

*"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth."*

John 1:14

Grace & Truth

Grace Lutheran Church, Fremont, OH

DECEMBER 2013

The people of Grace Lutheran Church invite you to join us for our special worship opportunities during Advent/Christmas 2013.

Midweek Advent Services

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

December 4, 11, 18

Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24

(Candlelight at all Christmas Eve services)

5:30 p.m.

Family Worship/Holy Communion
Cookie & Hot Chocolate reception to follow.

7:30 p.m.

Holy Communion

10:00 p.m.

Holy Communion

Pre-service Christmas recital begins at 9:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 29

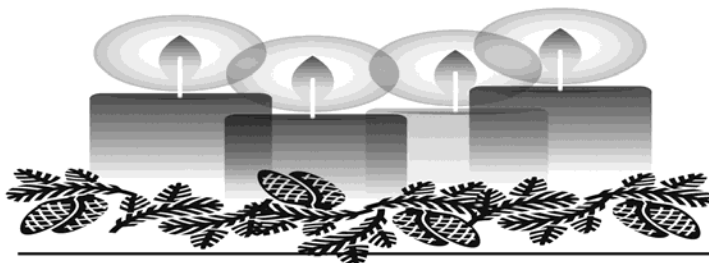
5:00 p.m.

Readings and Carols

Sunday, December 30 (one service)

9:00 a.m.

Readings and Carols



The Pastor's Corner



Here we are at December again...the time when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ! Let us celebrate the coming of the Christ child. Let us sing for joy that we may live in hope as children of God.

There are many ways to celebrate the story of the birth of Jesus Christ. We can attend church and sing for joy. We can share with others that have too little. We can read a story to our children and grandchildren...a story about a child born in a stable.

One of my favorite ways to celebrate is to share stories...those that offer hope and make us understand what is really important in this life. Here is an example of one of those:

The Mayonnaise Jar and 2 Cups of Coffee

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the 2 cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked his students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things — your faith, your family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite

Pastor's corner continued.

passions — and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car. The sand is everything else — the small stuff. “If you put the sand into your jar first,” he continued, “there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

“Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Attend worship. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse to dinner. Go fishing. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first — the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.”

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented.

The professor smiled. “I’m glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there’s always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend.”

May you find the golf balls in your life.
May you discover God’s joy and peace.
May you have a blessed Christmas.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Jody

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS RECITAL

We are organizing a children’s recital of Christmas music to precede the 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service. We are looking for the following: vocal music solos or duets, piano or instrumental solos of sacred Christmas music. Piano accompaniment will be available. Jan Serwin has agreed to coordinate this recital. Please call Jan with questions or to reserve a place in the program, at 419-334-8289. Jan will also arrange a time for you to practice in the church prior to Christmas Eve.

Upcoming Activities

SPIRIT SCHEDULE DURING ADVENT

- 5:00 - Meal
- 5:15 - Kids' Clubs
- 6:00 - Kids' Choirs / Study Hall
- 6:00 - Adult Groups
- 6:30 - Confirmation
- 7:00 - Advent Worship
- 7:45 - Bells

HANGING OF THE GREENS: Mark your calendars for Dec. 1, following the late service, we will gather to have lunch and then "Hang the Greens"! Our sanctuary always looks so beautiful at Christmas and it takes many hands to make that possible. To sign up fill out the insert in the church bulletin or let Maureen know at maureenpump@yahoo.com



MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES TO BEGIN!

On Wednesday, December 4 at 7pm, we will begin our Mid-Week Advent services. In keeping with the tradition, we will be having our Confirmation students help lead these special services for Advent. Our worship focus will be Proclaiming the Wondrous Birth, through the words of Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist. Come and join the celebration!

LADIES, DONT FORGET about the Advent Brunch, Saturday, December 7, from 10am to noon in the church dining room. If you want to host a table or just enjoy the morning as a guest, call Mary Nossaman, 419-332-4595 or Judy Overmyer, 419-332-9197. Come and join the fun!



Looking for participants to help with a LIVE NATIVITY!! The Live Nativity will take place at the Winter Wonderland at the Sandusky County Fairgrounds. We are looking for at least four people each night. You can make this a family event or invite all of your friends! The dates and times are as follows: Dec. 12 from 6-8 p.m., Dec. 13 from 6-9 p.m. (if it is too cold the shift will be cut short), Saturday, Dec. 14 from 6-9 p.m., Sunday the 15 from 6-8 p.m. and Thursday, Dec. 19 from 6-8pm, Friday the 20 from 6-9 p.m., Saturday the 21 from 6-9 p.m. and Sunday the 22 from 6-8 p.m. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board next to the activities office or please contact Stacey Reau, in the church office, if you are able to participate. Thank you!!

COMING SOON!

The Mission and Outreach Committee invites you to the Mission Fair at Grace Lutheran Church after worship on Saturday, Nov. 30 and Sunday, Dec. 1 and on Wednesday, Dec. 4. Unique items from Kenya, Tanzania and the International Organization SERRV will be available for purchase. Proceeds from this event help support our Brothers and Sisters in Kenya, Tanzania, East Africa, and around the world. Watch the Sunday bulletins for more information. See you at the "Fair."



