

Living Grace

Notes

December 2009 Newsletter

The Reverend David E. Hardy, D. D., Pastor
Web Page: www.livinggracelutheran.org

Gathered to Celebrate, Called to Witness, Sent to Serve!

Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, 24 December

7:00 p.m. Family Service with Holy Communion
*(featuring the Youth and Children of Living Grace presenting
“The Best Place to Celebrate Christmas” – a musical tour of Christmas around
the world)*

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service with Holy Communion



Lay Assistants

Sunday, 6 December

Ushers	8:30 – Jim Tuminella
	10:30 – Merrill and JoAnn Durrence
Lectors	8:30 – David Benner
	10:30 – Marlene Hardy
Communion Assistants	8:30 – David Benner
	10:30 – Team 1
Acolyte	10:30 – Erin Cunefare
Greeters	10:30 – Phyllis Prunty/Betty Hitz
Counters	Please look on Assistant Bulletin Board

Sunday, 13 December

Ushers	8:30 – David Benner
	10:30 – Harold Bowers/Ed Kennedy
Lectors	8:30 – Jim Tuminella
	10:30 – Olivia Kellar
Communion Assistants	8:30 – Missy Streubel
	10:30 – Team 2
Acolyte	10:30 – Abi Akamo
Greeters	10:30 – To be announced
Counters	Please look on Assistant Bulletin Board

Sunday, 20 December

Ushers	8:30 – Keith Siekierski
	10:30 – Will Arroyo/Paul Lefebvre
Lectors	8:30 – Michael Hardy
	10:30 – Will Arroyo
Communion Assistants	8:30 – Jan Levensgood
	10:30 – Team 4
Acolyte	10:30 – Michael Akamo
Greeters	10:30 – To be announced
Counters	Please look on Assistant Bulletin Board

Thursday, 24 December (*Christmas Eve*)

Ushers	7:00 p.m. – Chip Combee/Paul Lefebvre
	11:00 p.m. – Michael Hardy/David Benner
Lector	11:00 p.m. – Stephanie Cunefare
Communion Assistants	7:00 p.m. – Team 5
	11:00 p.m. – Team 2

Sunday, 27 December

Ushers	8:30 – Michael Hardy
	10:30 – John and Agnes Nelson
Lectors	8:30 – Michael Hardy
	10:30 – Carolyn Davis

Communion Assistants	8:30 – David Benner 10:30 – Team 3
Acolyte	10:30 – Cynthia Outman
Greeters	10:30 – To be announced
Counters	Please look on Assistant Bulletin Board

Team 1 = Will Arroyo – Captain
 Jan Levensgood
 Stephanie Cunefare

Team 2 = Margery Kellar – Captain
 Lesley Campbell
 Carol Ireton

Team 3 = Jim Outman – Captain
 Mary Jane Outman
 Cynthia Outman

Team 4 = Marlene Hardy – Captain
 Jo Kroger
 Paul Lefebvre

Team 5 = Lynn Lefebvre – Captain
 Stephanie Rhodes
 Carolyn Davis

Floater/Substitutes – Leanne Beutler; Taylor Cunefare; and Jason Eklund

If you wish to serve as a Lector or Communion Assistant, please contact Margery Kellar at margerykellar@comcast.net and she will be happy to place you on the rotation and prior to your first reading or assisting, you will be trained.

If you wish to be an usher, please contact Leanne Beutler at LBeutler@aol.com and she will be happy to put you on the schedule.

General News and Notes

December Birthdays

1	Stephen Arroyo	
3	Jeff Cook	
8	Margaret Holden	
9	Katie Lyons	
13	Nicole Hoppen	
15	Michael Ely	Hui Zhang
18	Connie Holley	
19	Robert Solheim	Kathie Kennedy
20	John Nelson	
24	Marian McCollum	
27	Louise Iconis	
29	Ree Lionberger	Gene Durrence, Jr.

Births

Congratulations to *Chip and Allison Combee* on the birth of their son, *Aaron Patrick*, on 30 November 2009.

