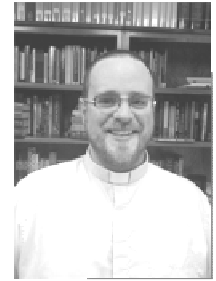


FROM THE PASTOR

January 2012

Merry Christmas! After all, it is still Christmas until Epiphany, which falls on January 6. I hope that your experience of the Christmas season has been rich. When we celebrate Christmas we are celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah. The Prince of Peace. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Emanuel, God with us. We are celebrating God coming into our world to live among us in a new way. We are celebrating the breaking in of the Light of God into our world to shine on all of the darkness that surrounds us. I hope that God's light shines on your life so that you can see the hope we have as followers of Christ.



Pastor Ryan Pederson

Happy new year! The year that has just ended has been a good year for me and my family. Our son is growing and learning and becoming more and more of his own person. His personality, which has been there all along, shines through more every day. My wife and I are learning to be better, and less worried, parents all the time, too. It has also been a good year at Grace. We have continued pursuing the mission of our church. We have had four baptisms. We have had new people join with us. We have had new people take on leadership roles.

We have a new year ahead of us now. What do you hope to see this year? What are you hoping will change in your life and in the life of the church? What are you hoping will stay the same? At this time next year, how will you know if it has been a good year or not? Think about these things. Make note of them so you can look back on them later. I look forward to working with you all this new year. I pray that we have a good year that we can look back on with satisfaction.

Peace,
Pastor Ryan

PS: Thanks to everyone for the Christmas cards and gifts! We really appreciate them.

NAME OF JESUS

A Worthy Identity

Our names are given to us, most often as newborns. As we grow, we grow into our name—the one we were given or the one we claim and others accept—and this name becomes central to our identity.

Do you know the story of your name? How was it

chosen? What other names were considered? If you could start this new year with any name, what might it be?

Imagine the naming story Jesus could tell: My name was prophesied before I was conceived (Isa. 7:14). An angel told Joseph (Matt. 1:21) and then

Mary (Luke 1:31) to name me Jesus. My name means "God's salvation" or "God is with us."

We grow into our names and our identity with the help of interpreters. The shepherds carried the message of the angels to the manger, and Mary and Joseph understood the



Blake Ramsey	2
Jack Hamre	4
Barbara Christensen	6
Bob Underly	14
Phyllis McKee	14
Wally Krueger	21
Lillian Raynor	23
Paul Schulle	25
Pam Ramsey	26
Mr. & Mrs. Al Rudolph	29
Laura Hamre	29

If we missed anyone
PLEASE contact the office.



MISSION STATEMENT

God's purpose for Grace Lutheran Church is:

Welcome to Grace,
Welcome the Message.

Principle Values:
Jesus is Lord
Everyone is welcome.
All serve in different ways.

Seek and share the message.

God's love is life changing.

Continued from page 1... identity of the baby in ponder-worthy new ways. How we shepherd, interpret, and care for our own name and the names of others has great impact for good or for ill. Sticks and stones can hurt bones, but name calling, labeling, and even negative self-talk can strike at our core identity. On the other hand, we can help ourselves and others claim a worthy identity by helping to name faithful gifts: "Pat, I admire your patience. . . . Carmen, you are so kind."

God gave Jesus "the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:9-11). As a new year begins, might you resolve to reveal only respect and devotion in the ways you say the name of Jesus?

Jesus grew into his name and title: Jesus the Christ, the Messiah. So, too, our name is tied to a title: Beloved Child of God. Try it following your name. Now that's a worthy identity.

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COUNCIL CLIPS: December 13, 2011

All members except Bob Raynor present. Treasurer explained the delay in treasurer's report due to the death of the bookkeeper and the bank changing passwords. Report accepted pending audit. Ladies of Grace purchased a new freezer. Rummage sale netted over \$1000.00. Leftover articles were all donated to various organizations. Discussion on sound system and needs of the hard of hearing. Discussion held on associate members. Suggested that the president, Frank Sommerfeldt, write to the Bishop and question why he ruled as he did. Also discussed of having A constitutional Committee in January 2012. Further work tabled until new council takes over.



Thank you to everyone involved in or responsible for the wonderful Children's Christmas Program. It was delightful. I look forward to it each year and so appreciated it. *Carolyn Vincent*

"Ecce Agnus Dei" Latin for "Behold, the Lamb of God," this is the phrase John the Baptist used twice to point out Jesus to others (John 1:29, 36). It marks Jesus' Epiphany (manifestation, revelation) as the Anointed One (Christ, Messiah).

