

Operation Deluge Today, December 22, before and after worship (Atrium)

Enjoy a treat, sign a card, and send a word of prayer or encouragement to Rich Stasack.

Fraternite Notre Dame Bake Sale: Today, Dec. 22, 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Consonance: "A Christmas Carol"

Date: Sunday, December 22, at 3:00 p.m. (Sanctuary)

A Christmas Carol, which is a beautiful piece by Benedict Sheehan that combines arrangements of traditional carols, new music, and narration, is a fitting program for the Advent and Christmas seasons. This magical retelling of Charles Dickens' classic tale explores the ever important themes of love, generosity, self-reflection, justice, and grace. Tickets can be purchased online (visit [Grace Links](#)), by calling the box office at 773.658.9799, or at the door. All children 12 and under may attend for free when accompanied by a ticket-holding adult.

General Admission: \$45, Senior Admission: \$35, and Teacher: \$20

What's Happening this Week

Building Hours

- Mon., Dec. 23: Building closes at noon
- Tues., Dec. 24: Building closed until 3
- Wed., Dec. 25: Building open for worship only
- Thurs., Dec. 26 and Fri., Dec. 27: Building open 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Mon., Dec. 30: Building open 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Tues., Dec. 31: Building open for worship only
- Wed., Jan. 1: Building open for worship only
- Thurs., Jan. 2 and Fri., Jan. 3: Building open 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Mon., Jan. 6, and Tues., Jan. 7: Building open 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Holiday Worship Hours (Sanctuary)

- December 24
 - 4:15 p.m.: Children's Christmas Eve Service
 - 6:00 p.m.: Children's Christmas Eve Service
 - 8:00 p.m.: Christmas Eve Worship
 - 10:45 p.m.: Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship (prelude starts at 10:30 p.m.)
- December 25: 10:00 a.m.: Christmas Day Worship
- December 31: 7:00 p.m. New Years Eve Worship
- January 1: 10:00 a.m.: New Years Day Worship

Upcoming Events

For more information about these events and other activities happening at Grace, visit our website or check out December's issue of Grace Notes. On the website, you can find upcoming holiday worship times, community concerts hosted at Grace, future events, and more information about the different ministries at Grace.

Grace College Students Christmas Get Together: Monday, December 23 at 4 p.m.

Location: Striker Lanes (6728 16th St., Berwyn, IL)

Grace college students who are back for break are welcome to join Mrs. Modrich and Pastor Troy for a night of fellowship and bowling. Reach out to Pastor Troy if you want more information.

Epiphany Brunch: Sunday, January 12, after worship

This annual tradition is a wonderful way to enter the new year together as a family of faith. Come start the new year right, with worship and fellowship centered in our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Please note that this event is later this year.** Help is needed for set-up, clean up, and providing food. If you are able to help, scan the QR code or visit [Grace Links](#) on the website to sign up. We would also like to know who is attending, so please RSVP using the same link. - Fellowship Team



GriefShare Seminar Series: Starts Thursday, January 16 through April 3

Your bereavement experience may be recent or not so recent. Whether you are grieving the loss of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandchild, other family member, or a friend, and no matter what the cause of your loved one's death, you will find encouragement, comfort, and help by being with others who understand what you are feeling. The course includes video sessions, online materials, and a workbook.

To register: go to GriefShare.org, click on Find a Group, and use the River Forest zip code (60305) to locate our group; call 708-366-6900; or email gracechurch@gracriverforest.org. For further information, contact facilitator Linda Bernard at 773-259-4720 or at Imbernard5@gmail.com. The sessions will be held on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to noon. All meetings will be held in the church library except as noted. All are welcome, and you can join at any time. More information, including dates and session topics, are available on [Grace Links](#).

January 16: Is This Normal?