LET THE CHRISTMAS CAROLS BE SUNG! On the weekend of Dec. 28 and 29 we will celebrate the birth of Christ with a service of readings and carols. **Please note that this is a 5th Sunday so there will be 1 service at 9 a.m. on Sunday.** The waiting will be over, the Savior will be here, so let the carols be sung! Anyone willing to help with the readings let Maureen know at maureenpump@yahoo.com

ALPHA BEGINS JANUARY 5, 2014!!

ALPHA is a safe, welcoming place for all people to bring their big questions about the meaning of faith. Alpha allows people to explore the basics of the Christian faith and then make up their own minds. There is no pressure; only clear and interesting video presentations and an opportunity to ask questions and discuss freely and openly. We hope every member of Grace will attend and invite others as well, particularly those who are not now a part of any church. ALPHA will be held at Pontifex (416 West State St.) on Sunday evenings from 5 – 7:30 p.m. The L.I.F.T. ALPHA team is now seeking those who would like to participate by attending the sessions or being a part of the ALPHA team. Opportunities to be a part of the team are open in the following areas: table hosts, table helpers, child care, greeters, sign in table, meal team, worship team, and prayer team. Training will be provided in three short sessions, so as not to require a lot of time. The sessions are: December 14 from 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at St. Mark, December 15 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. at Grace, and January 25 from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at Faith Lutheran. Anyone interested in participating in any way or, with questions, please contact Maureen at Maureen.pump@yahoo.com
Look for registration forms to come in the newsletter and bulletin!

DUST OFF YOUR COOKIE AND CUP CAKE RECIPES AND ENTER THE DESSERT CONTEST!

On February 9, following the late service, we will have a light lunch followed by a Dessert Contest. This time we are asking for only cup cakes and cookies. There will be categories for adults and kids! Sign-up sheets will be available beginning in December.

YOUTH AUCTION

Mark your calendars now for the Annual Youth Dinner/ Auction which will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2014, in the church dining room!



FINANCIAL REPORT

General Fund

As of October, 2013

	<u>2013 Actual</u>	<u>2013 Budget</u>	<u>2012 Actual</u>
Year to date receipts:	\$ 357,592.57	\$ 340,682.55	\$ 323,076.03
Year to date expenses:	\$ <u>369,746.23</u>	\$ <u>373,696.91</u>	\$ <u>335,691.74</u>
Receipts less expenses:	\$ (12,153.66)	\$ (33,014.36)	\$ (12,615.71)

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Baumer
Office Administrator

Church Council Notes - November 11, 2013

- Revised Constitution has been sent to the Synod office.
- L.I.F.T. - The Alpha program will start January 5. Volunteers are needed. The program runs 11 weeks.
- Elevator Update - Plans are to start after the Toledo Symphony.
- 2014 Budget - Congregational Budget Hearing will be held Sunday, December 15 at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.
- Toledo Symphony will perform at Grace on Thursday, December 5 at 7:30pm. Tickets are available in the church office.
- Community Thanksgiving Service - Sunday, November 24 at 7:00pm at Grace. Dessert reception with "Pastor's Pastries" to follow in the dining room.
- Christmas Eve Services - 5:30, 7:30, 10:00 (the Christmas recital will begin at 9:30)

CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET HEARING will take place Sunday, December 15 at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary to answer any questions regarding the proposed 2014 Budget.

(Church Council notes continued.)

Christian Missions/Outreach

- Bridge of Hope Christmas Party - December 15; volunteers needed.
- Alpha trainings scheduled for 12/14, 12/15, and 1/25.
- Coat Drive - 296 coats were given to Share and Care

Christian Worship

- Pictorial Directory is in process of assembly.
- Praise Choir evolving - seeking more voices and instruments.
- Altar Guild has 3 retiring members and 2 new members.
- Batteries needed for battery operated candles used at the 5:30 Christmas Eve service.

Christian Property

- Looking into weather stripping for office doors.

Christian Stewardship

- Preparing thank you letters from Consecration Sunday.

Christian Youth

- Orders are being taken for Thanksgiving Pies. Pies will be baked November 27; pick up time is 2-4pm in the church dining room. Donations of pie supplies are needed.
- Volunteers are needed for the Live Nativity at the Fairgrounds on December 14/15 and 21/22 from 7-9pm.
- Carolers are needed for Sunday, December 1 to sing at local nursing homes.
- Annual Youth Dinner/Auction is scheduled for Saturday, March 1, 2014. Donations needed.

REMINDER: All end of year donations must be turned into the church office by noon on Monday, December 30, in order to receive credit for 2013.

OUTREACH & MISSIONS UPDATES

Reaching out into our community and the world, to be the hands and feet of Christ.

