

GraceNotes

A SEASONAL PUBLICATION OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

FELLOWSHIP

ADVENT FESTIVAL

From wreathes to lefse
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WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

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ADULT ED & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

GROW IN FAITH

Book discussion, poetry devotions & more
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Come

refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vs. 7



Advent begins our year soon. Followed quickly by Christmas and Epiphany, we are reminded of God's coming to be among us as one of us. However, it is also the time of year that we feel more of a tug to come ourselves. We come to church for familiar hymns and festive decorations. We come to hear again the story of a baby long ago that changed the course of history and our lives.

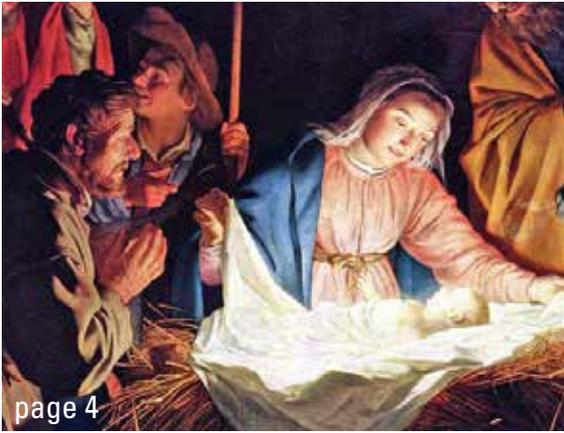
We are excited for things to come. As a kid I remember that Advent felt like an eternity as I waited to open gifts or for out of town family to come. Here at Grace we are excited about next steps with our architect and wondering about a vicar or some solution to come next year and join our part of the body of Christ.

This waiting and remembering is the tone of this season. Just as one waits for a baby to come in their time, we too, wait. Waiting for Christ's promised return, God's justice for this world, the hurts in our lives to be washed away, and even mundane things like a new roof on the sanctuary. As the hymn writer wrote, 'O come, o come, Emmanuel'. These words are for God and for us!

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Smuts'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rev. Matthew A. Smuts, pastor



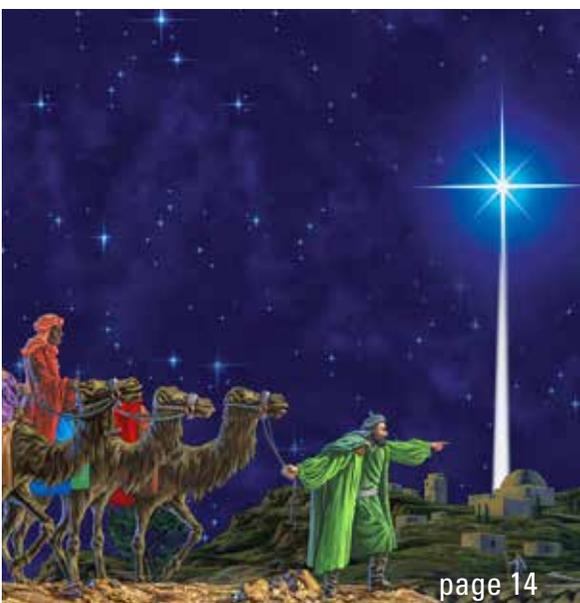
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COVER PHOTO

Christmas Eve Family Service (4 pm)

by Elizabeth Hood

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Worship | January 6, 2015 | 7:00 pm



Playing Favorites

Do you have a favorite Christmas carol? I do! Mine is “O Come, All Ye Faithful.” Have you ever stopped to consider *why* your favorite is your favorite? For me, a whole lot of factors come together all at once in “O Come, All Ye Faithful” to make it my favorite. To start, the words are beautiful, conveying a sense of both excitement and dignity as all are invited to go with the shepherds to Bethlehem “and see this thing that has taken place.” (Luke 2:15)

*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the king of angels.
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

A second reason is that this is one of the first hymns I learned from memory in childhood. I remember at a very young age loving the sound of the word “triumphant,” even if I didn’t quite know what it meant (I thought it might have something to do with elephants).

