

The Means of Grace

November 28, 2021

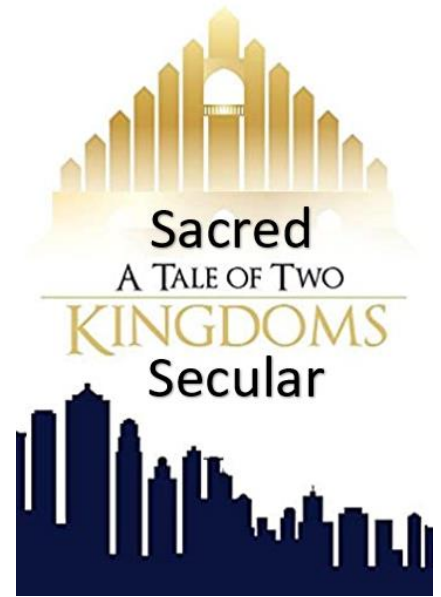


Fourteen teachings that define being Lutheran:

7. Two kingdoms – Sacred and Secular

There has always been tension between the church and government. At various times and places in history, the government has tried to wipe out the church. At other times, the government has tried to use the church for its purposes. Eventually, the church started carrying out a governmental role and even tried to bend the government to its will, attempting to use the government to carry out the church's work. Popes crowned emperors. Kings vowed to defend the church. Popes and bishops ruled territory and led armies. Conflicts arose over who should appoint church leaders: the church or the government. The result was confusion between the church's work and the government's work.

Martin Luther and his fellow reformers went back to the Scriptures to sort out this confusion. God carries out his work for the benefit of his believers and for the good of his whole creation in two different kingdoms or realms.



On the one hand, God has established his church, and through the church's work he cares for our souls (Matthew 16:17-19; Hebrews 13:7,17; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 4:15). He brings people to faith through the Word and sacraments (Romans 1:16; Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 5:25-27). He strengthens his church and comforts his people through the work he has given the church to do (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; 2 Corth. 5:19-21).

On the other hand, God has established government, and through the government's work he cares for our bodies (1 Peter 2:13,14; Romans 13:1,2). He maintains peace and order in society through laws; he protects people's physical well-being through the enforcement of laws (Romans 13:3-7).

True Lutherans have historically tried to avoid using governmental force to further the cause of the gospel, while also recognizing that Christians may serve in the government and be served by the government. True Lutherans have also attempted to avoid the confusion of the two kingdoms. The church and the government each have their own distinct mission and distinct ways to carry out that mission. As God's children, we live in both kingdoms and strive to be obedient servants in the church and to the government.

The Augsburg Confession stated it well:

"Now inasmuch as the power of the church . . . bestows eternal benefits and is used and exercised only through the office of preaching, it does not interfere at all with public order and secular authority. For secular authority deals with matters altogether different from the gospel. Secular power does not protect the soul but, using the sword and physical penalties, it protects the body and goods against external violence.

That is why one should not mix or confuse the two authorities, the spiritual and the secular. For spiritual power has its command to preach the gospel and to administer the sacraments. . . . It should not annul or disrupt secular law and obedience to political authority. It should not make or prescribe laws for the secular power concerning secular affairs. . . . In this way our people distinguish the offices of the two authorities and powers and direct that both be honored as the highest gifts of God on earth." (XXVIII:10-13,18)

THIS WEEK AT GRACE CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Sunday November 28, 2021