- Share and Care: Our October Coat Drive was a big success! Thanks to your generosity we collected 296 coats and donated them to Share and Care! What a wonderful gift you have provided for many people who might, otherwise, not have had a warm coat this winter. Also in Share and Care news! Lamar and Donna Garner will be our new representatives at Share and Care. LaMar and Donna have been very active and faithful volunteers at Share and Care for many years.
- Bridge of Hope: Beginning the weekend of November 17 we will be collecting hats and mittens for the Bridge of Hope, December 15, Christmas party. We will also have a "Post it note board" in the narthex during the month of December. This will give us an opportunity to pick up needed house hold items to be given at the Christmas party.
- Lutheran Homes Society: On November 16 & 17 Pastor James Dumke, from Lutheran Homes Society was here and gave a wonderful message which inspired us to continue our mission work. We also put the focus on children through a video called Prayer of the Children. Representatives from the Village House gave Mission Moments at each service and there was an offering taken, at the doors, to help support their work.
- Liberty Center: is currently housing a mom & dad with 3 children, mom & dad with 5 children, mom and 5 children, mom and child, mom and child, 3 single men, 1 single woman. The center is in need of coffee creamer, size 2 diapers, and volunteers! With the holidays coming, homemade cookies would be appreciated along with summer sausage and cheese trays, and as always, keep them in your prayers.

Crafting for a Cause will meet on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the dining room. A freewill donation will be collected for the use of your space to benefit My Brother's Keeper. This event is open to crafters of all ages and abilities. For more information contact Cheryl Paeth by email at cheryl.a.paeth@gmail.com or by phone at 402-850-1581.



A Note From Thrivent Financial for Lutherans:

We are excited and proud to share that members responded so enthusiastically to the Thrivent Choice Double Direction Church Campaign that we have reached the \$15 million cap. The campaign is now over.

A big “thank you” to all who helped to promote this one-time campaign or directed Choice Dollars yourself! We relied almost completely on congregations and the Lutheran community to spread the word, so we really didn’t know what kind of response to expect. Thanks for helping with this learning experience and thanks for helping churches nationwide in a big way!

As a reminder, if Choice Dollars were directed to your church during the campaign, then by Dec. 20, 2013, an additional electronic deposit will be made to your church’s bank account. This one-time deposit will represent the additional amount Thrivent Financial is distributing through the Double Direction Church Campaign.

If you have any questions, please email us or contact a Member Care Representative at 800-847-4836, and when prompted, say, “Thrivent Choice.”

Participation in Thrivent Choice is subject to the terms and conditions for Organizations Receiving Choice Dollars Grant Funds.

A Note From the Endowment Board:

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 first allowed taxpayers age 70 1/2 or older to exclude from gross income otherwise taxable distributions from their IRA (“qualified charitable distributions,” or QCDs), up to \$100,000, that were paid directly to a qualified charity. These gifts were also known as “Charitable IRA rollovers.” The law was originally scheduled to expire in 2007, but was extended through 2013 by subsequent legislation.

How QCDs Work for 2013

You must be 70 1/2 or older in order to make QCDs. You direct your IRA trustee to make a distribution from your IRA (other than SEP and Simple IRAs) to a qualified charity. The distribution must be one that would otherwise be taxable to you. You can exclude up to \$100,000 of QCDs from your gross income in 2013. If you file a joint return, your spouse can exclude an additional of QCDs in 2013. Note: You don’t get to deduct QCDs as a charitable contribution on your federal income tax return - that would be double-dipping. QCDs count toward satisfying any required minimum distributions (RMDs) that you would otherwise have to receive from your IRA, just as if you had received an actual distribution from the plan. However, distributions that you actually receive from your IRA (including RMDs) that you subsequently transfer to a charity cannot qualify as QCDs.



 THIS MONTH'S
birthdays

Dec. 1	Edna Collins	1612 Napoleon St.
Dec. 3	Ralph Kinsey	1545 Fangboner Rd., Rm. 306
Dec. 4	Sandra Houghtaling	563 Co. Rd. 358
Dec. 4	Alben Koebel	1116 Luckey St.
Dec. 9	Richard Burkett	1170 Muskellunge Rd.
Dec. 10	Patricia Gallagher	532 S. Pennsylvania Ave.
Dec. 10	Nancy Lawrence	699 Rambo Ln.
Dec. 18	Phyllis Jess	1751 Oak Dr.
Dec. 20	Lyla Avers	128 S. Granville Blvd.
Dec. 21	Erma Smith	1501 Co. Rd. 181, Green Springs 44836
Dec. 28	Ruth Gerstenberger	147 W. Thomson Dr., Clyde 43410
Dec. 28	Melvin Shafer	421 N. Co. Rd. 198
Dec. 29	Nancy Balsizer	2310 Co. Rd. 213, Clyde 43410
Dec. 29	Mary Frey	203 Liberty Ave., Clyde 43410
Dec. 30	Joan Ginnever	2147 Tiffin Rd.
Dec. 30	Margo Radtke	315 Bidwell Ave., Apt. 104

THE ENDOWMENT BOARD is seeking nominations for two positions beginning March 2014. This is a two-year term. Please call the church office, 419-332-1558, if you are interested.

Thank You's

To all responsible for the great brunch on October 20, 2013, a great big thank you. It was so nice for all to sit down and enjoy a lovely meal and a good visit.