And there was something deeply awe-inspiring about the “king of angels.” I particularly remember learning the later verses in second grade in my public school music class. This doesn’t happen in most places anymore, one reason that children’s music ministry in church is so important!

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest.
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

This carol also gave me one of my first encounters with a foreign language. My mom had a book of Christmas songs on the piano every year, and in that book “O Come, All Ye Faithful” appeared with its original Latin text. Of course, I didn’t know the relation of the Latin words to the English ones, or even how to pronounce all of them, but it was fun to try!

*Adeste fideles læti triumphantes, venite, venite in Bethlehem.
Natum videte, regem angelorum
Venite adoremus Dominum.*

Finally, there’s just something very gripping about the melody of this hymn, starting with the very grand opening gesture and culminating in the rising repetition of the phrases of the refrain:

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

What can you tell me about *your* favorite songs?

.....

All of our musical groups are hard at work on their music for the upcoming festive season. The children’s choir is learning Christmas carols from all over the world, in their original languages. In addition to English, we are singing in Spanish, Chinese, German, and Swedish! Kids have excellent ears for picking up new sounds, and they are doing this very successfully with a lot of enthusiasm! You’ll be able to hear some of these songs at our Christmas program at 10:00 am on December 14, as well as at the 4:00 pm service on Christmas Eve.

What’s Happening With the Adults

The chancel choir and soloists are working on a piece called “Song of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ” by the seventeenth century French composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier. This charming 10-minute work will be sung, in English, with instrumental ensemble at our 6:00 pm service on Christmas Eve. In keeping with the French theme, they’ll also be singing an arrangement of the French carol “Ding Dong! Merrily on High” and another carol by John Rutter based on a French melody. Our handbell choir, also appearing at the 6:00 pm service, is working on a setting of “Angels We Have Heard on High” (another French carol), as well as a medley of several other familiar carols.

Our wonderful soprano soloist, Angelique Zuluaga, will sing for us at the 11:00 pm service on Christmas Eve, as well as both morning services on Sunday, December 28.

You won’t want to miss a single worship opportunity during the next several weeks as we prepare for and then celebrate once again the joy of the coming of God to earth. See you in church! ■

Advent Christmas Epiphany

Welcome

www.gracepa.org

Worship

Christmas Eve

4:00 pm
6:00 pm
11:00 pm

Christmas Day

10:00 am
+
Sundays
8:30 am
10:45 am

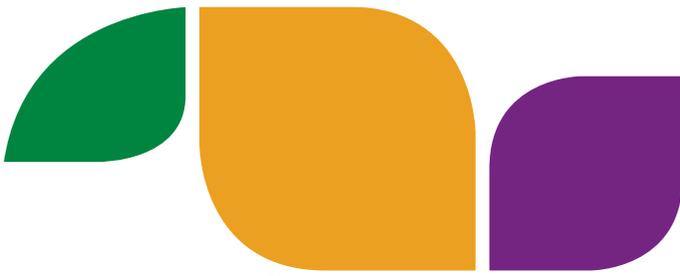
OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, December 21, 4-7pm
The Parsonage
641 Towle Way • Palo Alto 94306



hoodlvfthgrc Outdoor worship, blessing of the animals and stuffed animals! #aplaceforgrace

