



The King's

Business

Grace Lutheran

179 Holiday Island Drive
Holiday Island, AR 72631

479-253-9040

www.gracelutheranhi.com



January 2024

We at Grace Lutheran Church are called to reach, teach and be the people of God, as stewards of the Word and gifts of God.

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Grace Family,
Did someone say "2024"?

I want to begin by saying "Thank-You!" to this family of faith called Grace Lutheran for the gracious Christmas gift. Your love and graciousness over the past year (It has been almost a full year since I was installed as your Pastor) has been a blessing to me and Sharon. Your willingness to endure me for a full year reveals great compassion and understanding. I look forward now to another great year.

We will begin the year 2024 leading quickly into the Season of Epiphany beginning January 6th.

Epiphany (e-PIF-a-nee) is a Christian [feast day](#) commemorating the [visit of the Magi](#), but the season (Between January 6th and Transfiguration Sunday) also includes the [baptism of Jesus](#), [wedding at Cana](#), and other miracles revealing the person of Jesus Christ to us as the divine third person of the Trinity.

As already mentioned the feast commemorates principally (but not solely) the [visit of the Magi](#) to the [Christ Child](#), and thus Jesus Christ's physical manifestation to the [Gentiles](#). It is sometimes called **Three Kings' Day (although, they weren't King's but Wise Men, and we don't really know how many there were)**, and in some traditions celebrated as [Little Christmas](#). Moreover, the feast of

the Epiphany also initiates the liturgical season of Epiphany Tide.

The word Epiphany is from [Koine \(classical\) Greek](#) ἐπιφάνεια, *epipháneia*, meaning manifestation or appearance. It comes from the verb meaning "to appear". In classical Greek it was used for the appearance of dawn, of an enemy in war, but especially of a manifestation of a deity to a worshiper (a [theophany](#)). In the [Septuagint](#) (the first translation of the Old Testament into classical Greek) the word is used of a manifestation of the God of Israel. In the New Testament the word is used in [2 Timothy 1:10](#) to refer either to the birth of Christ or to his appearance after his resurrection, and five times to refer to his [Second Coming](#).

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In some places Christians take down their [Christmas decorations](#) on Epiphany Eve (Twelfth Night), although some historically wait to remove them on [Candlemas](#) (Feb. 2nd) according to the first tradition, those who fail to remember to remove their Christmas decorations on Epiphany Eve must leave them untouched until Candlemas, the

second opportunity to remove them. Failure to observe this custom is considered unfavorable. Not to worry, I won't be driving by your homes to inspect and take names.

This year the Epiphany Season will conclude on Transfiguration Sunday, February 11th, followed by Ash Wednesday on February 14th.

That will be the Wednesday following Transfiguration Sunday, hence the name Ash WEDNESDAY 😊.

In His Service and Yours
Pastor Schultz

Do Miracles happen today?



During Friedrich Wyneken's theological examination, the interviewer said: "As is well known, miracles no longer occur nowadays. It only remains to be asked, if there really were miracles in former times or not." He then asked Wyneken: "What do you say to that?" Friedrich replied without further reflection: "God is a God who does miracles daily" The young pastor had a point.

A miracle is something that happens that is beyond our ability to understand. As much as modern science has discovered, there is much more that we can't figure out. Miracles break all the rules. The earth's tilt on its axis and orbit

around the sun are just right to maintain life. The cycles of seasons, rain and snow, heat and cold, allow the wide variety of life that support us and give us pleasure. How this all happens we are barely able to understand. These and everything that gives us life are nevertheless very real, reliable and regular. In addition to these, God works through everyday people in our lives to make them what they are, all at the inspiration and provision of our Heavenly Father. God gives us all these things and more without fanfare and almost completely without thanks from us.

When we speak of miracles, though, these everyday acts of God are not what we think of. Our mind goes to the healing and suspension of nature that Jesus performed that continued in the ministry of the apostles. To a certain extent, this is deceptive. The events recorded in Scripture from the time of Abraham through the exile of St. John to Patmos cover two thousand years. As wonderful as miracles are, they did not happen all the time. Sometimes hundreds of years

pass between them. Because they are all written about in the same place, we get the impression they were constantly present. Only in the ministry of Jesus was this true, and then only for the three years of his ministry.

It is possible that God does act in these ways today, but we do not know. Scripture does not say they have ceased nor that they will continue. What we do know is that God does care for us, heal us today and we occasionally can't explain how. The miracles we do know about, however, are right under our nose. In water, he adopts us as his children and created new hearts in us. In bread and wine, he gives us his body to eat and blood to drink to forgive us our sins and give us everlasting life. The greatest is yet to come for us. On the day our life here ends, he will take us to be with him forever and on the last day, raise our bodies from the grave. On that day, when he restores us and all creation, that will be one of the greatest miracles of them all.