January 23: Your Grief Journey

Conference room

January 30: Loneliness & Sadness

February 6: Self-Care

February 13: Fearful & Overwhelmed

February 20: Anger

February 27: Regrets

Conference Room

March 6: Grief, Your Household, and Your Friendships

March 13: Questions for God

March 20: Stuck in Grief

March 27: Hope & Resilience

April 3: What Do I Live For Now?

Conference Room

Slovak Mission Trip 2025: June 26 to July 8

The Center for Christian Education (CCE)'s Vacation Bible School generates an abundance of interest and applications to attend. The number of applicants that the CCE can accept for the program depends on how many volunteers we can bring. Just one more volunteer means that 10 more kids can come to VBS to learn about Jesus and His love for them. There are different roles to fill, using different gifts. What is needed most are your love, smile, and desire to share with the children. If you are interested in attending, contact Pastor Dave Lyle (dlyle@graceriverforest.org).

Other Information

Grace Church Library

This month features books and DVDs on Advent and Christmas, which can be found in the atrium case and in the library. The book list is also on Grace Links. December's issue of Grace Notes featured two books that are also available to be checked out.

Fellowship groups

For more information on the groups, and contact information, visit [Grace Links](#).

Cornerstones: Every Wednesday in Church Library - **Will resume Jan. 8**

Yoga Class: Every Thursday from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall - **Will resume Jan. 9**

Finding Hope: Friday, January 10, at 10 a.m. in Church Library

Faith Forum: Tuesday, January 14, at 10 a.m. in Church Library

Rabbi Max Weiss of the Oak Park Temple will provide his perspective on the conflicts in the Middle East and the experiences of the Jewish people since the Hamas attack on Israel in October 2023.

Moms of Littles: Thursday, January 16, at 6:30 p.m. in the Youth Center

Religion in Literature: Friday, January 17, at 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a discussion on Phil Klay's short story collection, *Redeployment*, winner of the National Book Award. Klay served as a Marine deployed to Anbar Province during the Iraq war, and these stories are about the experiences of soldiers during that war. The meeting will be held in the home of Michael and Chrissy Nelson, 639 S. Lombard Ave., Oak Park. Jeff Wood will lead.

Knitting Group: Tuesday, January 21, at 1 p.m. in Church Library

Grace Notes Mailing Crew: Thursday, January 23, at 9:30 a.m. in Church Library

Theology on Tap: Friday, January 24, at 7:00 p.m. at One Lake Brewing Company in Oak Park

Men of Grace: Saturday, January 25, at 9 a.m. in Youth Center

Dads of Grace: Monday, January 27, at 7:30 p.m. (Contact Pastor Lyle for the location)

Moms of High School Teens and Young Adults: Stay tuned for the next event!

Christmas Giving at Grace

“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’”

-Luke 2:10-11

Dear friends in Christ,

Christmas is almost here! Each year, I am filled with anticipation of our Christmas celebrations at Grace, in which we hear again the great good news that Christ our Savior is born. In this child, God has given the world all we most truly need. In the Son, God blesses each of us abundantly.

As we celebrate Christmas, I ask that you prayerfully consider making a special financial gift to Grace Lutheran Church and School this season. God is doing so much good at and through Grace. We need your help to continue our many ministries as we enter 2025.

As of today, our year-to-date operating deficit is \$300,000. It is vitally important that we reduce this number such that we can enter 2025 on stronger financial footing. I know that you are people of great generosity, and that, together, we can greatly reduce this deficit by the end of December.

Please prayerfully consider making a special year-end gift to Grace. Your gifts can come in many forms, including cash, checks, stocks, IRA required minimum distributions (RMDs), charitable qualified distributions (CQDs), and more. To learn more about tax-advantaged contributions, please refer to our Win-Win giving brochure, which can be found on our website. Erika and I will be making an extra gift; I hope you will join us.

I look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus with each of you this year. May you, and those you love, be richly blessed by our God. May your faith inspire you to joyfully support God’s ministries at Grace.

Yours in Christ,

Dave Lyle
Senior Pastor

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Call 708-689-3032 for emergency pastoral care evenings and weekends.*