

*“Serving all people by sharing God’s Word  
and Gift of Grace”*

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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*Pr. Tsena Dinssa*

*Return Service  
Requested*

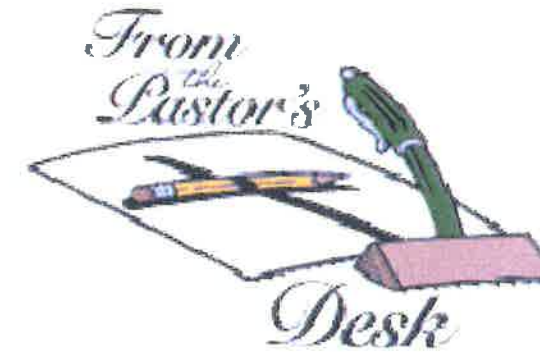
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# The Scroll

**Grace Lutheran  
Church**

February 2021



## “WHEN I SEE MY IMAGE IN IT”

The past year has been unpredictable, and for many has been tough. Globally, the days since the pandemic started are days of abnormal fear, panic, anxiety and hopelessness with a great effect on human health, financial security, social life and future goals. Fear, loneliness and stress have become common everywhere.

Spiritually no one is perfect in our lives and we are always under construction. Individual change is eminent when there is uncontrollable social and systemic change happens. So, my life during the pandemic is not indifferent. The past year were times when God has been molding and shaping me into the likeness of His Son, I can say. It was not easy but transforming. I said transforming because I have never been the same. Even physically I lost over 10 pounds. This all phenomena remind me an article I read a couple years ago from an unknown source.

It goes like this:

“A woman’s Bible study was reading thru the book of Malachi when they read this: ‘He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver’ (3:3). This verse puzzled them, and they wondered how this statement applied to the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out more about the process of refining silver and to get back to the group at their next Bible study. She called up a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him while he worked.

She didn’t mention anything about the reason for her interest, beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith work, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire, where the flames were the hottest as to burn away all the impurities. She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the entire time the silver was being refined.

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## The Best Valentine is GOD

*“For God so loved the world that  
he gave his one and only Son, that  
whoever believes in Him shall not  
perish but have everlasting life.”*

**John 3:16**





December 2020 Financial Summary

Congregational Offering to the General Fund - \$14,609.41

Expenses:

Administrative - \$7,515.91

Education - \$1,095.00

Mission Outreach - \$4,003.97

Pastoral - \$1,706.75

Worship - \$1,105.51

Total Expenses - \$15,427.14



Giving Options

Not only can you give through your offering envelope on Sunday morning, but our church offers other options to receive your offering:

**Automatic Giving** – You can set up monthly or weekly automatic deductions from your bank account. Contact the church office (218-687-4035) for a form to complete.

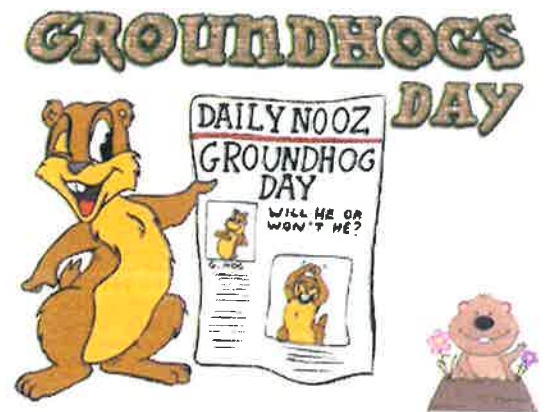
**Online Giving** – There are several links throughout our website ([www.gracechurcherskine.org](http://www.gracechurcherskine.org)) that will allow you to give a one-time or regular donation from your bank account, credit card, or debit card.

**Mobile Giving** – You can utilize your mobile device and scan the following code –



**Benevolence Ideas**

Our church has several special funds to meet needs that can't be met through our General Fund. Currently, these special funds are: Building Improvements, Grace Youth Group, Joy Ride Fund, Oil Candle, Sunday School Improvements/Supplies, Sunday School Outreach, Video Ministry, Vacation Bible School, Worship Hearing Aids, 'Men of Courage' Men's Group, and Shoebox Funds. In addition, our church houses the Grace Food Shelf and we ask for donations on their behalf as well as for the After School Backpack Program. Finally, our church is a part of the Grace Cemetery Association and we ask for donations on their behalf for the maintenance of the Synod, Pioneer, and Fairview Cemeteries in rural Erskine. Please contact Jim Ferden if you have any questions.



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I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
 I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
 I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**The Apostles' Creed**

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (for the Lord will not hold guiltless those who take his name in vain).
3. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his workers, or his livestock, or anything that is your neighbor's.

**The 10 Commandments**

Let Us Pray



Lent Readings and Prayers

Practice Martin Luther's Prayer-form this Lent by following these steps:

- Pray first thing in the morning and last thing at night.
- First, say the 10 Commandments (provided on back).
- Next, recite the Apostles' Creed (provided on back).

Read the prayer and lesson for the day (provided inside). When you read the Scriptures, really listen to the words. Reflect on their teachings, discover the brokenness presented in them, repent of the sins they remind you of and then give thanks to God for his loving forgiveness.

Rest in the Lord: "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10a).

Continue with your day. As you work, let your thoughts be of God.

**GRACE TO UKRAINE, con't.**

my church activity and churches does not cover my travel expenses because they hardly can pay their own utilities. So because of that I am very thankful for an opportunity to use Grace to Ukraine funds to help local pastors and their churches.

**Future of GTU ministry  
New Year Greetings**

May you'll have a year which is filled with love, hope & peace. Let everybody in your family will be healthy and Lord's presence will be always with you. Let you always will be strong in Christ, filled with Holy Spirit and ready for Lord's work. We love you in Christ and keep you in our prayers.