Deaths

Jim Axel, was called to his eternal home on 14 November 2009. A memorial service for him is still being planned by the family.

Newsletter Articles

To submit a newsletter article, you can either have a hard copy into the church office by the deadline date listed or send an electronic format to Leanne Beutler at Lbeutler@aol.com.

Newsletter Distribution

The newsletter is being received electronically via email to members of those who requested it. We will continue to print the newsletter and place them in the mailboxes in the narthex but we strongly encourage you that if you have an email address, you receive your newsletter electronically. This will save costs on paper, the copier costs and the time in collating the hard copy of the newsletter.

At any time, you wish to receive this newsletter via electronically please inform Stephanie Cunefare, sacunefare@hotmail.com or Leanne Beutler, Lbeutler@aol.com.

Book of Faith Bible Studies

Led by

Pastor Hardy

Advent Reflections - While We Wait

Thursdays: December 3rd, 10th and 17th @ 7:00 PM
Wednesdays: December 9th, 16th and 23rd @ 10:30 AM

Romans

Wednesdays: January 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, February 3rd and 10th @ 10:30 AM
Thursdays: January 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, February 4th, 11th @ 7:00 PM
Fridays: January 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, February 5th and 12th @ 1:30 PM

Graceful Group Monthly Meeting

The Graceful Group will hold it's next meeting on Thursday, December 10. Come join us for a Christmas potluck lunch (main dish, salad, vegetable, or dessert) at 11:30 a.m. Invite your friends to join our group.

Brien Engel with his "Glass Harp Music" will entertain us with music for the holidays. He will also include the history of what he does. He uses goblets filled to different levels with water and he plays them beautifully. This is a

program that we should invite our friends to enjoy with us. It will be very special.

Please make your reservation by calling or emailing JoAnn Durrence by Tuesday, December 8 if you plan to attend (404-633-1833 or email gmdurrence@bellsouth.net).

Cathy Shealy will be providing centerpieces for the tables using her beautiful camellias. We are always in need of helpers for table set up and clean up. Let us know if you can assist us in this way.

We will again have a table for books and magazines that you are willing to donate for someone else's enjoyment. You may read a book or magazine and bring it back for someone else to enjoy next month. Unclaimed magazines will always be given to the DeKalb recycling program.

Mark December 10 on your calendar and join us for a great time of food and fellowship to celebrate the Christmas Season.

Church Council Meeting Minutes, 17 November

Members Present: Pastor Hardy, Lin Parker, Jerry Chapell, Chris Keller, Carolyn Davis, Ruth Scott, Meredith Collver, Andy Sulek, Mike Ely, Stephanie Cunefare, Jan Levengood, , Dot Beaver, Margery Kellar and Missy Streubel.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm

Devotions were given by Carolyn Davis.

The minutes of September 8, 2009 were approved as previously distributed.

Treasurer's Report

- Flower fund will be paid out at \$1,100 to catch up since timely bills were not received.
- Contributions are paying expenses but still only covering half of the mortgage.
- The Treasurer's Report was received as information.

Financial Secretary

- 10-15% of the congregation still contribute to the building fund.
- Contribution envelopes for 2010 have been received and will be distributed in time for the New Year.

Pastor's Report

- The new capital campaign will be announced November 29th at the fifth Sunday luncheon to allow time for 2009 contributions. Ruth will get different envelopes for the new campaign. For Simply Giving a new pledge will have to be made to replace the old one. A letter will go out explaining the campaign and any changes.
- There will now be a surcharge to use Simply Giving.
- There were 36 people for the Exodus study. Advent study will be twice a week

on Thursday at 7pm and Wednesday at 10:30am.

- Post card reminders for the upcoming fifth Sunday and a schedule of holiday services will be mailed this week.
- Several new families are attending services but there are no new members at this time.
- The children's service will be combined with the family service on Christmas Eve.

