

# Weekly Announcements

*Dec. 14, 2025 • Last Sunday's Attendance: 185*

## After Worship: December 14

### **Operation Deluge: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. (Atrium)**

Stop by to enjoy a treat, sign a card, and send a word of prayer or encouragement to a Grace member.

### **Cookie Walk: 11:15 a.m. (Grace's Gym)**

Sponsored by the Graceful Evening 2026 Committee

Come to the gym after worship and choose your favorite cookies to take home. Fill a box for \$20.

### **Advent Christmas Concert: 4 p.m. (Sanctuary)**

This year's theme is Sing the Songs of Bethlehem. The Parish Choir of Grace Lutheran Church and fifth through eighth grade choir of Grace Lutheran School will sing familiar carols and anthems of the season with orchestra and congregational participation. The work that anchors this year's program was composed by K. Lee Scott, Sing the Songs of Bethlehem, which itself is presented in the familiar pattern of lessons and carols. Join us for this annual tradition to listen to music for the season and to add your voice to the song!

## Today at Grace

### **Sponsor a Christmas Poinsettia for the Grace Chancel**

Cost: \$20 (cash or check)

Sign up at the front desk or email [gracechurch@graceriverforest.org](mailto:gracechurch@graceriverforest.org).

### **Harmony Cares Food Collection: Until December 14 (Atrium)**

We will be collecting peanut butter, bread, and jelly for the food pantry.

### **Grace's Library is Open**

Did you know that the church library is open on Sundays? Stop by after worship to see what books are available. And if your child needs a break during worship, there are books just for them.

If you are looking for books on Advent or Christmas, you can find them in the library too! The book list can be found on Grace Links. To check out any book, please write your name on the card in the back of the book and leave it in the card holder on the table. Books are available for a four-week checkout.

### **Faith Promise Cards**

If you haven't brought in your card yet, you can still bring it in. Please leave it at the front desk.

# What's Happening: December 15 - December 20

Ready to build deeper friendships and connections at Grace? Now is the perfect time to jump in! We have several groups meeting this week, and you're invited to stop by even if you've never attended before. All are welcome and no RSVP required. Come connect with your church family!



## **Knitting Group: Tuesday at 1 p.m. (Church Library)**

Looking for a cozy community to share your love of yarn? Whether you're a beginner or an experienced knitter, you'll find a warm welcome here! Bring your current project and enjoy some relaxed crafting time and good conversation. We will also show you how to contribute to our prayer shawl ministry.

## **Grace Links**

## **Cornerstones: Wednesday at 10 a.m. (Church Library)**

Join us for fellowship followed by a discussion about the upcoming Scripture readings. This week includes morning prayer as well. All are welcome!

## **Wednesdays in Advent**

- 11:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer (Church Library)
- 6:00 p.m.: Supper (Fellowship Hall)
  - Hosted by the Board of Spiritual Life
- 7:00 p.m.: Evening Prayer (Sanctuary and Online)

## **Handbell Choir Rehearsal: Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. (Bell Room)**

If you're interested in joining, please contact Lisa Wolfanger ([lwolfanger@graceriverforest.org](mailto:lwolfanger@graceriverforest.org)).

## **Parish Choir Rehearsal: Wednesday at 7:45 p.m. (Music Room)**

## **Moms of Littles: Thursday at 6:30 p.m. (Youth Center)**

We are group for moms of children ages infant - 8th grade. Our intention is to build and maintain a faith-based community that supports each other as we navigate the journey of parenthood. All moms are welcome in this group regardless of church or school affiliation. If you are in need of child care, please let Elyssa know by the Monday before each meeting ([elyssa.salinass@gmail.com](mailto:elyssa.salinass@gmail.com)).

## **Music of the Baroque: Thursday at 7:30 p.m. (Sanctuary)**

Holiday Brass & Choral Concert

They will bring to life festive music from the medieval era through the Baroque, including works by Gabrieli, Palestrina, Josquin, Praetorius, and many more. Principal Guest Conductor Nicholas Kraemer conducts this treasured Chicago tradition. Tickets are \$43-\$103 and may be purchased online at [baroque.org/holiday](http://baroque.org/holiday) or by calling 312.551.1414. It can also be found on Grace Links. Use code GLC20 to receive 20% off all available seats.