#aplaceforgrace



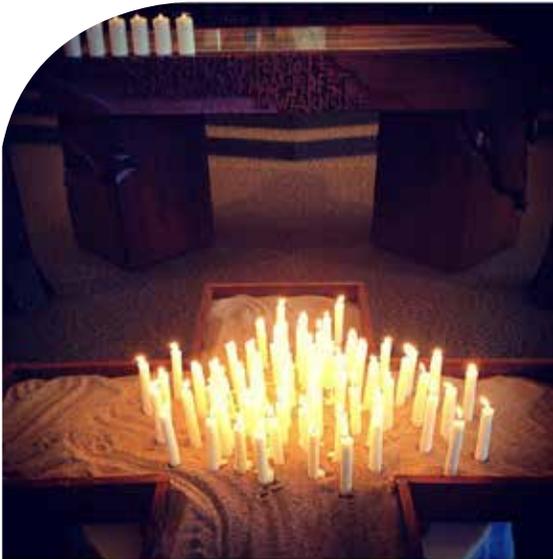
hoodlvfthgrc Sunday School at its finest. #aplaceforgrace



aarika Launch day! #aplaceforgrace



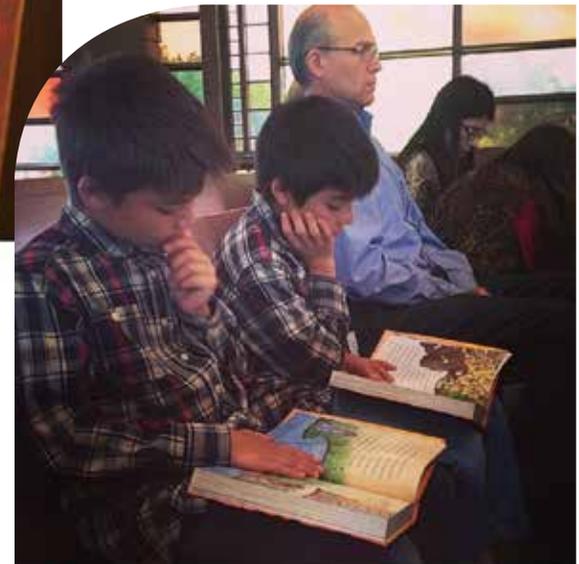
aarika Nolan volunteered to lead the prayer with @hoodlvfthgrc at Sunday school opening #aplaceforgrace



hoodlvfthgrc For all the saints, who from their labors rest. #aplaceforgrace



hoodlvfthgrc Worship #aplaceforgrace



hoodlvfthgrc Contemplative worship #childreninchurch #aplaceforgrace #childrensbibles



A PICTURE IS WORTH a thousand words and adds so much to a story. As we kicked off this capital campaign in May, Elizabeth Hood and the youth group launched their own efforts to help show what making a place for grace looks like. They started a hashtag campaign on social media, posting photos that exemplify the various ways we make #aplaceforgrace. We've picked a few to share with you and, for those who want to help tell the story, we invite you to use the #aplaceforgrace tag on Facebook or Instagram.

Six months into the campaign, we have raised \$1.18 million in gifts and pledges. Thank you to those who have helped us reach this incredible amount toward the making a place for grace campaign. Your generosity enables us realize a vision that will impact us today and usher our ministry into the future.

One of the benefits of a three-year campaign is that for those who have yet to pledge, it's not too late! You can pledge or make a gift online, transfer gifts of stock, or pick up envelopes in the narthex. With the end of the calendar year quickly approaching, there are many tax benefits you can enjoy by making a contribution by December 31, 2014.

Enjoy the photos (courtesy of Elizabeth Hood and Aarika Riddle) and thanks for making #aplaceforgrace. ■

Capital Campaign Team:

Aarika Riddle, Chair

Timo Ahonen

Julie Buckley

Mark Cravens

Elizabeth Katz

Andrew Mellows

Don Ostrus

Erik Rausch

Pastor Matt Smuts



Each year, members and friends of Grace have an opportunity to share with those who are struggling financially and receiving help from Ecumenical Hunger Program (EHP) in East Palo Alto. Many families would not be able to enjoy Christmas gifts except through the Angel Tree.