Flowers for The Altar-Faye Rutstein

Communion Prep-Gill espies

8:30 AM Adult Bible Study / Sunday School

9:30 AM Worship Service

and livestream grace-wels.net/worship or facebook.com/GraceWELS

11:00 AM – Confirmation Class at Church

OFFERINGS CAN BE MAILED TO THE CHURCH - 7610 NE FREMONT

11:00 AM - Confirmation Class

Monday November 29, 2021

Pastor in office

6:30 PM Church Council Meeting

Tuesday November 30, 2021

Pastor in office

8:00 AM 5-6 Confirmation Class

Wednesday December 1, 2021

Pastor in office

6:00 PM Google Meet Bible Class

Thursday December 2, 2021

Pastor in office

8:00 AM 5-6 Confirmation Class

Friday December 3, 2021

Pastor in office

8:00 AM 5-6 Confirmation Class

Home bound / Nursing Home Visits

Saturday December 4, 2021

Pastor in Office-Sermon Prep

Sunday December 5, 2021

Flowers for The Altar

8:30 AM Adult Bible Study / Sunday School

9:30 AM Worship Service

and livestream grace-wels.net/worship or facebook.com/GraceWELS

11:00 AM Confirmation Class

OFFERINGS CAN BE MAILED TO THE CHURCH - 7610 NE FREMONT

PRAYERS:

Joanna Hafner was hospitalized this past week with high blood pressure. She has returned home to recover.

Theo Hafner the Hafner family gathered at Grace School on Monday of this past week for a private baptism as Theo was made of child God through faith in Jesus by means of Holy Baptism.

Ganpin, the Delgado's longtime international student, has gone to Michigan to attend high school. We wish Ganpin God's richest blessings!

Homebound. As the Holiday season approaches please keep in prayer and make efforts to visit our members who would love to be in church with us but cannot attend due to health limitations. **Dorothy Elsasser Cheri Lockhart, Dwight Twomey, Errol Carlson, Shirley Baker, Vivian Fleener, Steve Vonfeldt, Arvolla Rehbein** . Please let us know if you know someone we can visit or add to our list to prayer for – whether they are a member or not!



A Family of Ministries For Christian
Worship, Education and Care





November 24th – Thanksgiving Eve Worship (7:00 PM)

Please join us for worship and thanking God for all his gifts. This is the most important part of your Thanksgiving celebration.

November 28th – First Sunday of Advent, worship at 9:30 AM

Our theme this year is “The Tree of Life”. This week - The Seed of the Tree

December 5th – Second Sunday of Advent, worship at 9:30 AM

Our theme this year is “The Tree of Life”. This week - The Root of the Tree

December 10th – ROOTED Christmas Party at 6:30 PM

A Christmas party for our 20 and 30 somethings!

December 11th at 4:00 pm - Celebrate the Posada at Grace School!

Please make room for Christ at Christmas with us in this special celebration.

December 12th – Third Sunday of Advent, worship at 9:30 AM

Our theme this year is “The Tree of Life”. This week - The Branch of the Tree

December 17th at 6:30 pm – Precious Lambs Christmas at Grace Church

Please join us for this wonderful program of Precious Lamb praising the Savior.

December 19th at 9:30am – Grace Lutheran Church & School Christmas Service

This year our children will remind us of the peace that only Jesus brings into the world

December 24th at 7:00 pm – Grace Lutheran Church Christmas Eve Service

Please join us on Christmas Eve and celebrate the birth of Jesus!

December 25th at 10:00 am – Grace Lutheran Church Christmas Day Service

Christmas Day worship! “Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning”

December 25th at 9:30 am – The First Sunday of Christmas

Please join us for our Sunday morning worship

December 31st - New Year’s Eve – No worship service at church

We will welcome in the New Year at our Sunday morning worship...

January 2nd - The Second Sunday of Christmas / New Year’s Celebration

We welcome WELS musician Chris Dreisbach to lead our morning worship music.

PASTOR BITTER – Call to Christ Our Savior, Collinsville, IL

Pastor Bitter has received another call to consider serving at a home mission start in Collinsville, IL which is just to the east of Saint Louis, MO. Please keep Pastor Bitter in your prayers as he deliberates the calls to Grace and to Christ Our Savior. As always, you are encouraged to communicate your thoughts to Pastor Bitter about our ministry together at Grace. Below is the call acknowledgement letter that was sent to the members at Christ Our Savior this past week.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings from the Pacific Northwest! This past Monday evening, November 8th, the Lord of the Church extended a Divine Call to me through your congregation to serve as the pastor at Christ Our Savior in Collinsville. I am humbled to receive your Call and grateful for the opportunity to consider how my gifts may best serve the kingdom of God in the Collinsville area.

