for all people,' is for you, is true always and without end. It matters not when you see the light. It doesn't matter if you see it right away and run to the manger where the baby Jesus sleeps, or if you don't learn about it until later, as the message begins to spread. It doesn't matter if you believe the first time you hear the story, or if it takes you years to get there. It doesn't matter if you get lost along the way and have to ask for help (as the Magi did), or if you have some sort of internal GPS that guides you to exactly where you need to be. The love, mercy, grace and hope of Jesus is for all of us. It is for everyone. There is nothing that could ever keep God from welcoming us, from embracing us, from loving us. The evidence of that is found in the baby in the manger and the man on the cross.

I pray that, on this Epiphany Day, and in the season of Epiphany, your 'moment of sudden revelation or insight' would allow you to experience, for yourself, the love and light of God. That you would see it, shining in your life, leading you forward and that you would know it is for everyone – and it is for you.

Peace be with you,

Pastor Jenn



Music Notes

“What to Watch”

Viva Verdi! – Presented by The Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra

Date: Saturday, January 21, 2023

Time: 8:00 pm

Location: Ruby Diamond Concert Hall, Florida State University, 222 S. Copeland Street, Tallahassee, FL 32306

Admission: Ticket prices range from \$36- \$60. Senior and child/student discounts available. \$10 student rush tickets available 30 minutes before the show with a valid ID.

Contact: patronservices@tallahasseesyphony.org or phone: 850-224-0461

Enjoy an evening of Verdi's greatest hits with music from *Il Traviatore*, *Aida*, *Nabucco*, and *La Traviata*. An all-star lineup of soloists, joined by FSU's chorus program, will make this a concert for the ages! "Ben Gulley has won awards and competitions for his magnificent voice ... his voice is enchanting. However, the winner is the audience and the prize is listening to the operatic tenor perform." —Broadway World Join us in the concert hall before the performance for a Pre-Concert Chat with Music Director Darko Butorac at 7:00pm.

Unity 16 – Repair the future - *presented by Tallahassee Community Chorus in partnership with the Florida A&M Concert Choir and the Tallahassee Branch NAACP.*

Date: Sunday, January 29, 2023

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: Ruby Diamond Concert Hall, Florida State University, 222 S. Copeland Street, Tallahassee, FL 32306

Admission: Adult: \$25.00, Senior (62+): \$20.00, Student: \$10.00, All seats reserved. All ticket sales are final; no refunds. Purchase tickets online or call 850-597-0603.

Email: concerts@tcchorus.org

Joined by our special guests, the Florida A&M University Concert Choir, we present *Weather*, by Rollo Dilworth, commissioned by the Chorus last year as part of a commission consortium. The work sets the *poem by Claudia Rankine* and powerfully depicts the pandemic's storm-like impact on our lives, particularly on Black lives, and calls upon us to restore peace and repair the future. Composer Dr. Rollo Dilworth will join us for this performance!

The Technical Booth has arrived!!

For those that were able to make the Christmas Eve Service in-person, you were able to see that our technical booth has been installed and is up and running!

This has been a wonderful investment that protects the equipment and wiring used for our weekly services, both in-person and online.

A very special thanks to Patrick Floyd, with True Grain Wood Crafting. Great care was taken in the design to meet all our technical needs as well as the design of the church. If you are in-person for a service, please, stop by the back area after or between services to take a look!



Manna on Meridian Effort in December and January

Grace Lutheran Church members donated 117 cans of tuna, 9 miscellaneous items and 30 t-shirts for the December distribution.

FUTURE NEWS:

In 2023, Grace Lutheran Church is tentatively scheduled to be the lead



church in February, June and October. Any assistance you can provide is greatly appreciated.

For January 2023, the Save-A-Lot pickup date will be January 12th at 3:00 pm.

DISTRIBUTION DAY will be held January 21st at early as 7:00 am till 10:00 am or so.

Manna is always the third Saturday of each month.

THANK YOU for your faithful support of the Manna ministry, as it allows us to serve more members of our community.

Worship Assistants for January/February

LAY READER ASSIGNMENTS

January. 8: 9:00 a.m. Sharon Piepmeier; 11:00 a.m. Abi Hudson

January 15: 9:00 a.m. Bill Pomidor; 11:00 a.m. Brent Kallestad

January 22: 9:00 a.m. Joy Becker; 11:00 a.m. Jan Peterson

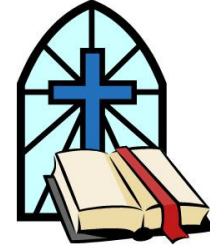
January 29: 9:00 a.m. Randi Buehner; 11:00 Lance Peterson

February 5: 9:00 a.m. Mary Grant; 11:00 a.m. Kathy Sanguinet

February 12: 9:00 a.m. Janet McPherson; 11:00 a.m. Paul Schneider

February 19: 9:00 a.m. Sharon Piepmeier; 11:00 a.m. Kris-Tena Albers

February 26; 9:00 a.m. Bill Pomidor; 11:00 a.m. Don Blancett



Save the Date!

Upcoming Fellowship Events

Mark your calendars for the following Grace Lutheran Fellowship Opportunities. These are wonderful opportunities to get to know your fellow members of Grace better. Don't miss out on these opportunities.

February 5, 2023 - Chili Cook-Off (after 2nd service)

Cooks wanted. Congregation will have an opportunity to sample a variety of Chili and cast a vote for People's Choice. If questions contact Mary Grant at 609-602-0155 or grantmlcic@hotmail.com.

February 19, 2023 - Mardi Gras - (after 2nd service)

PLEASE JOIN US IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL in between the worship services for refreshments and fellowship. If you would like to host refreshments on a Sunday, the signup sheet is next to the coffee urn. If we have no host, the Fellowship Committee provides coffee.



**Wish these folks a belated
Happy Birthday**

December 1

Randi Buehner, Sarah Brown
Wells

December 6

Joy James

December 8

Aubrey Tangen

December 9

Don Monda

December 12

Steve Szypula

December 13

Susan Wessner

December 15

Linda Wolters

December 18

Nancy Schiellerd

December 19

Teresa Wooten

December 23

David Brown

December 25

Thomas Ewald

December 27

Thomas Campbell, Jacqueline
Curtis

December 28

Avery Tangen

December 29

Joshua Monda, Owen Rodenberg

December 30

Karen Hoy

**Say Happy Birthday to these
folks**

January 1

Lance Peterson

January 3

Gavin Leanillo

January 4

Sue Homant, June Lawrence,
Kevin Lundgren

January 8

Georgia Jahns

January 12

Victoria Heller, James Jennings

January 15

Lisa Rubin

January 17

Nancy Adams

January 18

Jan Holmden

January 20

Irwin Jahns, Peggy Stevens

January 23

Anna Fitzpatrick

January 25

Jean Jacobs

January 27

Leila Allen

January 29

Calvin McMillan, Joseph McRory

January 30

Nancy Banks, Sunshine Jacobs

January 31

Jane Moyer

THANK YOU

To Grace Lutheran Church Congregation Members and Friends-

Thank you for the generous Christmas Gift. It was such a nice surprise and it is appreciated very much. I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and that the New Year in 2023 will be a happy one.

Lisa Rubin
Church Office Administrator

Dear members of Grace Lutheran-

Thank you for your gifts and kind words during the Advent and Christmas Season. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

Leslie Heffner



*Have a topic to share for the February, 2023
Grace Notes? Feel free to send Nick Gandy an
email at ngandyman@yahoo.com. Your input is
always welcome.*

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