Sincerely,
Mary E. Coleman

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Your love of our Lord has shown forth and raised up high to our almighty Father, through your prayers, cards and love. Thank you to the Soup and Prayer Shawl Ministries and to Linda Swartz for bringing the delicious soup and the rainbow colored shawl. Both brought me comfort. Thank you to Pastor Jody for visiting me everyday and praying with me. Maureen your presence and prayers were also raining down on me. God is our Almighty God. He lives and is alive in our faithfulness. My deep thanks to all.

Yours in Christ's love,
Sandy Houghtaling

I would like to thank Pastor Jody for her visit and prayer and to all for your prayers and cards. These helped to remind me that you were all thinking of me.

Thanks again,
Dale Shimer

How wonderful it is to know that so many people were praying for our son, Steve, who lives in Hilliard, Ohio, as he struggled with cancer and chemo treatments during the last four months. The good news is God heard these prayers and eliminated the cancer from Steve. Or thanks to Pastor Jody, Maureen, and Pastor Jim and his wife Linda for helping us through this difficult time. Thanks to all our church friends for your cards, thoughts, concerns, and prayers.

Thanks be to God,
Sharon and Dick Zilles

We would like to thank Pastor Jody for the nice visit, and the beautiful gold cross that we received for our 50th wedding anniversary. A sincere thank you to Pastor Jody and Grace Lutheran Church.

Bless you all,
Bud & Dianne (Ann) Laird

Noah's Ark has boarded two more passengers for the school year. We are having a wonderfully blessed year so far with 24 students. Our unit on "Family" ended, and we started on the "Alphabet" unit. The letter "C" saw us building a castle out of cardboard! For the letter "D", a dragon topped the castle to protect the brave knights and princesses who play inside. As we continue into fall, we will be working on lessons about making messes and cleaning up!



In October, we had our Fall Program and Trick-or-Treated. Parents joined us for a few songs and the children showed off their costumes for some treats. We even visited the offices and saw Pr. Jody, Linda, Tricia, Maureen, and Ms. Stacey.

We would like to thank Dr. and Mrs. Farrell for the new desk and other office supplies that we are already putting to good use. Who would have thought that the preschoolers would have so much fun on an old electric typewriter? Thank you, also, to Cal Bristley for the file cabinets and shelves. It will help our office space become more organized. We love being able to recycle and update our office at the same time.

Noah's Ark Preschool enrolls year-round, so when your child is ready, we are here! Email Tricia McElfresh at noahs_ark_fremont@yahoo.com or Call 419-332-1558 for more information!

With God's children,
Tricia McElfresh
Administrator

TOLEDO SYMPHONY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Thursday, December 5 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased in the church office, Monday - Friday, 8:30am to 4pm. Adults - \$10; Seniors (65 and over) \$8; Students (18 and under) \$5.

YOUTH NEWS

A NOTE ABOUT YOUTH ACTIVITIES: There are sign-up sheets in the Activities office for each individual upcoming youth event. If you know you are going to attend an event, please write your name on the sheet. Even if it is a possibility that you may attend, please write your name down. This will enable Stacey and the several volunteers who prepare events to plan accordingly. Thank you!!

There will be NO Spirit activities on Wednesday, Nov. 27!
Happy Thanksgiving!

November and December Events for Kids and Youth:



All LITTLE LUTHERANS & CRAZY KIDS (1st-5th graders) are invited to a movie at Paramount Cinema, 301 S. Front St., Fremont, on Saturday, Nov. 23! We will plan on meeting in the cinema parking lot at 1:30 p.m. We will be watching *Free Birds!* Admission to the movie will be paid, but please bring your own money for snacks. Please sign up on the bulletin board next to the activities office if you are able to attend. Thanks!!

PIE MAKERS - All youth, parents and adults are invited to help make pies in the church kitchen on Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 8 a.m. for our Youth Pie fundraiser! We are usually done around noon. Thank you!



TOT TIME will meet on Saturday, Nov. 23 at 10:30 a.m. in the church lounge for fun, stories and songs! Tot time is for infants through preschoolers with a parent.

Calling all CAROLERS! On Sunday, Dec. 1 we will meet in the dining room at 11:15 for a light lunch. After lunch we will then head out to area nursing homes for an afternoon of caroling to spread some holiday cheer! Please sign up on the bulletin board next to the activities office.

Calling all CRAZY KIDS (4th and 5th graders). . . on Thursday, Dec. 12 from 6-8 p.m. we will participate in the Live Nativity at the Winter Wonderland, being held at the Sandusky County Fairgrounds. It will be a fun night complete with live animals and treats at the end of our shift! Please sign up on the bulletin board next to the activities office if you are able to attend. We will just plan on meeting at the fairgrounds that night. If you need transportation, please let Stacey Reau know. Thank you!!

MIDDLE and HIGH SCHOOL Youth!! On Thursday, Dec. 19 from 6-8 p.m. we will participate in the Live Nativity at the Winter Wonderland, being held at the Sandusky County Fairgrounds. It will be a fun night complete with live animals and treats at the end of our shift! Please sign up on the bulletin board next to the activities office if you are able to attend. We will just plan on meeting at the fairgrounds that night. If you need transportation, please let Stacey Reau know. Thank you!!