I look forward to speaking with your leaders and I would welcome the opportunity to speak with anyone from Christ Our Savior or Martin Luther who would like contact me. My contact information is below – call, email, text. In addition, I will be speaking with the leaders and members of Grace, here in Portland, Oregon where I am currently serving.

As I prayerfully consider where to serve the Lord, I ask that you please keep me and my family in your prayers, as well as God's people here in Portland, OR. Please be assured that Christ Our Savior and the ministry at Martin Luther will be in my prayers and in the prayers of the members of Grace as well.

As with many of our pastors, I grew up in the Midwest (Oakfield, Wisconsin) and served at Grace, LeSueur, MN for the first 8 years of my ministry. However, over the past 17 years I have become very familiar with life on the West Coast and living in a large urban city like Portland. Portland and Collinsville / Saint Louis have many differences... and many similarities.

In the city, I love the multi-cultural opportunities that are all around us. I love the world mission field that exists in every neighborhood. Life in this city forces me to think about what it means to be a Christian as I come into daily contact with people who don't look, think, or believe like I do. Yet, when I think of each of them as a precious soul to be won for Jesus, I have to leave behind whatever attitudes I might have about people who aren't like me and see them for who they are, blood bought souls who God loved so much he sent his Son to save! On a daily basis the city forces me to think about the question posed to Jonah "Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

At Grace in Portland I have many responsibilities. As a pastor at Grace Church we care for about 260 souls of our members each day. At our school I serve as the campus pastor for about 120 students Preschool – 8th grade and teach religion and confirmation classes to the 5th – 8th grades. In our district I also serve as the Circuit Pastor for Oregon. All this work brings me great joy!

In addition to the ministry at Grace I'm also a husband and a father. I've served as a pastor for the past 25 years and for the past 28 years God has blessed me with a loving supportive wife, Kimberly, and 5 children who bring joy into our lives every day. Our oldest son, Tyler, is 26 and lives and works close to Portland. Our oldest daughter, Mikayla, is 25, married, and works as a relator in Little Rock, Arkansas. Our middle son, Noah, is 23, and our youngest son, Josiah, is 20. Both are living at home and working in Portland while studying power management and taking online classes at Bismarck University. Finally, our youngest daughter, Rebekah, is 15 and is a sophomore at Gladstone High School near Portland.

I wanted to share a little information with you about my family as I acknowledge this call because that dynamic also plays a large part in deliberating a call. We ask that you would lift us up in your prayers over the next few weeks. I am confident that the Lord will lead me to a decision that will be a blessing to his kingdom and will, above all, bring him glory.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in me by extending to me this Divine Call. May our gracious Lord continue to richly bless us as we serve him day by day.

Yours in Christ,

Thad Bitter
Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church

ZECHARIAH

AT-A-GLANCE



O.T. BOOK #38



AUTHOR: THE PROPHET
ZECHARIAH



WRITTEN: 520 BC- 484 BC

Zechariah's writings encourage and admonish the Jews of Jerusalem. But most importantly, he anticipates a full restoration of God and His people.

Old Testament: 39 Books

38

New Testament: 27 Books

After the Babylonian captivity the Jews had been released to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple of the Lord. The city is in ruins. The royal family has been reduced to governor status. The temple is under construction. But the words of the prophets still remain.

FAMOUS STORIES INCLUDED:

Zechariah uses different ways to communicate God's word:

Visions. Zechariah has vivid visions, Lucky for Zechariah—and us!—an angel interprets many of these symbols.

The word of the Lord. This is God using Zechariah as His mouthpiece to the people through word alone.

Symbolic demonstrations. Sometimes, Zechariah will do something in the physical world that represents the spiritual side of things.

