



*Rooted In Christ - Growing in Love -
Branching out in Service*



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

104 S. Colfax St.

West Point, NE 68788

402-372-2050

gracewpn@hotmail.com

www.gracewpn.org

Missionary:

Rev. Linda Johnson Swyenkulo

Ministers: Everyone!

Pastor: Rev. Priscilla Hukki

402-841-0220

pjhukki@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:

Teala Connealy

Trinity Church UCC/UMC

900 E. Decatur St.

P.O. Box 156

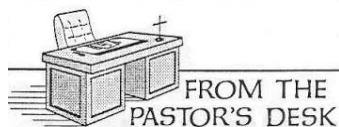
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Grace & Trinity Newsbites

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2024



The end of the liturgical or church year and then the end of the calendar are fast upon us; and in the middle of them we move from autumn to winter. The liturgical cycle of the church, along with the seasons

of the year, the regular pattern of night becoming day, all keep reminding us that life is a series of beginnings and endings, of death and rebirth. We may not all, always enjoy change, but, let's be honest, life without change is no life at all.

There are a lot of changes in life we have little control over; and there's a bunch that we can plan and prepare for. Work hard, play smart, be brave, be thoughtful, and be kind for all the stuff that depends on your decisions. In all things, pray always, trusting that God is with you, no matter what!

What do you see?

A glass half full or one half empty?



Your attitude is one of the things you get to choose. Choose wisely.

What do you see? Two faces, a chalice; or something else?

We all see the world differently. Be curious about how others see the world.



Attitude and perspective matter! Grace at 104 S. Colfax and Trinity at 900 E. Decatur are buildings which house the church when it gathers. The building is not the church. We living stones are the church. Each of us is called to be a Christ follower (Christian), a disciple (always learning) and an evangelist (proclaiming the Gospel) in daily life and

work; and together *we are the church*. The church always in need of reformation and renewal. The church in service of neighbors. The church for the sake of the world. The church with radical good news to share; remember, believe, rehearse and repeat it often in word and deed - **God loves you!** Have a radical attitude: love your neighbor as yourself, and God above all. Have the same perspective as God: all are beloved. Be intentional about gathering with the church to be strengthened and nourished and sent out to *be* the church where you are.

Traveling mercies,
Pr. Priscilla

Thank you to both councils for the gifts given for Pastor appreciation month and for my 20th Ordination anniversary. Thanks too for the cards and other gifts received; and for the delicious chocolate cake. I am grateful. I am glad to be your pastor and thankful for the ministry we do together in West Point and beyond.

Both Grace and Trinity have annual meetings coming up. Trinity's is November 16 after the 5:30 PM service. Grace's is December 8 after the 9:00 AM service. Please mark your calendars and plan to participate in this necessary business of each congregation. If you have a report to do, Teala would like them as soon as possible. We would like to be able to have each annual meeting report the week prior to the meeting so everyone has a chance to read it beforehand. This also helps in being able to make timely corrections.

Our Christmas program this year will be in two parts! Part 1 will be at Grace on December 15. We hope to have a light brunch after the service and then have a whole bunch of us go Christmas caroling! Part 2 will be at Trinity on December 21. Weather permitting after the service we will cook hot dogs and make S'Mores and maybe even sing a few carols around the fire (on the eastside of the church).

We would like this to be intergenerational – it's going to be fun! Please let Pastor know asap if you would be willing and able to participate. We will be doing some initial work on Wednesdays November 13 & 20 during Christian Ed at Trinity; but not all the extra adults/youth need to be there.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Grace Lutheran and Trinity Churches will be hosting a community Thanksgiving dinner on Sunday, November 24th at 11am at Grace Lutheran Church. Free will offering is encouraged.

This is a great opportunity to enjoy a meal together with neighbors and friends.

All are welcome! RSVP is required to attend.

Please RSVP no later than Nov. 18th. Call either church or email at 402-372-2050 gracewpn@hotmail.com

402-372-2271 trinity.church.ucc.umc@gmail.com

Grace and Trinity members are asked to bring a side dish or dessert, or both.

We are looking for 3-4 helpers with setup, serving and cleanup. Please let Teala know if you are able to help.

We'd like to have 2 shifts: Setup/serve/eat or
Eat/serve/cleanup.

Thank you!

Advent Wednesday supper and service will be at Grace this year. The theme is 'Journey to Bethlehem'. It's a work in progress; would you like to be part of the planning? Interested in an adult study before work, over lunch or some other time? Let Pastor know and we will get one – or two – set up. Supper will be at 6; with the service beginning approximately 6:30.