To participate:

- 1. Pick up tags between November 30 and December 7 from the Angel Tree in the narthex.*
- 2. You must sign out the tags that you take so that we know who has which tags!**
- 3. Please select and purchase one or two gifts per person. In order to be sure that family members receive roughly equivalent gifts, plan to spend about \$30-\$50 total per person.*
- 4. Wrap your gift and securely attach the gift tag. Gift cards can be placed in a sealed envelope, with the gift tag securely attached.*
- 5. Gift receipts are welcome, as they facilitate exchanges, but are not required.*
- 6. Please deliver your gift(s) to church no later than Sunday, December 14, so that they can be delivered on time.**
- 7. Keep the second gift tag (with gift ideas) at home, as a reminder to pray for that person during the holidays.*

Thank you for your generous demonstration of God's love.

Deadline for Heritage Fund Requests

As is our custom, the Endowment Committee is accepting requests from Grace members and committees for funding from our Heritage Fund. This Fund, valued at more than \$129,000, makes grants from the earned interest to non-budgeted Grace programs, including community programs in which our members are involved.

In the past we have funded Grace youth programs, community programs like Bay Area Anti-Trafficking Coalition, and international programs such as Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem and Lutheran World Federation.

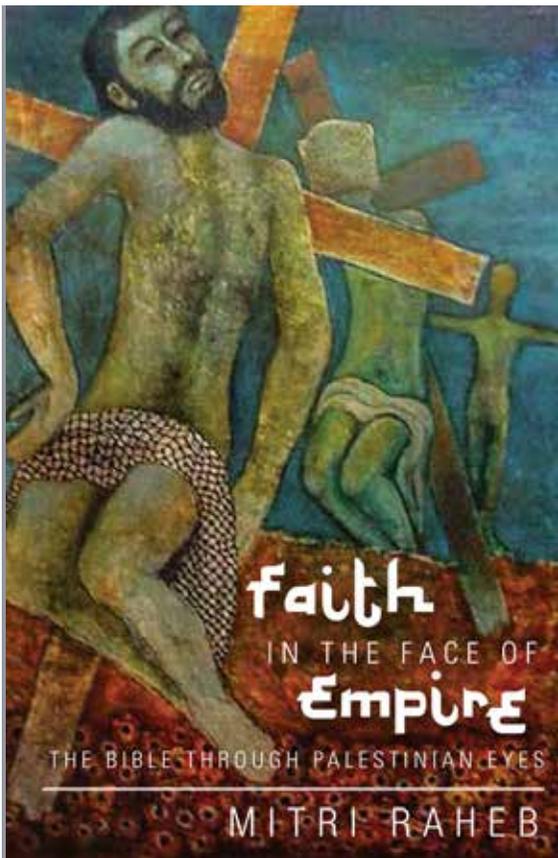
Request forms are available in the church office, and the deadline for consideration is December 31.

Endowment Committee: Amrette Butler; Dan Logan; Martha Meyer; Don Ostrus; David Vroom; Don Zepp; Pastor Matt Smuts, ex officio; and Julie Buckley, Council Liaison.

Dollar\$ for Turkey\$ Time

The holidays are right around the corner, so it is time for the food closet clients to receive their holiday gift that used to be a frozen turkey. Since the year that two of the turkeys (heavy and slippery!) fell on two of the volunteers' feet, we have instead given out Safeway gift cards so folks can buy what is suitable for their family. So in addition to condiments, cereals that are kid-friendly or senior-friendly (high fiber), canned meats, hearty soups, tea, ground coffee, and hot chocolate, we hope you will clearly mark a check to go through our offering plate to pay for those gift cards.

AND Joanie Caroon really needs some folks who can give two hours once a month to help. This is not hard work, just very much needed.



Advent:
Candles in the Dark



Advent: Grow in Faith

Dear friends,

If you are reading this update, please turn to the other adults in your household and ask: Did you know that there are faith and fellowship opportunities for adults at Grace? We've recently heard from several adults that they aren't aware that classes and fellowship groups extend from ages 0-100+, and so we are inviting you to help us spread the word. A list of current groups is in the Narthex and also available on the Grace Lutheran Church website. Go to the section "Engage" and download the "Growing in Faith Together" flyer under Programs for Adults.