## **Religion in Literature: Friday at 7:30 p.m.**

Location: Jeff and Claudia Wood, 1027 Thatcher, River Forest.

We will read aloud and discuss portions of W. H. Auden's *Christmas Oratorio: For the Time Being*. The full text can be found on Grace Links.

## **Consonance: Friday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. (Sanctuary)**

A Christmas Carol

With arrangements of traditional carols and original music by Benedict Sheehan, this performance promises to bring the festive spirit to life in Charles Dickens' beloved tale. We will again be joined by voiceover artist Bill Rohlfing. Tickets are \$45 for adults and \$35 for seniors. To purchase tickets, visit Grace Links or go to [consonancechicago.org](http://consonancechicago.org).

## **Fraternite Notre Dame Bake Sale: Sunday from 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. (Atrium)**

## **Confirmation: Sunday at 9 a.m. (Youth Center)**

Session Topic: The Bible and My Life

## **Sunday School: Sunday at 9 a.m. (Nursery and 3rd floor Commons)**

Session Topic: Angels Visit (Matthew 1:18-25)

## **Longest Night Worship Service: Sunday at 7 p.m. (Sanctuary)**

Whether it is a loss that we have experienced, a chair around our table that now sits empty, fractured relationships, the reminder of unfulfilled dreams, or the brokenness of the world; this time of year can be suffocating. There can be so much dissonance between what we feel and the cheeriness that pervades this time of year. This service seeks to provide a space for you to lament, cry, name your grief, pray, sing and hope in the presence of Christ.

## **Upcoming Events**

Information about upcoming events, fellowship groups, and concerts can be found in Grace Notes and on Grace Links. The monthly event calendar is also available at the front desk or you can scan the QR code for a PDF version.



## **Holiday Worship**

### **Christmas Eve**

Service of Lessons and Carols: 4:15 and 6 p.m.

*Both services are led by the students of Grace Lutheran Church and School.*

Traditional Service: 8 p.m.

Candlelight Service: 10:45 p.m. (Prelude starts at 10:30 p.m.)

### **Christmas Day: Worship at 10 a.m.**

# Other Information

## Finance Report

Grace Lutheran Church General Fund – July 1, 2025 through December 10, 2025 (23 Sundays)

- Church Budgeted Contributions \$889,000 (\$38,650 per week)
- Church Actual Contributions \$763,000 (last year was \$727,000 through December 10)
- Church giving is \$126,000 (14.2%) behind budget, and \$36,000 (5.0%) ahead of last year.
- Today's December 10 deficit is \$213,000 (\$225,000 deficit last year through December 31).

## Adult Education Note

Elizabeth Palmer of *The Christian Century* did her annual presentation on the best books of the year at Adult Education last week. If you would like to see the books she recommends, visit Grace Links to find the Powerpoint from the presentation.

## Christmas Cookie Collection for Harmony Food Pantry

Each year for Christmas, Harmony Food Pantry gives each client a dozen (or more) home-made Christmas cookies as a special holiday treat. Due to high food costs and government cutbacks, we have been averaging close to 300 clients each week, which means we will need at least 3600 cookies. We invite you to join us in bringing some Christmas cheer to our neighbors in North Lawndale. Bring your cookies to church on Sunday, December 14. Be sure to label them Harmony Cookies; or you can drop them off at Connie Zyer's home at 1321 William St. River Forest. There will also be coolers at the side door of Connie's driveway from Dec. 10 - 15 where you can place your cookies if you can't bring them to Grace on that Sunday. For more information, contact Connie at 708-917-4872 or [cruschz@aol.com](mailto:cruschz@aol.com).

# In the Community

## Second Sunday Concert

Date: Sunday, December 14, at 3 p.m. (United Lutheran Church, 409 Greenfield St, Oak Park)

Flutist Eric Leise, along with cellist Christopher Ferrer and pianist Cacie Miller, will perform works by Lili Boulanger, Frank Bridge, Philippe Gaubert, and Carl Maria von Weber. There is no cost to attend the concert, and it is open to the public.