New Business

- The next finance committee meeting will be 12-2 to recommend the budget to be reviewed at the January council meeting.
- The terms for Lin Parker, Dot Beaver, Chris Keller and Andy Sulek are up in 2010. Lin Parker has already served two terms. Lin, Margery and Missy will be the nominating committee to find replacement members.
- The November fifth Sunday will be a chili luncheon sponsored by church council. Carolyn and Margery will pick up the toppings. Pastor, Jerry, Lin, Jan, Missy, Stephanie, Mike and Meredith will make chili. Ruth will make chicken noodle soup. Lin, Stephanie, Meredith and Missy will help set up the Saturday morning before at 10am. There will be attendance and cleaning sign-up sheets in the Narthex this Sunday. Council also agreed to continue the fifth Sunday events in 2010. Council liaisons will reach out to the various committees to obtain luncheon sponsors.
- Margery will be putting a 'Help Wanted' ad in the next newsletter for a youth director/directors along with a job description.
- Council approved a pocket style name card holder at \$1.38 ea. Missy will print the name badges for the congregation.
- Andy and Meredith volunteered to notify council as soon as registration information was available.
- Welcome kits will soon be available to give to guests. A shelf will be added to the greeters stand to hold them. They will contain a letter from Pastor, Pastor's business card on a magnet, Jan's parish nurse business card, an LGLC pen, an explanation of the liturgy and the current newsletter. Phyllis Prunty will be notified when they are ready so she can advise the greeters.

Committee Reports

- Health Ministry – the health fair was good with 27 flu shots given. The blood mobile had to cancel though. The next fair is in May 2010. The lites of love concert at Gwinnett Medical Center will be 12-10.
- Worship and Music – Valpariso travel choir will be giving a concert at LGLC in April 2010.
- Parish Education – will be meeting this week. The youth are tentatively planning on caroling with St. John on 12-19.
- Shepherd Group – the shepherd list is ready.
- Communications – LGLC marketing video has started development. Church member data being moved to Google Docs for members needing to use it. A committee has been formed to explore a contemporary worship service.
- No other reports were submitted. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 with the

Lord's Prayer.

Help Wanted Ads:

YOUTH CHAIRPERSON(S)

JOB DESCRIPTION: Plans, instructs, and leads Living Grace youth in a variety of activities to build confidence and promote spiritual, physical, mental, and social development. Demonstrates basic skills, safety precautions, and other techniques to prepare the youth for activities. Arranges for provisions, such as transportation, food, and equipment. May handle small amounts of money.

QUALIFICATIONS: Our ideal candidate will have good communication skills, a strong sense of accountability, and at least one year of experience working with teens.

BENEFITS: The satisfaction of being in service, leading, and having fun while getting to know our youth and parents.

APPLYING FOR THIS POSITION: Please submit your resume to the church office.

NURSERY WORKER

JOB DESCRIPTION: To take care of our little ones during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Hours from 10:15 a.m. to 12 noon or until the last child is picked up.

QUALIFICATIONS: Needs to have good skills in caring for young children from infants to 5 years old.

SALARY/BENEFITS: Salary is \$25. per week with two Sundays of paid vacation and one Sunday of paid sick in the term of one year. Vacation and sick leave will not be carried over to the next year.

APPLY: Please submit your resume to the church office.

Guidelines for Prayer Requests

Please notify Leanne Beutler, Newsletter Editor via email at Lbeutler@aol.com or written note to add or remove a name from the prayer list. If the name has appeared in three consecutive newsletters, it will be removed in the fourth newsletter unless you notify Leanne by the newsletter deadline.