Advent is the beginning of the church year and a perfect time to challenge yourself to deepen your faith. Here are three possibilities to consider!

Traditionally, our **Adult Forum** sessions during Advent focus on the Holy Land. This year, Martha Meyer will lead a book discussion of *Faith in the Face of Empire: The Bible Through Palestinian Eyes*, by Mitri Raheb, on December 7 and 21. Participants can purchase a copy of the book at the Advent Festival on November 23 or through Amazon. Please read chapters 1 and 2 for discussion on December 7, and chapters 3, 4, and 5 for discussion on December 21. If there is interest, the book group will read and discuss the rest of the book in January. Adult Forum meets Sundays from 9:30-10:45 in the Chapel.

Following up on his two-part class this fall on poetry and prayer, Vicar Nikoli has assembled a poetry Advent devotional for use at home. Please contact him at vicarnikoli@gracepa.org if you would like a copy of this to use for your devotions this season.

Finally, Rev. Gwen Hermanson Schaefer, a local ELCA pastor, is training to be a spiritual director. She is looking for people who can help her in her training. This is a great opportunity to learn about the process of individual spiritual direction and try out a few sessions while also serving the church by supporting pastoral development. For more information, contact Pastor Gwen directly at pastorgwen12@gmail.com

Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed Advent and Christmas,
Barbara Pitkin, Geri Horsma, Fran Harris, Sabine Kabel-Eckes
Adult Education and Spiritual Formation Committee



Text by Elizabeth Hood



Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him Psalm 37:7

Being silent and still is something we aren't very good at. How often do we take 5 to 10 minutes a day or week to be still and silent? I would guess not very often.

I attended our Taize service last Sunday night, a service of reflection,

singing, and silence. We sit for 10 minutes in complete silence. As Tim and I both reflected on, this time can feel like forever at first but as you get accustomed to the timing and feeling of the silence, it truly becomes beautiful. I realized after Taize how peaceful and connected to God I felt after the service, mostly because I don't often enough set time aside to do this.

How can we hear the voice of God if we never stop to listen? To be still. Advent is a time of waiting and watching for God. Preparing and a time to slow down.

Advent should be a time set apart to be still and listen for God. Wait for God. There are just 25 days in Advent this year, November 30 - December 24. What could you do in those 25 days that would set this time apart? Could you spare 10 minutes a day to sit in silence? Could you pray in your home with your family once a day? Take time to read a Bible verse from an Advent calendar each day?

What could you do this Advent to find time each day to BE STILL?

Wouldn't connecting to God and finding peace be worth it?

As we rush around in a frantic and hurried pace this holiday season, let us remember why we celebrate. Let us be full of gratitude at the gifts we already possess and let us find time to be still.

Sunday School High School

We are in full swing and we would love for you to join us for Sunday School! We meet every Sunday in the Sanctuary at 9:40 am for Sunday School Opening—and we are currently starting to sing and rehearse for our Christmas Program!

The program will be on December 14 and on Christmas Eve December 24. Below is a list of practice dates and times!

Sundays, November 16-December 7

Singing/practicing at opening and 5 minutes with Tim in each class. He will rotate through each class and go over your child's song for the program.

Saturday, December 13, at 10 am

Christmas Program Rehearsal in the sanctuary

Sunday, December 14, at 10 am

Performance (Meet in Brown Hall at 9:45 am)

As our Sunday School Mission Project for November, we are collecting \$\$ for Turkeys. All money given goes directly to the South Palo Alto Food Closet for holiday meals for those in need.

We will also continue our ELCA World Hunger campaign: \$10 provides school supplies to a child in need. The children love adding books to our "Classroom" poster during Sunday School opening. We have already raised enough for more than 25 students!