A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS will be held on Saturday, December 21st from 10-11am in the church dining room. All preschoolers through fourth graders are invited to a morning of fun, games, cake and celebrating the birthday of our Savior! If any middle or high school youth would like to help at the party, please contact Stacey Reau in the church office. Thanks!



PRACTICE for the Sunday School Christmas Program will be held on Saturday, Dec. 21 from 11 a.m. to noon in the sanctuary. Please plan to attend. Thank you!!



Mark your calendars now for the Sunday School CHRISTMAS PROGRAM which will be held on Sunday, Dec. 22 at the 10 a.m. service! All kids and youth are asked to please join the fun each Sunday morning at 9 a.m., in the church auditorium, so that each person has a part in the program.

All Middle and High School girls are invited to a study about Ruth starting on Wednesday, January 8! We will meet from 6:15-7:15 p.m. in Stacey's office every Wednesday evening. We will explore the life of Ruth, who battles many of the same issues young women face today: self-esteem, friends, suffering, purity, guys and much more. We will be using the study entitled Get Real! Embrace the Reality of Ruth. Like a spiritual key, this youth-friendly Bible study will unlock a desire to live for God in a real way!

Come on Middle and High School youth. . .we need you at Sunday School! Each week is a new adventure with everything from YouTube clips, to movies to following and discussing the new program I Am Second! And, breakfast is served each Sunday morning! See you Sunday at 9 a.m. in the youth room!!



The Spirit Kids' Club (1st-5th graders) will be collecting paper items for Village House until December 11th! The goal of Village House is to provide a comfortable, home-like environment for children who are required to have supervised visitations with their family members. Village House is also available as a neutral location for supervised exchanges, drop-off or pick up for families with custody arrangements. With lots of traffic in and out of the house each day, the need for paper products is immense. Participants in Kids' Club are asked to bring in the following items to help Village House prepare for the busy holiday season: paper plates, paper cups, plastic forks and spoons, napkins and toilet paper. Village House operates entirely on contributions from the community and grants, so every single donation is greatly appreciated! Thank you!

PLEASE CHECK OUT THE LOST AND FOUND BASKET, located in the Activities Office, if you are missing any items. We have many items that have been turned in over the last few months.





Christmas Poinsettias can be ordered through the church office. Plants are \$9 each. Payment and wording for the bulletin must accompany orders. Plants can be picked up after the 10:00 service on Christmas Eve.

GRACE FELLOWSHIP will meet again on Tuesday, December 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the lounge. Join us for fun and fellowship.



Take some time to check out what's new in our Church Library...

from **CRAZY TALK**

Eschatology: The study of the way things worse before they get better when all reality ends.

Rapture: Now you see it, now you don't - because the teaching is not biblical.



Please keep in mind the **Student Uniform**

Exchange Room, located right across from the church library! You can pick-up what your child needs or drop off what your child has outgrown. Every day the selection seems to get bigger and bigger! This room is self-serve and is open on Sunday mornings, Monday-Friday from 10am-noon, and on Wednesday evenings during Spirit! Thank you!!



TANYA'S STORY by Tanya Schardt, War Veteran

Recently at the Community Veterans Day service, Tanya Schardt, a member of Grace Lutheran Church, shared her story as a war Veteran. She is a wounded Army veteran of the war in Iraq. Tanya has paid and continues to pay a very heavy price for her service to our country, and we all owe her a great debt of gratitude.

Tanya shared: "I always wanted to be in the military. My grandfather served in World War II, and he was very proud to be an American and to defend America. He instilled those same values in his children and grandchildren, from the time we were little. My mom thought that no one would follow in my grandpa's footsteps, because she had all girls. But I was not going to let that stop me. So I joined the army reserve while I was just one credit short of graduation from college, and in not even a month, I went into active duty.

In the 11 and a half years I was in the army, I was stationed all over the place – in South Carolina, Maryland, Texas, Germany, California, Louisiana, and Georgia. And I did rotations in Kuwait, Egypt, Qatar and Iraq.

My MOS or Military Occupation Specialty is armaments – I worked with all different kinds of weapon systems, everything from 9mm guns to artillery, tanks, you name it. The only thing I didn't work on was Helicopter firing systems.

Being in the Army meant everything to me. I loved it, even though the hours were long, and it wasn't easy. But it was worth it knowing that I was doing this, so others back home would not have to.

I was in Iraq on three tours, one with 3ID, with 1AD, and last with 1st Calvary Division. I went into Iraq the first time during the invasion when Saddam was killing his people. When I got there, I really didn't know what to expect. It was hard, especially when we had to write a good bye letter the chaplain would hold as the last letter to our family, in case we didn't come back.

It was a very different culture, and none of us had been in combat before. Our training didn't prepare us for things like encountering starving people, and children being used as combatants.

During my first tour of 18 months I went all over Iraq – and I was there for the invasion, the finding and trying of Saddam, the first election and so on. There was much good that happened, although it was not reported on the news. But it was also an experience that changed me. I became very hardened by the violence and the suffering and the losses.

I brought my camera and took pictures thinking that I would not ever be coming back. However, once I got back I had a Permanent Change of Duty Station – transferring into a unit that was already scheduled to go to Iraq – and so back I went. This time, I knew what to expect and because of my experience, I could help others who were

there for the first time. After 15 months, I came home a second time. But I was once again PCS'd to a new unit – that went right back in again.