MOST FAMOUS VERSES:

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. **Zechariah 9:9**

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son." **Zechariah 12:10**

Important Points about the Book:

- We often look for a chronological order when reading Bible prophecy, and that's one of the things that can make it confusing. Zechariah does things like refer to Jesus' first coming in Zechariah 9:9 (see above), which references Palm Sunday. Then in the very next verses, he refers to the Second Coming.
- Zechariah is quick to show us that God clearly sees a big picture. He sees what is coming as clearly as what is past. He is likely to cause prophecy that will mention the details of that big picture together, even though they may happen thousands of years apart.
- Zechariah's first eight chapters are directed to the builders of the Second Temple and the returnees from the Babylonian exile. He prophesies at the same time as Haggai, but while Haggai's messages were full of caution, Zechariah's are full of hope and encouragement.
- Chapters 9-14 are thought to have been given much later in his life. They refer mostly to the coming of the Messiah, both his life and death and his future return.



8:30 – 9:15 AM Grace Church

Bible History Lessons

With Applications

From Luther's Catechism

Sunday School has started up again. To start we will have a combined class led by Melissa Baker.

Sunday School will meet in the room at the far end of the fellowship hall from 8:30 – 9:15 AM on Sunday mornings. Adult and older children are welcome to attend bible class with pastor in the fellowship hall. A weekly lesson will also be attached with the announcements each week.

But we could use your help too! If you're interested in teaching, assisting, administrating or participating in our Sunday School program in any way please contact Pastor Bitter.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Make the Connection



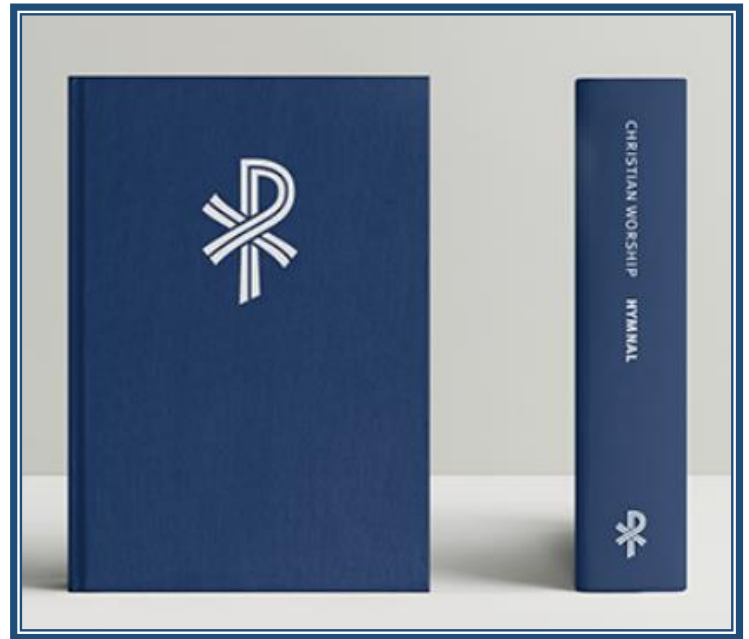


Wednesday Evenings at 6PM

Online via Google Meet
(invite will be sent via email)

The New Hymnal Is Here!

Nearly 100 volunteers served on 12 committees for the last 9 years as part of the WELS Hymnal Project.



To begin our transition to using this new hymnal in our ministry we are giving all our families an opportunity to purchase their own. The new hymnal is designed to be much more than just a book to be used in the pew on Sunday morning, it is in fact deigned to be a devotional book that can be used in your home all week!

Hymnals were ordered on Friday. We hope to have them mid-December.

If you ordered a hymnal(s) or worship books checks can be made out to Grace Lutheran Church and given to Larry Glasheen. If you mail your check to the church please include a note indicating its purpose. We pray that this new hymnal will be a blessing to our worship and your homes!