Praying for Members, Family, and Friends

Members

Bill Conley; Laurel Jackson; Verna Jensen; Lorraine Koeves; Fred Kroger; Julien Lange; Ree Lionberger; Debra Melchionda; and Linda Tuminella

Marian Seckinger

Sister of JoAnn Durrence

Helen Cunningham

Mother of Margery Kellar

Alex Markert

Nephew of Linda Tuminella

Juanita Mitchell

Mother of Linda Tuminella

Anne Cressman

Mother of Marlene Hardy

MaryAnn Sweeney

Friend of Shirley Arroyo

Linda Linke

Friend of Living Grace

Ursula Booch

Friend of Connie Holley

Marietta Sandidge

Mother of Jo Kroger

Barbara Marsh

Friend of Jan Levensgood

Lib and Joe Hale

Friends of Connie Holley

Mary Mildred McArthur

Mother of Mary Jane Outman

Rosemary Stewart

Friend of Tom Bellamy

Sarah Jane

Sister of Tom Bellamy

Wynn Franke

Cousin of Margery Kellar

James Davis

Friend of Carolyn Davis

Gerry

Friend of Carolyn Davis

Bob Parris

Friend of Tamara Albrecht

Max Carroll

Friend of Shirley Arroyo

Steve

Friend of Missy Streubel

Anita Reed

Friend of Jan Levensgood

John Dilg

Friend of Cate Sulek

Father George Choyce

Friend of Leanne Beutler

Wayne Sims

Friend of Leanne Beutler

Tom McGreevy

Husband of Doris McGreevy

Health Ministry

Holiday Gifts and Traditions:

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights”...James 1:17 NIV

A harried woman and her children were ending their day of holiday shopping. To express her frustration and stress, she stated that whoever created Christmas should be strung up and shot. A bystander brought to her attention that someone had already crucified him. Before you get caught up with your tasks, lists, and expectations, put them into perspective. Ask yourself what you should be celebrating: the hectic, stress-laden, financially burdened holiday season, or the gift of peace and hope.

Even though God gives us all we need for a healthy, happy life, we tend to disturb it by “spending” and “observing” the holiday on human terms. Look at the holiday traps that take up your time. Categorize your holiday tasks as “need to do,” “should do,” “want to do,” and “expected to do.” Which ones really address the Christmas spirit? Just because you are invited to attend an event or have habitually participated in an activity does not mean you have to continue in that activity. Prioritize all of your activities. By weeding out those that distract you from the true meaning of Christmas, you will find less stress and more enjoyment from your choices.

Advent is a time for hope, peace, joy, and love; not mounds of gifts, chaotic rounds of parties, or copious amounts of food. Consider what has real meaning for you. Is it the Christmas story you heard as a child or its impact on you as an adult? Think about the music of the holiday and how a stirring rendition of “Joy to the World” or a quiet performance of “Silent Night” displays love and peace in a harried world. Don’t let commercialism or stress overshadow the gifts of love and sharing that you offer your loved ones. Remember the spirit of Christmas, share your presence with others, reduce your stress, and create meaningful traditions that demonstrate God’s love.

Jan Levensgood, Parish Nurse/Health Minister

On Thursday night Dec. 10 from 7 to 8 PM there will be a program at Gwinnett Med. Center in the new lobby mall in Lawrenceville. It is the Lights of Love and Remembrance presented by Congregational Health Ministry of Gwinnett Medical Center. Bring the whole family to honor or remember someone you love, and enjoy the free handbell choir concert with holiday music. If you would like to purchase a luminary, there are cards on a table in the narthex. Each luminary represents someone who is being honored or remembered. The proceeds from the luminaries benefit the parish nursing program at Gwinnett Med. Center.

**Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
(WELCA) News**

**Living Grace Women of the ELCA
General Meeting**

All women are invited to attend the Women of the Church General Meeting on Saturday, December 12, 2008 at 12:00 Noon at the church. The Anna Circle will be our hostesses providing drinks, desserts and the program. Please bring the covered dish of your choice and join us!

Piece Maker's

The quilting group will meet at St. James Church on Thursday December 3rd and on Saturday December 12th - 9:00AM to 12:00N.

The quilts are made and sent to Lutheran World Relief for distribution to those in need around the world.

You may call Agnes Nelson @770.458.3473 if you would like to participate.

Sew-N-Sews – Book Bag Ladies

The Sew-N-Sews and the Book Bag Ladies will not meet in December. The next scheduled meeting is Monday January 11, 2010 from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the church.

