GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
& SCHOOL

Dear Parents of Grace Lutheran Church,

The early evening Christmas Eve worship services at Grace are led by the children of Grace Church and School. *All children* in grades 1–8 are invited to be a part of this tradition. Every year, children who attend schools other than Grace participate in these services along with Grace School students. We hope that your child(ren) will be able to take part in the 2025 Christmas Eve services.

The children, even the youngest, prepare carefully for this special night. Leading worship is an important responsibility, and we want each child to be able to participate in a positive way, at an age-appropriate level. We hope that you will read the enclosed information about the service and rehearsals carefully. After doing so, please go to the Grace website to let us know about your child(ren)'s participation in leading Christmas Eve worship at Grace, and please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Please fill in the online form by November 6 if your child(ren) would like to participate in the service. If you have multiple children, a separate response is needed for each child.

Approximately 175 children are part of the Christmas Eve services each year at Grace. Your help and support make it possible for this tradition of leading Christmas Eve worship to continue.

For those who have not been part of the Christmas Eve service in the past, we invite you to view this 5 minute clip Grace_Lutheran_Christmas_Eve_Rehearsal_720p.mp4 from a past rehearsal. It provides a glimpse of this wonderful service our students lead every year. If you would like to view the full service from last year, here is a link to it as well: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LZJKB0r_6g&t=477s

We pray that your child's participation in these services helps them grow in faith and knowledge of God's love, shown to us in Christ's birth.

In Christ,

Pastor Michael D. Costello
Cantor, Grace Lutheran Church & School

Dr. Taylor-Imani Gates
Principal, Grace Lutheran School

Johanna Johnson
Music Teacher, Grace Lutheran School

2026 Christmas Eve Worship Information

Information for Grace Children who do not attend Grace School

After reading the following information, let us know about your child(ren)'s participation in the Christmas Eve service using our online form on the church website.
For questions, contact Ms. Johanna Johnson (708-366-6900, ext. 247; jojohnson@graceriverforest.org)

Children in Grades 1–4

- Sing for one worship service (two is optional). Rehearsals take place after the church service on November 8, 15, 22, December 6, 13, and 20. Attendance at these rehearsals is very important. Students need to make a minimum of 4 rehearsals.
    - Singers will meet in the seminar room. Grades 1–4 will rehearse 11:20–noon.
- Children should be picked up in the atrium following rehearsal.
- All children must attend the dress rehearsal: Wednesday, December 23 at 8:30 a.m. (finished by 11:15 a.m.) Children should be picked up in the atrium following rehearsal.
- Word sheets and recordings of the songs may be downloaded from the Grace website beginning December 1.

Pageant (3-4 Grade only)

- Participate in one or both services. The only rehearsal is the dress rehearsal.
- All children must attend the dress rehearsal: Wednesday, December 23 at 8:30 a.m. (finished by 11:15 a.m.) Children should be picked up in the atrium following rehearsal.

Children in Grades 5–8

Students must attend both services in choir. Eighth grade students may also serve as a reader.

5–8 Choir

- Sing at **both** the 4:15 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. services.
- Rehearsals take place after the church service on November 8, 15, 22, December 6, 13, and 20. Noon-1 p.m. All children must attend the dress rehearsal: Wednesday, December 23 at 8:30 a.m. (finished by 11:15 a.m.) Children should be picked up in the atrium following rehearsal.

(optional) **8th Grade Readers**

- Read at one or both services, as assigned.
- Rehearse with Ms. Gwen Gotsch, times to be arranged.
- All children must attend the dress rehearsal: Wednesday, December 23 at 8:30 a.m. (finished at 11:15 a.m.) Children should be picked up in the atrium following rehearsal.

Cover Design (All Grades) All children are invited to submit a design for the bulletin cover for Christmas Eve. The deadline for submitting a cover design is Monday, December 7. You can turn it in at the reception desk.