What not to take into the new year

- **Self-help books** — Trust in God first; don't turn to him as a last resort. (See Proverbs 3:5-6.)
 - **Tape measure** — Consider only God's standards; don't compare yourself to other people. (See Luke 18:9-14.)
 - **Rearview mirror** — Don't live in the past. You'll miss out on what God is doing in your life now. (See Philippians 3:12-14.)
 - **Gavel** — Stop wasting time judging others. Instead, pray for them, help them and team with them. (See Luke 6:37-38.)
 - **Life vest** — Don't be overly cautious spiritually. Peter experienced Jesus in a real way because he dared to step out of the boat. (See Matthew 14:22-33.)
 - **Garage-door opener** — We think we're networked but often isolate ourselves. God intended for us to live in community with one another. (See Hebrews 10:23-25.)
 - **Handcuffs** — Don't offer excuses about why you can't help out. God can do amazing things through — and despite — us. Just follow him, with no excuses. (See Mark 6:35-44.)
- Gregg McCaslin

LUTEFISK TICKETS ON SALE

Tickets for a lutefisk dinner in the Valley are now on sale. The meal will be served on **Saturday, February 4, 2012** at **Our Savior's Lutheran Church**, 1105 West Fern, McAllen, TX. The price is \$17.50 per person and will be served in two shifts; **11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.**

Anyone interested in buying tickets, please call or contact **Don Stang, 956-412-6281**. **Tickets are limited** and early purchase is recommended.



Thirty-two women of the church and guests gathered Dec. 17 for this year's Ladies of Grace Christmas party, and

the LOG officers want to thank everyone for making the party such a special event. We all enjoyed the great potluck lunch (scrumptious hot dishes and salads and wonderful desserts), followed by Flora Gunderson's thought-provoking program based on a hat theme. We are particularly overjoyed with the generosity of the offering--\$629 was donated to **Operation Homefront** to help in that organization's services to deployed military service members, recovering wounded veterans, and their families and caregivers. A special blessing is that **our gift will be doubled** by a **matching grant**, enabling Opera-

tion Homefront to serve even more families. (If you are interested in more information about Operation Homefront and the work it is doing, check the bulletin board in the parish hall or ask Marlene Pegg.)

Thanks to all!
Marlene

The Theme Verse for **this month's bible** study is "**Take heart, get up, he is calling you.**" Mark 10:49 Please join the "**Ladies of Grace**" as Pastor Ryan leads us in the study of the Gospel of Mark. Carolyn Sauerbrei will be hostess **January 19 at 9:00 AM** in the Parish Hall. All ladies invited.

**THOSE FOR
WHOM WE PRAY**



CONGREGATION MEMBERS: Mary Mars, A. C. Hoehne,
Gladys Hansen, Carol Heesch, Ruth Pegg.

FAMILY MEMBERS: Linda LaFond, Maureen Fedson, Marvin & Billie
Smith, Mary Ellen Bennefield, Butch Pierce, Jackie Prigge, Corey Schiavoni.

CONGREGATION FRIENDS: George Garcia, Rita & Joe Wagner, Matthew
Reed, Randy Hale, Steve Schluender, Mary June Sinnema, Daniel Steinberg,
Margie Watson, Vern & Dottie Alt, Thada Hart, Penny Bridger,
Tara Carnesi, Jean Nelson, Julie Scott, Molly Martinez, Virginia Cavazos.

THOSE WHO SERVE: Edwardo Mujica, Jacqueline Salazar, James Sanchez,
Randy Cavazos.

PRAYER CHAIN 2012

Irene Dear	423.3164	Laura Hamre (W)	425.6695
Sarah Kennedy	455.5623	Barbara Lomelino Cell	357.1490
Marvel Devine	428.5846	Jeanna Lute	423.1873
Edna Gross	423.0890	Phyllis McKee	425.5776
Elaine Krueger	428.2895	Sherry Brooks	797-2615
Marie Sankey (W)	364.2792		

(W) Indicates our Winter Texans. When they return north, call the next one on the list.

WELCA

January 12— 9:00 AM Business Meeting –Marvel Devine is Hostess

11:30 Lunch @ Olive Garden

January 19—9:00 AM Bible Study

Leader is Pastor Ryan

Hostess is Carolyn Sauerbrei

January 26—9:00 AM Prayer Shawl

MEN'S BREAKFAST

8:00 AM on the **2nd and 4th** Wednesday's at Tila's. All men invited.