The layettes made are not only used for indigent families, but are also used for children going into the Foster Care Program. Book bags are sewn, filled with supplies and donated to Lutheran World Relief.

You may call JoAnn Durrence @404.633.1833 or Sue Benner @ 770.493.4044 to find out additional information on how you can help.

**Prison Ministries
Books ...Greeting Cards!**

We are pleased to be able to announce that we are now able to accept both paperback and hardback books for stocking the prison libraries.

We will also now start collecting Birthday Cards, Christmas Cards, note cards and greeting cards for all occasions so that the women can send their personal greetings to family members and friends.

Your donations for both programs can be placed in the designated box in the Narthex.

Judy Knapp of Rock of Ages Lutheran Church, Stone Mountain, is the Clinical Chaplin at Pulaski State Women's Prison in Hawkinsville, GA.

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child

Once again this year, Miriam Circle Members prepared shoe boxes for this international outreach program which provides Christmas presents to children around the world, many of whom have never received a gift of any kind.

Thanks to the Children and Youth Sunday School Classes and their Teachers for their help in assembling boxes.

We are asking for donations, in the amount of \$7.50 or more to provide for the shipping costs of the boxes. You may make your check out to Living Grace Lutheran Church with a notation for Samaritan's Purse Project.

Outreach Committee

Shearith Israel Night Shelter for Homeless Women

Thanks to all who volunteered and served at the shelter during its opening week of November 16th through November 22nd.

Jan Levengood - Joanne Durrence - Kellar Ladies - Cunefare Ladies - Sue and David Benner

Living Grace has also committed to staff the shelter the week of March 12th through March 18th. However if those nights are not convenient for you, David or Sue Benner will be happy to find a night that would fit your schedule!

Consider giving one night of your time as a gift to those who need our help to be able to spend a night in a safe and secure environment. Without willing volunteers, these women would have to spend the night on the streets, never peacefully sleeping and constantly on their alert for danger.

Questions? Call Sue or David Benner@ 770.493.4044 or @dobenner@yahoo.com.

NETWorks

NETWorks Community Ministry will be relocating to First Baptist Church on LaVista Road in Tucker as of December 31st of this year. New operating hours will be 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Please consider volunteering to help those in need. For information, contact Sue Benner @770.493.4044/suembenner@yahoo.com.

Thanks to all who have so generously donated food items to the food pantry. The need continues for donations. You may place your nonperishable food items in the designated box in the Narthex.

As our economy continues to struggle, more and more families are in need of food. Our donations are critically needed.

Heifer Sunday

The Third Sunday of each month has been designated to be Heifer International Sunday. December 20th and Sunday January 17th will be the next designated dates for donations.

Heifer International is an organization that provides farm animals for families in developing countries. **Heifer International puts faith into action with its time proven principal of "passing on the gift". Every family who receives livestock agrees to pass on one or more of its animal's offspring to another neighbor in need.**

Special envelopes are provided on these designated Sundays for contribution to this cause.

Angel Tree for Foster Parents

Again this year we will participate with other Lutheran churches to provide gas cards to help defray the travel expenses of foster parents, who are the backbone of the success of the Lutheran Services of Georgia Foster Care Program.

Please take one of the "Angel" envelopes from the tree in the Narthex; buy a \$10 gasoline credit card, make a cash donation or make out your check to Living Grace Lutheran Church and place the envelope in the offering plate. This year there are 100 foster parents in the program that need your help.

Parish Education/Youth

9:30am Sunday School classes continue in December and in to 2010, with the exception of **December 27th, when there will be no children's classes.**

Praise Report on Attendance

This Fall, we have been blessed by an upward creep in attendance numbers in our Children's and Youth Sunday School classes! Some of you have made the commitment to bring the kids at least every other week. We thank you, busy parents and grandparents, for making that extra effort for that oh-so-important hour of faith-based instruction, play, and fellowship. This is the only such hour of the week for most kids. We pray that the Sunday School years will have a positive impact on our kids. While they may not remember every verse or lesson they learn when young, we hope that when our kids are grown and making their own choices, these fond memories will help them stay on the path that God has paved for them.