About a year into my third tour, we were just getting ready to pack things up. We were in a Humvee, coming off a mission. As usual, I was the only woman. But I was always considered just one of the guys – I had proved myself, so they knew they could trust me even on two man teams.

There were five people in the Humvee, four soldiers and an interpreter. I had just switched seats so I could be gunner. All of sudden we saw a pickup truck backing towards us and there was a huge explosion. I had to be told later what happened after that. It turned out that the interpreter and the person I switched places with died of their wounds.

I woke up at the combat army surgical hospital in Bagdad. They got me where I could survive the flight to Germany – and I was there until I was stable enough to be transported back to Brook Army Medical Center in San Antonio, about two weeks after the incident.

I was in and out of the hospital for 2 years. I needed many surgeries. I kept taking a turn for the worse. I really had my chaplain scared, because I died on the table four times. Two other times I went into cardiac arrest because of an allergic reaction to medicine.

It was really hard, and I had a real crisis of faith. I was going through all these surgeries and I was on 30 medications – and I got to the point where I just didn't care if I lived or died. And it was just so hard when you see so many people getting killed. You ask these questions "why." I was older than many privates who didn't make it back alive. I had already lived a life more than they had. God is supposed to be all powerful – but yet He's letting this evil happen – where the evil person gets away while this other person dies.

The chaplain came in to see me one day and I told him to stop lying to me and get the heck out of my room. I didn't trust him and I thought he was just a scam artist. But then I went into a deep coma for several days. When I woke up – I was calling for the chaplain to come back.

For while I was out, I saw a place of bloody walls and I saw the light. It was very scary and cold. The chaplain said God is trying to tell you to change the way you're going. I said, maybe you're right.

When I got out of the hospital, I was struggling a lot. Then I retired in February of 2010 and moved back to Ohio. My aunt invited me to Grace Lutheran here in Fremont and I talked with Maureen Pump – and I told her I thought I was doomed to hell because I had broken the commandments. But she told me I wasn't – and showed me scripture that God forgives. And now my faith has returned.

(Tanya's story continued.)

I still struggle with my traumatic brain injury, along with other medical problems on a daily basis. And my doctors tell me I'm not going to live to old age.

But I just tell myself that God is not done with me yet. He came so close to taking me so many times. But I still have some purpose He wants me to fulfill. And I have changed my whole outlook on life.

Although my doctors said I couldn't do it, I'm now going to school, taking German, geography and history. My teachers are helping me. And I've been able to share my experiences, which has changed other student's lives. Our society is so much about material things – but life is really about the little things that God gives us – that we too often take for granted.

We are only here for a blink of the eye, and when God blinks his eye, you're gone. So life is about making a difference, as corny as that may sound. And now some of my friends who turned away from God – saw how far I had fallen and come back, and so now they have come back too.”

ALL SAINTS' DAY was celebrated at all services the weekend of November 2 & 3. We give thanks for the following faithful servants who have gone before us during the past year.



Ethel Fisher
Jeremy L. McMullen
Loretta Busby
Warren 'Dale' Collins
Avonelle 'Avie' Lotycz
Wayne E. Druckenmiller
Doris Haubert
Tracy Allen Jones
Kaye L. Willey
Betty Foster
Rita Shafer
Doris J. Shriver
Jack Druckenmiller
Joseph 'Joe' Havens
Paul Fick
Ronald L. Meyer, Sr.
Margaret Coe

Thomas A. Hakes
Eric J. Theller
Sharon Kinkaid
Albert 'Al' Wright, Jr.
Mary Aldrich
Lawrence 'Del' Rauch
Richard 'Rich' W. May
Ralph K. Cover
Robert C. Michael
Estella Vogt
Richard 'Rick' P. Byrnes
Matias Sanchez
Nolan Quinn White
Barbara Nieset
Ellen May
Glen Grubb
Helen Smith

ALTAR GUILD FOR DECEMBER

Cheryl Paeth
Mary Nossaman



Ronald Meyer, Sr.

Amos Druckenmiller



November 2 - Sean & Emily (Prasuhn) Wonder

November 9 - Gordon & Linda (Bussiere) Hinsch

*The Church Office will be closed for the
Thanksgiving Holiday on
Thursday, November 28 and
Friday, November 29.*

Happy Thanksgiving!

REMINDER: If you or a loved one are admitted to any hospital, please specify with the hospital that you are a member of Grace Lutheran Church, Fremont. You or a member of your family also need to call the church office and let us know where to find you. Due to the privacy laws, we are often not notified and we need to rely on you.

REMINDER: To our friends who are heading to a warmer climate for the winter months, don't forget to let the church office know your "Winter" address. We want to keep you updated on Grace happenings

(The Post Office does not forward the newsletters, so if we do not have your current address or if you leave an order of "Temporarily Away", we are charged postage when your mail is returned to us. If this happens, it will be necessary to take your name off the mailing list until we are notified of your return, to prevent recurring charges.)

Keep in Touch!



We are preparing for winter!