2021

Hymnal Pricing List

<i>Christian Worship: Hymnal – Pew Edition</i>	\$24.00
<i>Christian Worship: Hymnal – Gift Edition</i>	\$52.00
<i>Christian Worship: Psalter</i>	\$22.00
<i>Christian Worship: Accompaniment for Hymns, Volumes 1, 2, and 3</i>	\$105.00
<i>Christian Worship: Accompaniment for Services</i>	\$40.00
<i>Christian Worship: Accompaniment for the Psalter, Volumes 1 and 2</i>	\$70.00
<i>Christian Worship: Altar Book</i>	\$100.00
<i>Christian Worship: Pastor's Companion</i>	\$55.00
<i>Christian Worship: Agenda</i>	\$50.00
<i>Christian Worship: Planning Guide</i>	\$25.00
<i>Commentary on the Propers – Year C</i>	\$50.00
<i>Our Worth to Him: Devotions for Christian Worship</i>	\$15.00

**PLEASE
NOTE!**

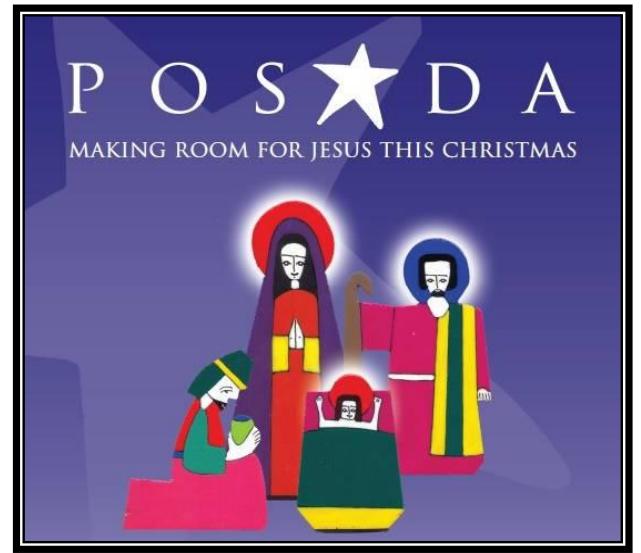
Be sure to visit nph.net/hymnorder for information about upcoming suite components such as *Musician's Manual*, *Easy Hymn Accompaniments*, and more!

Saturday, December 11th

4:00 PM Grace School

What's a Posada? It's a traditional Mexican celebration re-enacting Mary and Joseph looking for a place to stay where the baby Jesus can be born!

What will happen? We will be following two people dressed up as Mary & Joseph riding a real donkey around the school knocking on the doors asking for a place to stay. At each door Mary & Joseph will be turned away until the last door...



"Enter! Enter!" Will be the response and then the celebration will begin! Inside children will break Piñatas and all of us will enjoy a Mexican supper of tamales, churros and more!

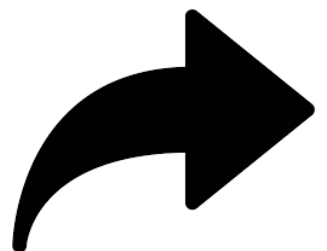


For Everyone! A great opportunity for families to prepare for Christmas in a new way. Last year the snow made for a wonderful evening and a very special Posada. Each year brings something new to the event!

Children are invited to come dressed up as angels and shepherd if they wish. We hope you and your whole family can join us for a very special Saturday, Dec 11th at Grace School!



WE NEED YOUR HELP! Please contact Juan Garcia at (281) 650-9245 if you would like to help plan or contribute to this special event! Please consider a special gift to help fund this event! In coming weeks please look for opportunities to sign up to help in various ways.