This season, Stephanie Rhodes's Pre-K/Kindergarten class has started viewing and discussing bible stories from the Hanna Babera Greatest Adventure video series. So far, they've learned about Samson and Delilah and Joshua and the Battle of Jericho. What adventures lie ahead?? Carolyn Davis' elementary grades class continues to explore the bible using Augsburg Fortress' brand-new

Spark program. Cathy Shirah's youth class dives into Disney every week with Phillip Anderson's study of scripture lessons, told through comparisons with various Disney animated classics. All the classes took a break one Sunday in November to prepare shoebox gifts for Operation Christmas Child. Under the very helpful guidance of Sue Benner, we finished 16 boxes in one hour. Great Job, everybody! And finally, a BIG thank you goes to Meredith Collver for substitute teaching this Fall.

Wanted: Brown Paper!

Please keep Parish Education in mind when you receive packages at home or the office. These days, many boxes are packed using twisted brown paper, and we will be needing loads of brown paper, twisted or flat, for next summer's VBS program decorations. Please start this Christmas season by recycling all that paper and by dropping it off in the Youth Room (the back cubicle in the Fellowship Hall.) Thank you!

Miscellaneous Donations

Your donations of materials and items for Parish Education are greatly appreciated. Sometimes we find items in the storage room but we're not sure for whom they are intended, as many groups use the room. Please help us by labeling your item with a "To and From" note. We thank our generous friends at Living Grace!

Cathy Shirah and Stephanie Rhodes
Co-Directors, Parish Education

SATURDAY DECEMBER 19

Calling all Youth and Young at Heart to go Christmas caroling! We will meet at 5pm at the church, load the bus, and begin our trek to local retirement communities. After singing, we will return to the church for pizza and cokes.

Worship and Music

Living Out Our Baptism

Come, Lord Jesus

As we prepare for the coming of the Birth of Jesus, it reminds me of the words to one of our beloved Advent hymns:

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set the people free
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.
Born thy people to deliver,

Born a child, and yet a King.
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone:
By thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne. Amen.

Christmas Eve Services

Come worship with us on Christmas Eve, Thursday, 24 December. We offer two worship services. The Family Service at 7:00 p.m. will incorporate the Youth and Children's Christmas Program that usually was given the Sunday before Christmas. It was decided that the children share their program with all of the congregation on this night. The program will be in place of the "storytelling" or homily. Then return at 11:00 p.m. for our traditional Candlelight Service. Both services we will offer Holy Communion. Come share the joyous birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Special Days in December

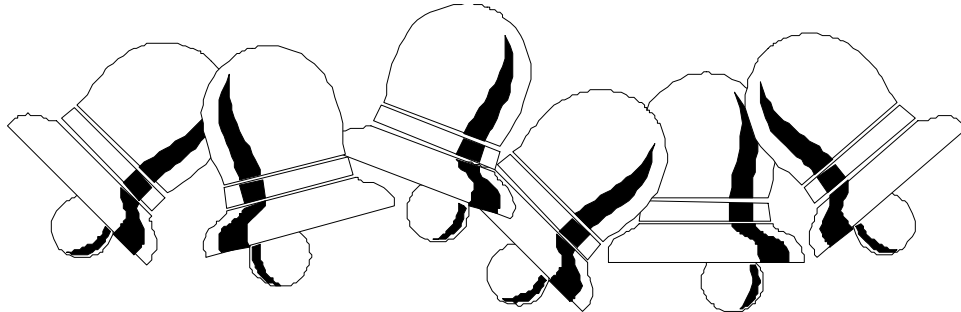
24 December
Christmas Eve

25 December
Christmas Day

26 December
Stephen, Deacon and Martyr

28 December
The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

29 December
John, Apostle and Evangelist



MONTHLY CALENDAR – SEPARATE FILE ELECTRONICALLY



LIVING GRACE Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Time Sensitive Material • Please Expedite!