Elementary

MARCH 6-8, 2015 | RETREAT AT MT. CROSS

Gather for a faith-filled weekend at Mt. Cross with Lutheran Elementary Youth from all over the Bay Area!

Please contact Elizabeth if you are interested! We can't wait to take our young campers to camp for a weekend of fun and faith.

We took a great group last year and had a blast over the weekend!

JULY 6-10, 2015 | DAY CAMP AT GRACE

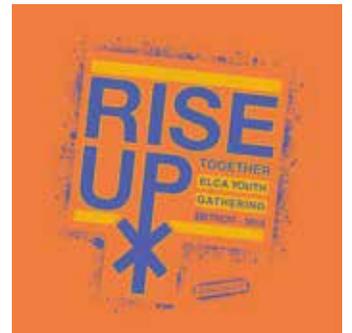
Save the date for summer fun and faith! Online registration begins in January.

ELCA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING DETROIT 2015

Rise Up Together!

We are taking 17 youth to Detroit next summer(!) and we need your support as our youth work hard to raise the funds needed through:

- Monthly Bake Sales
- Dinner and Silent Auction
- Babysitting Nights and More!!



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP:

CHRISTMAS COOKIE SERVICE PROJECT

Last year we made sugar cookies for our local fire fighters and delivered them. This is another event the youth requested to do this year. So we will pick a night to make cookies, and deliver them to those in need and those who we wish to thank for their service.

Women of Grace

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12 | COOKIE EXCHANGE

We are working on our fourth annual Christmas Cookie Exchange event for Grace Ladies! Join us on Friday, December 12! Watch for details on time and place in upcoming bulletin announcements and eNotes...

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | SWEETHEART PARTY

All Girls, Ladies, Friends, and Sisters are welcome to an afternoon tea with snacks, crafts and fun. Bring a friend and make sure not to miss out!



Priority registration for CMT begins in January for Grace families (church and preschool)

Info and forms: graceCMT.org

Session 1 | 9 am - 4 pm | June 8 to 12, 2015

Promised Land | Performance: June 12 at 7:30 pm

Sessions 2A & 2B | 9 am - noon; 1 - 4 pm | June 15 to 26, 2015

Spirit of the Universe | Performances: June 25/26 at 7:30 pm

Session 3 | 9 am - 4 pm | July 27 to 31, 2015

Don't Shut Us Out | Performance: July 31 at 7:30 pm

Sessions 4A & 4B | 9 am - noon; 1 - 4 pm | August 3 to 14, 2015

The Greatest Treasure | Performances: August 13/14 at 7:30 pm



On Our Way to Bethlehem

After two thousand years, the “little town of Bethlehem” is still I

Text by Martha Meyer



y
em
ittle.

ABOVE
Bethlehem at night

HOWEVER, ITS FOUR square miles are surrounded by “the Wall,” and Mary and Joseph would have quite a wait at the checkpoint.

After the recent devastation of Gaza, the people of Bethlehem are depressed and so is their economy, which is so dependent on tourism.

There is HOPE, however, in the programs of the Diyar Academy for Children and Youth; the Dar al-Kalima University, College of Arts and Culture; and the Ajyal Senior Care Program. During this Advent season, Grace Lutheran Church, along with other congregations in the San Francisco Bay Area, strives to raise funds for these life enhancing programs. Through the generosity of one of our members, Don Ostrus, we have a challenge gift of \$20,000 towards our goal of \$40,000. You can accept the challenge by writing a check to Grace Lutheran Church with “BSB Account #2539” on the memo line or participating in a raffle—actually five raffles in one. See the poster!

Thanks to the generosity of these folks:

- Chaplain Wilma Reichard donated an antique star quilt from the 1920s
- Autumn Bea and the Grace quilters donated a queen-size purple and turquoise star quilt
- Greg and Kathleen Sterling Wallace donated an Apple iPad Air2 WiFi and Cellular, 128GB, with a Smart Case and Apple Wireless Keyboard
- Jeanette Cool donated a dinner for ten at the Sam Mazza Castle in Pacifica
- Lois and Gordon Peacock donated a mixed case of Sonoma Valley’s famous Peacock Family Wines.