We are looking for volunteers to help with snow removal on sidewalks and steps. We have two snow blowers and plenty of shovels. Please contact Jim Post, 419-680-2464, or call the church office, 419-332-1558.



**DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES IS DECEMBER 11.
The newsletter will be assembled
on Thursday, December 19.**



THANKSGIVING PIE SALE NOVEMBER 1-24TH

All proceeds will benefit the youth

9" Homemade Pies - \$10 each - Payment due with order

*Make checks to Grace Lutheran Church
Orders can be placed in the offering plate
or made in the Church Office.*

Apple – lattice topped _____

Apple – crumb topping _____

Cherry – lattice topped _____

Cherry – crumb topping _____

Pumpkin _____

Pecan _____

Total # Pies _____ Total Cost _____

Name _____ Phone _____

**Pies can be picked up between 2-4pm on
Wednesday, Nov 27th in the Kitchen.**

Grace Lutheran Church
705 West State Street
Fremont, OH 43420
Return Service Requested

Worship Services:

Saturday 5:00pm - Traditional Worship

Sunday 7:45am - Liturgical Worship

9:00am - Christian Education

10:00am - Celebration Worship/Holy Communion

Office Hours – 8:30am-4:00pm, M-F, 419-332-1558

E-mail: gracefremont@yahoo.com

Web page: www.gracefremont.org

Jody Rice, Senior Pastor

jjrice2002@yahoo.com

James Avers, Visitation Pastor

pastorjim777@sbcglobal.net

Maureen Pump, Lay Associate Minister

MaureenPump@yahoo.com

Linda Baumer, Office Manager

gracefremont@yahoo.com

Tricia Dabrunz, Secretary/Receptionist

dabrunztricia@yahoo.com






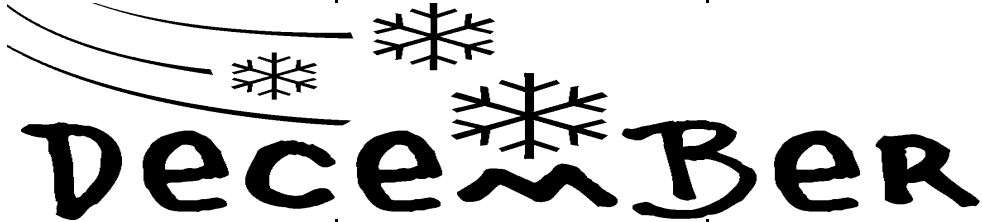
Stacey Reau, Part-time Youth Minister - Preschool-6th grade

stacey.reau@gmail.com

Tricia McElfresh, Director, Noah's Ark Preschool

noahs_ark_fremont@yahoo.com

Non-Profit
Paid
Fremont, OH
Permit #133

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
HANGING OF THE GREENS MISSION FAIR 7:45 Worship/Communion 8:55 Senior Choir Practice 9:00 Christian Education 10:00 Celebration Worship/Communion 11:15 Praise Team Practice 11:15 Hanging of the Greens 11:15 Family Caroling Lunch - Dining Room 12:00 Go to Nursing Homes for Caroling 7:30 DAA	2 9:00 Project Day 1:00 Bible Study - Lounge 5:30 Executive Budget Meeting 6:30 ALPHA - Lounge 7:00 Scouts 7:30 Dartball at Clyde	3 	4 SPIRIT 5:00 Meal 5:15 Kids Clubs 6:00 Kids Choirs/Study Hall 6:00 Adult Groups 6:30 Confirmation 7:00 Advent Worship/Mission Fair 7:45 Bells	5 11:30 Soup Kitchen at St. John's 7:30 Toledo Symphony	6 	7 10 - 12:00 Advent Brunch 5:00 Worship/Communion/Baptism	
8 7:45 Worship/Communion 8:55 Senior Choir Practice 9:00 Christian Education 10:00 Celebration Worship/Communion 11:15 Praise Team Practice 7:30 DAA	9 9:15 MOPS 1:00 Bible Study - Lounge 7:00 Scouts 7:30 Dartball at Home 7:00 Church Council Devotions 7:15 Standing Committees 8:00 Church Council	10 7:30 Grace Fellowship	11 SPIRIT / G & T DEADLINE 5:00 Meal 5:15 Kids Clubs 6:00 Kids Choirs/Study Hall 6:00 Adult Groups 6:30 Confirmation 7:00 Advent Worship 7:45 Bells	12 11:30 Soup Kitchen at St. John's 6 - 8 Crazy Kids - Live Nativity - Fairgrounds	13 	14 9:00 Crafting for a Cause 9 - 12:00 ALPHA at St. Mark 5:00 Worship/Communion	
15 7:45 Worship/Communion 8:55 Senior Choir Practice 9:00 Christian Education 10:00 Celebration Worship/Communion 11:00 Congregational Budget Hearing 1:30 - 3:30 ALPHA at Grace 6:00 Bridge of Hope Christmas Party at Hayes United Methodist 7:30 DAA	16 9:00 Project Day 1:00 Bible Study-Lounge 7:00 Scouts 7:30 Dartball at Zion	17	18 SPIRIT 5:00 Meal 5:15 Kids Clubs 6:00 Kids Choirs/Study Hall 6:00 Adult Groups 6:30 Confirmation 7:00 Advent Worship 7:45 Bells	19 G & T ASSEMBLED 1:00 L.I.F.T. - Evangelism Meeting - Lounge 6 - 8 Middle/High School - Live Nativity - Fairgrounds	20	21 10-11 Birthday Party for Jesus - Dining Room 11:00 Christmas Program Practice 5:00 Worship/Communion	
22 7:45 Worship/Communion 8:55 Senior Choir Practice 9:00 Christian Education 10:00 Celebration Worship/Communion/Sunday School Christmas Program/Baptism 7:30 DAA	23 1:00 Bible Study-Lounge	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5:30 Family Worship - refreshments following 7:30 Worship 9:30 Recital 10:30 Worship	25  OFFICE CLOSED	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 	28 5:00 Readings & Carols/Communion	
29 5TH SUNDAY 9:00 Readings & Carols/Communion 7:30 DAA	30 END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS DUE BY NOON	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE				2013	