We will again be working with St. Mary's and St. Paul's to host the Living Nativity on Main St. Yes, the camel is coming again! Mark your calendar for Tuesday, December 3; 5-8 PM. There will be a sign-up Genius set up to fill in the schedule; 5-6: Grace. 6-7: St. Paul. 7-8: St. Mary. We look for at least 8 people per shift, but could have up to 10 or 11; generally, shifts have been 20 minutes. We also need 1-2 people to help with costumes; and 1-2 to greet people. Watch for more information. Donations are welcome to help with the costs (Approximately \$750 left to cover.)

Salvation Army bell ringing will again take place over a week and a half; beginning on Tuesday, December 3 and ending Sunday, December 15. If you have an idea for a place and time you'd like to ring, please let Teala know. There will be usual times scheduled the weekend of December 7 & 8; but we'd like to plan strategically and cover a variety of times and places. We brought in \$1,555.50 last year and have used just about all of it to help local neighbors in need, much of it for rental assistance.

Tickets are sold out!

Drive - Thru Lasagna Supper

sponsored by the Women of Grace, WELCA

with help from the Trinity Women & Christian Ed. Kids

Meals will be delivered to your Vehicle!

Wednesday, November 6, 2024 - Food Pickup from 5:30-7:00pm

Grace Lutheran Church 108 S. Colfax Street, West Point, NE

(pull into the East driveway (by the alley)

on the North Side of the Church off Park St.)

Serving: Lasagna (beef or chicken), dinner roll, salad, and dessert.

\$10.00 per ticket - Get Your Pre-Sale Tickets from (only 250 available):

Mary Vander Pol or Grace Lutheran Office (402) 372-2050

Please consider sending donations to one of the following in supporting these disaster-impacted communities:

<https://www.umc.org/en/how-we-serve/we-are-disciples/disaster-relief>

<https://support.ucc.org/hurricane-helene-relief?erid=1487558&trid=789e32ab-6bbd-468f-b96c-045d1f3a1d3d>

<https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/Our-Impact/Hurricane-Response>



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR



...Here is a great way to show that love and really help YOUR community. When we collect 500 pantry items, Thrivent will donate \$500 to OUR LOCAL FOOD BANK!!

We have from Oct 15th to Nov 15th to meet the 500-item goal. When shopping, pick up an item or two (or more).

Let's show some neighborly love.

The following is a needs list from our local pantry.

Let's make this a weekly challenge.

WEEK ONE: Oct 20th bring boxed meals, cereal, jello/pudding, pasta, Mac & cheese, cake/dessert mixes (anything in a box).

WEEK TWO: Oct 27th bring canned goods, vegetables, fruit, pork & beans, meats (tuna and chicken).

WEEK THREE: Nov 3rd bring toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, bodywash/soap, toothpaste/brushes) & paper goods (toilet paper/paper towels).

WEEK FOUR: Nov 10th bring whatever you feel inclined to donate (anything nonperishable!), other items needed: pasta sauce, peanut butter, jelly, ramen, apple sauce, pancake/waffle mix/oatmeal.

In Our Prayers this Week:

**To see an updated list
please contact the office.**

Trinity News

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

**To see an updated list
please contact the office.**

Trinity – September Financial Report – General Fund

**To see the latest report please
contact the office.**

From the council -

Please make plans to be available for the Annual Meeting of the congregation on Saturday, November 16 after worship.

Our agreement with Renewed Life Church has been finalized; for a 6-month trial, possibly beginning Sunday, November 3. They will have use of the building from 8:00 to 1:00. Our lease begins with the following statement:

Trinity and Renewed Life are entering this agreement in a spirit of Christian fellowship. As prudent stewards we sign a normal and usual business agreement for our mutual benefit. For the sake of good order and in a spirit of Christian charity, we agree to the following line of communication. It is expected that any concerns or issues from congregation members will be raised directly to their pastor & designated representative. These concerns will then be relayed to the pastor & designated representative of the other congregation. Anything brought to the pastors & designated representatives will be addressed in a timely manner and any resulting action will be communicated to the person raising the issue. We expect that representatives of both congregations will be made aware of this expectation so that we may use this space to glorify God and be credible witnesses to the Gospel.

Fruitful talks with Franciscan Healthcare continue. A lease has been drawn up and is being carefully considered by all parties, including Great Plains legal staff. Please keep this whole process in prayer.

Grace News

November Birthdays & Anniversaries
December Birthdays & Anniversaries

**To see an updated list
please contact the office.**

Grace Lutheran Church - Financial Report

General Fund – September 2024

**To see the latest report
please contact the office.**

**We will have order forms for the Poinsettias later on in
November. Details were unavailable at the moment.**

The new church directories are available for pick-up. If you haven't already picked yours up then please stop by the church office for yours. A huge thank you to all involved (Willis Mahannah, Linda Lofgren and a few others.) with putting this one together. Getting all the names, contact information, pictures, etc. together is a lot of work.