Advent and Christmas

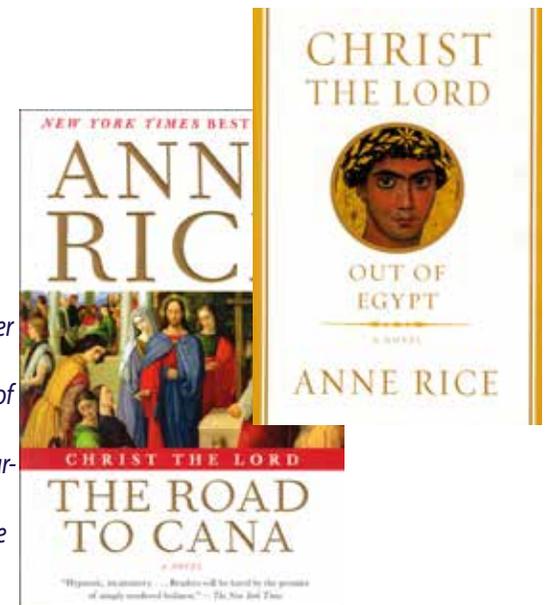
With Advent and Christmas approaching, we've pulled out many of our Advent and Christmas resources to make them readily accessible to everyone stopping in the library. Although this a busy bustling time of the year, many of our materials can be enjoyed in small segments—a book of devotions with a five-minute lesson per day, a plan for a simple craft in a family Christmas activity book, or a poem in one of the collection of Augsburg Fortress's Annuals of Christmas Art and Literature. We invite you to stop in the library and take a few minutes to get in the Christmas spirit. The large-format Annuals are on the bottom shelf near the computer station. The others are on the desk near the door. We also have a large number of children's books with Christmas themes, and will display those on the children's table.

Jan Curtis also has recommendations for this Advent Season: The Anne Rice books she mentions are on the shelf in the Fiction section, which is the "N" (for Novel) section in our library, filed by author's name, Rice. ■

Mary Ashley, Librarian

Anne Rice has written Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt and Christ the Lord: The Road to Cana, both of which I read a couple of years ago. I like her writing very much, and particularly liked the first of these books. She has a fine sense of place and character. The narrator is Jesus, and the place is: on the way to Nazareth from Egypt. The Magi come into the story, as does Jesus, age twelve, in the Temple. Rice uses Scripture, ancient historians such as Pliny and Josephus, and Roman Catholic legends and traditions to flesh out the narrative, and it's an interesting take on an old familiar tale.

For her use of language and word-pictures alone, I can recommend either book, but Christ the Lord Out of Egypt particularly, in this Advent Season coming soon.



Jan Curtis

Yearly Pledge Campaign—Where is It?

During this time of the church year at Grace, the Stewardship Committee would normally be conducting the pledge campaign to fund the operating budget. So where is it?

The Finance Committee has approved a change in the budget year, so we are going to "hold over" the current budget until next spring. We invite Grace members to attend an adult forum on Sunday, November 30, to get more detail.

Note, however, that current pledges are funding this year's operating budget and the tax year has not changed—so it's a good opportunity to check to see if pledges are up to date and if additional gifts are possible.