DECEMBER

GREETERS

December 1, 15, & 29

7:45 - J. Gangwer (Front)
 J. Guthrie (Baptistry)
 C. Klohn (Chapel)

10:00 - T. McElfresh (Front)
 J. Overmyer (Baptistry)
 C. Slemmer (Chapel)

December 8 & 22

7:45 - J. & J. Lajti (Front)
 C. Paeth (Baptistry)
 D. & C. Polter (Chapel)

10:00 - N. Sloma (Front)
 J. Long (Baptistry)
 D. & R. Cooper (Chapel)

USHERS

December 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29

7:45 - B. Guthrie
 R. Haynes
 C. Weickert

December 1 & 15

10:00 - T. & P. Karle
 L. McElfresh
 G. Nossaman

December 8 & 22

10:00 - S. Nossaman
 M. Mullholand
 J. Avers
 T. Shanahan

WEDNESDAY ADVENT SERVICE ACOLYTES - 7 P.M.

December 4 - Nathan Weltin, Rilee Overmyer
 December 11 - Matt Dupey, Mallory Hutton
 December 18 - Morgan Urban, Isaac Fraley



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES - TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 - DEACONS

5:30 - Jean Dupey, Michele Klohn, Marv Mullholand, Janet Dorr
 7:30 - Cheryl Paeth, Becky Seibert, Roger Haynes, Dave Cooper
 10:00 - Linda Martin, Ruthann House, Scott Nossaman



DECEMBER 1 ACOLYTES: 7:45 - Isaac Fraley

10:00 - Carly Wiersma, Cydne Jess

DEACONS: 7:45 - J. Dorr, R. House, L. Martin, M. Klohn

10:00 - D. Cooper, B. Williams

COMMUNION ASSTS.: 10:00 - The M. McElfresh Family

SOUND SYSTEM: B. Bilger (5:00), G. Dupey (7:45), R. Hawn (10:00)

DECEMBER 8 ACOLYTES: 7:45 - Matt Dupey

10:00 - Meghan Moses, Brooke Casperson

DEACONS: 7:45 - R. Haynes, L. Widmer, J. Dupey, R. House

10:00 - C. Waggoner, C. Miller

COMMUNION ASSTS.: 10:00 - L. Merrill, L & J. Overmyer, B. Prasuhn

SOUND SYSTEM: N. Mayer (5:00), L. Klohn (7:45), E. Muffler (10:00)

DECEMBER 15 ACOLYTES: 7:45 - Aaron Klohn

10:00 - Taylor Sachs, Meredith Troxel

DEACONS: 7:45 - M. Klohn, B. Seibert, C. Miller, T. Schling

10:00 - M. Mullholand, S. Nossaman

COMMUNION ASSTS.: 10:00 - C. Star, K. Saionz, S. Brickner, F. Keller

SOUND SYSTEM: B. Bilger (5:00), J. Oliver (7:45), D. Prasuhn (10:00)

DECEMBER 22 ACOLYTES: 7:45 - Alicia Klohn

10:00 - Casey McElfresh, Alaina Klingman

DEACONS: 7:45 - C. Paeth, R. Haynes, L. Widmer

10:00 - D. Cooper, B. Williams

COMMUNION ASSTS.: 10:00 - The M. Dabrunz Family

SOUND SYSTEM: N. Mayer (5:00), G. Dupey (7:45), M. McElfresh (10:00)

DECEMBER 29

9:00 ONLY

ACOLYTES: Briana Garner, Morgan Waggoner

DEACONS: C. Miller, S. Nossaman, C. Waggoner, M. Mullholand

COMMUNION ASSTS.: 10:00 - The. E. Muffler Family

SOUND SYSTEM: D. Prasuhn

JANUARY 5 ACOLYTES: 7:45 - Isaac Fraley

10:00 - Jack & Eric Gedeon

DEACONS: 7:45 - J. Dupey, J. Dorr, R. House, L. Martin

10:00 - C. Waggoner, M. Mallholand

COMMUNION ASSTS.: 10:00 - The T. Wiersma Family

SOUND SYSTEM: B. Bilger (5:00), G. Dupey (7:45), R. Hawn (10:00)