Grace Directory Corrections:

Our apologies to any misprints in the new directory. So, please let the church office know of any other misprints that you might spot and we will add these corrections to the next newsletter.

Corrected Spelling: Karime Dahlgren

Lana Hagedorn is a member of Grace Lutheran

Hopefully, everyone is enjoying the great fall weather we've been experiencing the last few weeks. Now if we could just get some moisture in the ground before winter! As we wind down the year 2024, we have many great memories to reflect on as a congregation. For one, this past year we celebrated our 150th anniversary as a church. Everyone involved in the planning process for the different events did a wonderful job. I heard many positive comments regarding the outdoor celebration held in June and the recent visit to service by Bishop Johnson! Now is the time to start planning for the next 150 years! The councils of both Grace and Trinity continue to meet quarterly to discuss how both congregations can work together to serve the Lord and enhance our partnership. I feel that the Trinity/Grace Oktoberfest was a great success once again due to the hard work and dedication of the many people I worked alongside at this year's event. A special shout out to the children who ran individual meals to the cars, especially

when the line was backed up to the swimming pool! We now prepare for the Grace lasagna supper that is being held on November 6th.

As a reminder, the annual meeting will take place earlier than in the past, scheduled for Dec. 8th. You may recall that one of the constitutions changes presented and approved at last year's annual meeting involved the change of date of the annual meeting to the last 3 months of the calendar year. The main reason for this change was to have the budget approved BEFORE it took effect rather than approving the budget in January, when we were already using funds before they were approved. I don't anticipate any major proposals for the next annual meeting, and it should be "normal" business.

Finally, the Grace Council is losing three members whose terms are expiring, and we are seeking some replacement members to keep our numbers in a good range. If you or someone you know may be interested, please reach out to Pastor Hukki or one of the current members for additional details. I encourage you to consider a term of three years to get some insight into the inner workings "behind the scenes".

Thank you for your support and countless volunteer hours during the past year! As we head into the colder time of year, I hope to see many familiar faces at services.

Robert Wilson, Grace Council President

The Friendship Circle Christmas Outing will be Monday, Dec. 9th. Dinner will be at the Bing Bed & Breakfast – 5:30 p.m. Please R.S.V.P. to Vicki by Dec. 2! We would be delighted to have others join us for caroling (TBD) & dinner!



Friendship Circle - October 14, 2024

In attendance: Fern Thorman, Linda Lofgren, Mary Vander Pol, Sandy Boots, Ruth Maresh, Pastor Priscilla Hukki and Mary Thomas

We started our meeting enjoying a "Burger Bash" supper as part of a fundraising project through Franciscan HealthCare. Mary VanderPol complimented the meal with a salad and dessert.

Following our meal, Sandy led us in an informative talk about the Samaritan's Purse project. We watched a short video depicting children in foreign countries receiving a box and taking part in follow up group activities where they learned more about Jesus. We each received a bookmark encouraging us to pray for the Samaritan's Purse project. On the back of the bookmark, there were scripture

passages and prayers for each day of the week. We took turns reading them aloud.

Next, Mary Vander Pol read an article from the Faith in Action newsletter describing how the Lutheran World Relief Quilts and Health Care Kits had been given to aid some of the stranded ship personnel following the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Maryland in March.

A date has been set for the 2025 Spring Gathering. It will be April 26, 2025 in Atkinson NE. St. John's Lutheran Church will be hosting. The program theme is "Love Beyond Measure."

Our annual Drive Through Lasagna Dinner is scheduled for Wednesday, November 6. Mary VanderPol had taken care of placing an ad in the Elkhorn Valley Shopper, October 23 issue. Flyers have been printed and will be placed around town. 250 tickets have been printed and are priced at \$10 each.

Mary gave us an update on what has been ordered and what work will need to be done in preparation for the dinner. She will be sending out an email once the work times have been scheduled. Volunteers for making the brownies were: Linda, Sandy, Mary, Ruth and Linda. Pastor volunteered to cook the ground beef. Calls will be made to recruit more help with the preparations.

We tentatively made plans to visit our Special Friends in December. Before we confirm the date, we need to check with Julie Johnson in Oakland.

In November, we will be scheduling several work days so we are opting out of a regular meeting. We will discuss our December plans while we are working on the lasagna dinner preparations.

Linda asked if we wanted to continue the Baby Care Kits next year. (We do) A request for \$300 from Endowment has been made for materials needed to complete those kits.

Those who had attended the Christ Lutheran Guest Night in Wisner in September gave a report.

Address Service Requested

**Grace Ev. Lutheran Church
104 South Colfax Street
West Point, NE 68788-1811**