Council Notes

This fall, the church council has focused on setting Grace up for a successful 2015. We've been especially conscientious about planning the transition from the capital campaign to beginning the construction-planning phase of realizing the campus master plan. To ensure we're striking the right balance between staying on sound financial footing and ambitiously going after our vision, we're working closely with the finance committee, the lending arm of the ELCA and the architect to develop a specific proposal to put before the congregation for a vote early next year. In that vote, the congregation will be presented with updated architectural renderings of what we propose to undertake in the first phase of the campus master plan and be requested to approve a construction loan. We're also very happy to announce that several Grace members have volunteered to serve on the building committee which will oversee how our funds, upon congregational approval, are

put into action. Serving on the building committee will be Jim Schlatter (chair), Barbara Larsen, Timo Ahonen, Christina Buttler, Mary Cravens, Steve Madsen, Gail Foelsch, and Andrew Mellows. Doug Hohbach will be consulting on structural and civil engineering issues as they arise. Please feel free to seek them out if you have questions or input about our exciting next steps!

Additionally, we're thinking carefully about the possibility of recruiting and selecting a seminary intern or vicar for second half of the coming year. And, lastly, be on the lookout for a note in the mail from me in early December. In that mailing I'll be inviting you to contribute to a monetary Christmas gift for our wonderful staff. Thanks, in advance, for your consideration of that.

Have a blessed and joyful holiday season,
Ray Ernenwein, Grace Council President ■

COUNCIL

Dave Bohn
STEWARDSHIP, SOCIAL MINISTRY

Julie Buckley
MUTUAL MINISTRY, CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Nate Calhoun
SOCIAL MINISTRY

Maria Derrick
CHILDREN'S EDUCATION, FINANCE

Ray Ernenwein, President

Gail Foelsch
PRESCHOOL, BUILDING COMMITTEE

Twila Forbes
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Sabine Kabel-Eckes
ADULT ED AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Holly Lucke, Vice President
PERSONNEL

Don McElravy
STEWARDSHIP

Jim Schlatter
BUILDING COMMITTEE

Katy Siegel, Secretary
YOUTH MINISTRY

Bay Bells presents
Our Holiday Favorites

Friday, December 5 at 7:30 pm Grace Lutheran Church
3149 Waverley St, Palo Alto

Saturday, December 6 at 1:00 pm Granada Theater
17440 Monterey Rd, Morgan Hill

Ringers' favorites include Ukrainian Bell Carol, Joy to the World, What Child is This, We Need a Little Christmas, Ocho Kandelikas, and many more!

THE MID-PENINSULA RECORDER ORCHESTRA

FREDERIC PALMER, DIRECTOR
GRETA HAUG-HRYCIW, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

PRESENTS

A HOLIDAY CONCERT

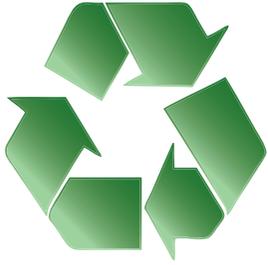
The program will feature settings of "Farewell my love" by Francisco Guerrero and Josquin des Pres, an arrangement for recorders of the theme music from a popular Swedish children's program, a pair of dances by the 16th-century Italian composer, Giorgio Mainerio, two passepieds from the Orchestral Suite No. 1 by Johann Sebastian Bach and two concertos, one by Telemann for recorders and basso continuo and the other by the 17th-century Polish composer, Adam Jarzebski, featuring bassoon soloist Gregor Dairaghi.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2:00 P.M.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
3149 WAVERLEY ST., PALO ALTO

ADMISSION FREE

The location of this concert is wheelchair accessible.
The Mid-Peninsula Recorder Orchestra is an affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society.
For further information please visit our website at mpro-online.org or call Frederic Palmer at 650-591-3648.



Printed on 30% post consumer recycled paper

Sunday Worship

8:30 & 10:45 am



Also broadcast on Cable 30

Sundays 11 am | 8:30 pm

Mondays 12:30 pm



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.
www.elca.org



ADVENT FESTIVAL

9:45 am in the Chapel:
How to celebrate Advent
and Christmas with your
family and children!

November 23

**after the 10:45 am
worship service
in Brown Hall**

Make an Advent wreath, Advent crafts, enjoy warm
soup and conversation, and get your fill of lefse!!