2021 POSADA SIGN UP SHEET

	Donation	Donation	Needed Donation
Ice & Water			\$15
Drinks			\$40
Fruit (Oranges & Apples)			\$40
Plates			\$40
Cups			\$20
Plasticware & Napkins			\$20
Tamales			\$375
Taquitos			\$225
Salsa			\$25
Rice & Beans			\$165
Churros			\$150
Gym decorations			\$50
Luminarias (paper bags with sand and candle)			\$60
4 piñatas			\$150
Candy			\$100
Toys			\$100
Paper bags for candy and fruit			\$0
Donkey			\$200
Hay for the donkey			\$30

2021 POSADA SIGN UP SHEET

	Volunteer Name	Volunteer Name	Volunteer Name	Volunteer Name
Set pulley for Piñata				
Piñata set up and help holding it up				
Table/Chairs set up				
Joseph				
Mary				
Donkey rental	Susan Garcia			
Get hay for the donkey	Juan Garcia			
Cup Candles for procession				
Gym decorations lights, tables, doors	Juan Garcia			
5 Food Servers/Kitchen helpers	Susan Garcia			
Luminarias set up				
2 guitar players - 1 inside & 1 outside				
2 lead singers 1 inside & 1 outside				
Gym decorations lights, tables, doors				
Cleanning and take down afterwards				



Weekly Mowing!

Please consider signing up for spring and summer lawn care. The lawn at church needs to be cut every week... can you sign up for a weekend to cut.

Weekly Cleaning!

Please consider signing up for summer and fall church cleaning. The church building needs to be cleaned each week and we could use your help!



MEMBER PHOTO BOARD

Cathie Gillespie is working at updating our membership photo board. If you are not yet included on this board, please take a copy of the membership information sheet, complete and turn it in with a colored 4x6 photo and drop it in the box located on the table at the entrance to the church. If you would like to replace your current photo, just drop the picture there with your name on the back.

Church Photo Directory



FALL MEMBER PHOTO DIRECTORY BOOK is currently being assembled. Please submit a picture that you would like to use in the directory to Cathie for the photo board or to pastor. We hope to have a directory in your hands by the end of the November.