BREAKFAST FOR ANYONE

8:00 am on the **1st, 3rd and 5th** Wednesday's at Lonnie's Down Home.



Items needed for **January** are:

- Canned Tuna
- Mayonnaise and relish
- Applesauce
- Dry Noodles/Pasta

CHOIR PRACTICE

Starting January 4th

Wednesday nights at 6:00 PM

BIBLE STUDY

Starting January 11th on Wednesday nights at 7PM. Everyone welcome.



A caring disciple

In Acts 9, Peter tells of a woman who lived in Joppa. She performed good works and helped the poor. Solve the puzzle below to reveal this disciple's two names.

Instructions: Cross out the letters that spell each object and write the remaining letter on the blank.

_ a d c l t n e _
 _ r o h m t a e _
 _ s r g b a p e _
 _ r b i e d a _
 _ p e h t s h r e d _
 _ r d h a e n l c a _
 _ f a d o o _

Her name in Greek

_ p d e e s h _
 _ d c h i l n e r o _
 _ d r o v e _
 _ a c e h t r _
 _ s a r c o s _
 _ n u s o a t i n m _

Answers: Tabitha, Dorcas

NO-SEW FLEECE SCARF



Winter is a difficult time for people in need, so make this scarf to help someone stay warm.

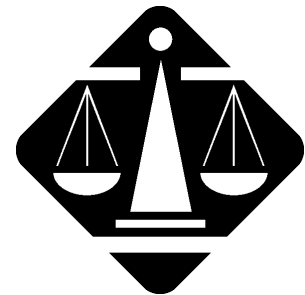
What you need:

- Medium-weight polar fleece, 60" standard width (a 9" portion will make one scarf)
- Scissors
- An adult to help

What you do:

1. Cut a piece of medium-weight polar fleece to the size of 60" x 9". Cut the fabric across its width so the material is stretchy.
2. Trim off the edge binding. To add "fringe" along each end, make a 6"-long cut every half inch.
3. For curly fringe, pull each strand and then let go sharply. Another attractive option is to tie an over-hand knot at the top of each strip.
4. Donate your scarf to a local group that helps people in need. For greater impact, encourage your Sunday school classmates or other friends to make scarves, too.

In the book of Judges, a cycle is repeated many times: The Israelites do "what is evil in the sight of the LORD," God hands them over to an enemy nation, they cry out to the Lord and he appoints a judge, or political/military leader, for them. Under the judge's leadership, the Israelites conquer their adversary and prosper – until they start doing "what is evil in the sight of the LORD" all over again.



Who was not one of these judges?

- A. Deborah
- B. Ehud
- C. Esau
- D. Shamgar

Answer: C (See Judges 3–5.)

**GRACE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
ELCA**

Pastor Ryan Pederson
1001 E Jackson
Harlingen TX 78550

Tel: 956.423.0314

Fax: 956.423.0314

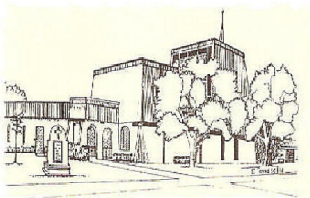
E-mail:

secretaryatgrace@gelelca.org

pastor@gelelca.org

Deadline for the February Newsletter is Wednesday, January 25th. Please get all information to Bonnie Morton., Publisher. bonnie@mortonscorner.com; call 245.4104, home 622.4401 or leave in the office. THANKS . The February Newsletter will be ready by email January 27th and in the Narthex on Sunday, January 29th.

We're on the Web
<http://www.gelelca.org>



DECEMBER

Offerings include Youth & Poinsettias

Offerings: \$14742.00

Attendance: 499

2012 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dokken	Vern	956.425.0445
Galloway	Jim	956.425.5521
Lomelino	Barbara	956.357.1490
Lute	Mike	956.423.1873
Morton	Ronald	956.622.4401
Palmer	Butch	956.425.1680
Sommerfeldt	Frank	956.425.5776
Underly	Jan	956.399.1603



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

JANUARY SERVICE SCHEDULE

	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 22	January 29
Ushers	Bob and Lillian Raynor	Bob and Lillian Raynor	Bob and Lillian Raynor	Bob and Lillian Raynor	Bob and Lillian Raynor
Liturgical Assistant	Frank Sommerfeldt	Frank Sommerfeldt	Frank Sommerfeldt	Frank Sommerfeldt	Frank Sommerfeldt
Lector	Virginia Anderson	Virginia Anderson	Virginia Anderson	Virginia Anderson	Virginia Anderson
Acolyte	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth	Lute/Poulos Youth