Reports from the Mission Field

Dear Grace Family,

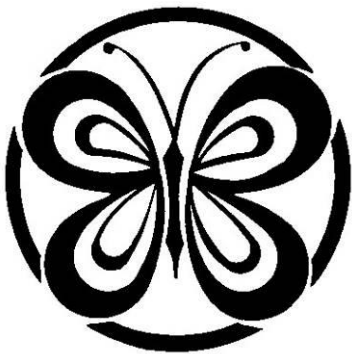
As a means to help us better connect to the work that goes on in the Mission Field, and the work of our LCMS Missionaries, I've asked the Rev. Christian Tiews permission to reprint some of his reports in our monthly newsletter. This month, I submit the following. Pastor Schultz

Last week I started a new baptismal preparation class. I asked the group why they came. One young man replied: "I hate Islam. In fact, I hate all religions. But a friend of mine in refugee camp told me about his good experience here and I'm curious." We read John 3:16, which I explained. Then I gave a thumbnail sketch of the triune God and we looked at some passages from Genesis, chapters 1 to 3—from creation to the fall from grace. I showed how Satan had brought sin and death to all human beings and to all creation, but that God had a solution for this disaster even before the beginning of time. That solution was the Messiah—first mentioned in Genesis 3:15

and in the New Testament revealed as Jesus of Nazareth. Finally, we circled back to John 3:16. The assignment for the next lesson was to read one chapter of the Gospel of John every day and to watch "The Hope Project," a wonderful 80-minute movie which encapsulates Christianity, available on the Internet. I used that movie for decades back in the States, teaching confirmands and adults. Funny enough, in the '90s I networked with Mars Hill Productions, who created the movie, when we were living in the Houston area. In the meantime, they have dubbed it into 39 different languages, including Farsi. In yesterday's class we discussed the Apostles' Creed and

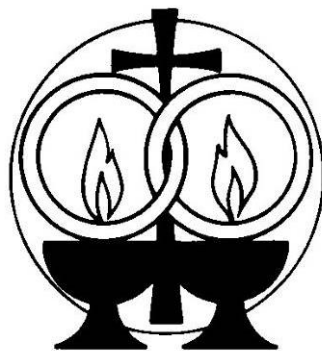
read Luther's explanation of the Second Article: "...who has redeemed me...not with gold or silver, but with his..." The student cut me off: "Life." "Exactly right! How do you know that?" I asked. "From that wonderful movie... I think I'm beginning to understand the main point of Christianity." "Which is what...?" I asked. "I'm a sinner and on the cross Jesus took my sins upon Himself." All around the room, big smiles and some moist eyes. "Amen," I replied. "You're definitely on the right path."

**Rev. Christian C. Tiews
Hamburg, Germany**



January Birthdays

Mike & Karen Quinly	15
Dianna Mancuso	29
Randall Garrett	30
Tony Willmuth	31



January Anniversaries

Lyle and Charlotte Bonner	9
Sheldon & Lee Knuth	11
Robert & Barbara Herring	25



Bruce & Jane Bleser
Sharon Fenske
Ken & Bernie Haydon
Tom & Dianna Mancuso
Myles & Sharon Schultz
Mike & Jane Smith
Joe & Sherry Steichen

Thank you all!



Epiphany Open House

*12 Appaloosa Drive
Holiday Island, AR*

Pastor and I would like to invite the congregation to our home January 6th from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. on January 6, 2024 for a Come-and-Go Epiphany Open House, everything provided. We look forward to having our Grace Church family in our home for an evening of casual fellowship, hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

*Love in Christ,
Sharon and Pastor*

Thank You!

We wish to thank all of our members for remembering us with prayers, words, cards and even gifts. We are greatly moved by your care and generosity. The congregational gift was most generous and much appreciated. As much as we appreciate all these Christmas blessings, our greatest appreciation is for your love and concern throughout the year. It has been, and continues to be, a joy to serve the Lord together with all of you. we pray for continued blessings in 2024.

Women's Bible Study

*Monday January 8th and 22nd,
2024, 10:30 a.m. at Sharon's house,
12 Appaloosa Drive, Holiday Island.*

Grace Men's Fellowship

We meet on the traditional second Monday, January 8th. We gather at 8:30am for fellowship and eat breakfast at 9:00. After a brief meeting we will be taking down Christmas decorations. Join us!