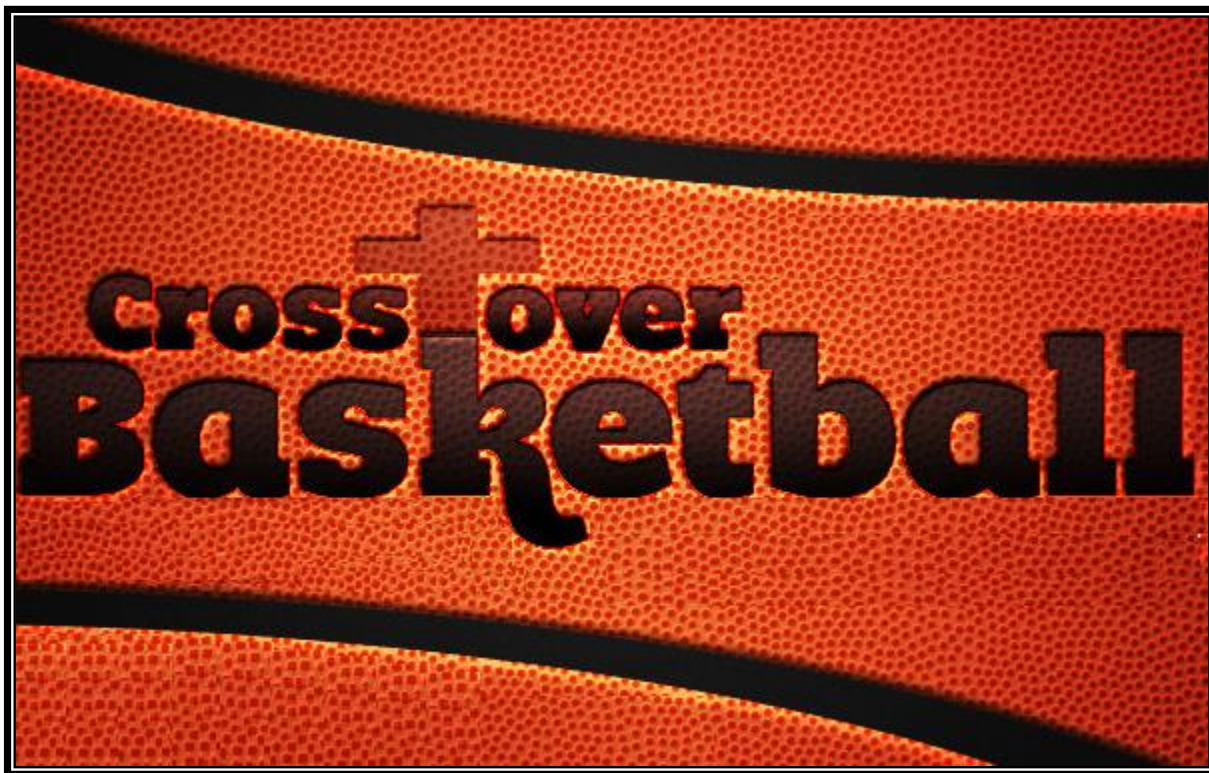


The Mary Martha Group

Beginning on Feb. 12, 2022, Mary and Martha will hold evening get togethers with meetings brief to hopefully include ladies who are unable to attend our day-time meetings. Make a note on your new year's calendar now! The time will be 4PM on Saturday! Plans are in the making to hold these about every 3 months.

Mary and Martha will again sponsor the **canned food drive** during the month of November! There will be bushel baskets on the pew in the fellowship hall designated for food collection. Food will be donated to the Oregon Food Bank.





We would like to start our “Cross-over” Basketball nights again at our gym at Grace School again.

But we need your help!

If you, or a group, would like to help organize, plan and carry out these basketball evenings please contact Pastor Bitter.

This event is for adults – high school age or older.

Bringing your friends.

Get some exercise.

Dunk on someone.

Have fun.

Live your faith.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS For THE WEEK OF ADVENT 1 2021

Sunday Isaiah 63:16-17

- Who cannot help us in time of need? Why not?
- Who alone does help us? What important thoughts do we find in the last line of 16?
- What does the first line of 17 suggest? Why would God forsake them?
- What is the plea of the prophet? What does he seek from God? Rev. 6:10.

Monday Isaiah 64:1-4

- What Is Isaiah's prayer? Do we feel like this at times? Explain.
- What is Isaiah suggesting God do? 2,3. Why? 3
- What is Isaiah's reference to Mt. Sinai say God has done to show his presence?
- What does God say to them and us in such times? Ephesians 4:1-16

Tuesday Isaiah 64:5-8

- Who joyfully works righteousness? What have people done to need to be saved?
- What have we all become? Like what is our own righteousness?
- What is the significance of the last half of 6?
- Who calls on the Lord by nature? What is God's attitude toward us? 7
- How did we become what we now are? Galatians 3:1-14.

Wednesday 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

- How does the Apostle identify himself? How did he come to be an Apostle?
- How does he identify the Church at Corinth? What were its members called? Rom.1:7.
- How did these people testify that they belong to God? 2
- Who alone has grace and provides peace between God and man? HOW?

Thursday 1 Corinthians 4-9

- Why is Paul thankful for himself and the Corinthians?
- Why do we thank God daily for what we are and for all Christians and what they are?
- How many spiritual gifts do we lack? Why or why not?
- Who will sustain us and for how long? How can we best show our appreciation?
- What is the prize for which Jesus is sustaining us? James 1:12; Rev. 2:10.

Friday Mark 13:32-34

- Who alone knows the day and the hour of the last day?
 - In view of that when should we expect our LORD's return?
 - What does it mean to stay away and how do we do that?
 - What are the consequences of not being ready when the King returns?
- Mt.25:1-45. What will we miss out in and what will we receive?

Saturday Mark 13:35-37

- Is God speaking of physical or spiritual sleep? Define spiritual sleep.
- What is the only thing we do know about Christ's return?
- What part of the day or night will be return? When should we be ready?
- What does it mean to stay awake? Galatians 6:1-5.