**Plans for 2021**

We trust that Lord who helped us so far will let to continue our ministry in future. I and my family pray about opportunity to visit USA next year but all our plans are in God's hands. We wish to be faithful to Him. We hope that God will lead your hearts to pray for us and support GTU ministry. Our main GTU slogan: We go forward on our knees with humbleness and thanksgiving!

**GRACE TO UKRAINE**

**If you'll have a prayer request, please, let us know:**

My e-mail: [ksn\\_ibs@ukr.net](mailto:ksn_ibs@ukr.net)  
Facebook & Messenger: Sergey Kolinkovsky  
Viber & Telgram free call:  
+380679932035

**We care about you and love you!**

**If God will give you a desire to donate for our ministry:**

Grace Calvary Fellowship, P.O. Box 493,  
Wellington, KS. 67152 (mark, please, for Grace to Ukraine)

**We wish you to be a part of our ministry!**

**We need your prayers!**

**“Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples”**

**(Ps. 96:3)**

**May God bless you!**



**SUMMER IS  
COMING**

⇒ **Pathways is planning for Summer 2021 and will have safety protocols put in place for a great summer experience**

⇒ **Temperature checks and sanitizing**

⇒ **Safe cabin groups**

⇒ **Pick up and drop off registration**

⇒ **We will be following the CDC guidelines for our area to make our campers experience great**

**REGISTRATION IS NOW  
OPEN**

**Pathways Bible Camps.org  
218-227-5107**

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
COUNCIL MEETING**

January 13, 2021

7:00 P.M.

*'Serving all people by sharing  
God's Word and Gift of Grace'*

**Present:** President Jason Carlson, Nick Walk, Hollie Stewart, Yvonne Halvorson, Gene Haugom, Dean Bernard, Gary Walter, Jim Ferden, Ann Brekken, Wade Farrell, Ryan Breitbach

**Call to Order:** President Jason called the meeting to order.

**Devotions:** Jason chose devotions from Proverbs 31 Ministries. Subject Anticipation.

**Approve Agenda:** Motion to approve the amended agenda as presented by Ann. Seconded by Dean. Motion carried.

**Secretary's Report:** Gary moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Wade. Motion carried.

**Financial Secretary's Report:** Yvonne moved to approve. Seconded by Gene. Motion carried. (Report on file).

**Treasurer's Report:**

**Cash Flow Report**

• Undesignated funds available to be used for December's General Fund expenses totaled \$14,901.91. When factoring in previous months' special donations, this amount exceeded the month's General Fund expenses totaling \$15,427.14.

• Congregational giving to the General Fund was \$14,609.41. The monthly budget goal is \$17,957.40.

• Noteworthy Other Giving:  
o Miscellaneous – A majority of this income consisted of donations to various church funds.  
o Oil Leases – This income includes an extra oil company payment due to timing.

Some of the noteworthy expenses this month included:

Administration – Financial Secretary: 4<sup>th</sup> quarter payment.

Education – Education Director: Annual payment.

Mission Outreach – Miscellaneous: Pass through donations from the Deer Hunter's Supper, Love, and Thanksgiving offerings as well as pass through donations of the 2020 Mission offerings.

Pastoral – Miscellaneous: Related to visit by Pastor Tsena.

Worship – Worship Technology Supervisor: Annual payment.

**Budget Report**

• We ended the month at approximately 49% or \$104,000 under budget.

All of the major budgeted expense categories ended under budget for the month.

**History of Regular Giving to the General Fund Report**

• December's giving was the highest giving for any month during the year.

• However, this was almost the lowest giving for any December in 10 years.

This was the lowest year-end giving total since 2011.

**History of the General Fund Balance**

Balance continues to remain high due to decreased monthly expenses.

**Account Balances Report**

• Building Fund - Reflects a donation made during the month and the monthly expense for the separate elevator phone line. In addition, it reflects work performed by Jack's Electric regarding the lighting replacement and repair in the sanctuary, wiring for the furnace and outlets in the sanctuary, and replacement of lighting in the basement (\$8,250). Monthly activity in this account also reflects the replacement of the doors in the narthex (\$7,629) by Thief River Glass and parts to changeover connections related to the replacement of the fuel oil furnace (\$123.41) by Fertile Oil Company.

• HS Scholarship Fund – Reflects a donation.

• Klatt Estate Fund – Reflects equipment expenses related to the improvement of online worship (\$554.22).

• Oil Fund – Bldg Upkeep reflects a portion of this month's oil/gas revenue.

Oil Fund – Church Emergencies reflects a portion of this

*Continued on Page 7*

**GRACE COUNCIL, continued** they requested. The dates did not coincide with our ability, according to our constitution, to make a congregational vote possible. The letter from the NALC was dated Sept 16, however, we did not receive it until January. This made the timeline impossible for us to meet their early February deadline. Seconded by Gary. Motion carried.

#### **Parsonage Furniture option**

Some used furniture was offered by Ron and Renee Howe's daughter Tracy, for the parsonage if it was needed. We certainly appreciate this offer but we decided we'd like to wait and let Pastor Tsena choose what he would like. Thank You for the kind offer and thinking of our church.

**A/V Desk** A member of Grace has generously offered to build a custom desk if we cover the material cost. Nick and Jason have been having quite a time finding one that can house the new equipment, meet the storage design needs, and match our décor. Wade made the motion to cover the cost of the materials. Dean seconded. Motion carried.

**Grace to Ukraine** We received the 2020 update newsletter from *Grace to Ukraine*. (newsletter on file) We financially support this organization and the update is very informational and inspiring.

#### **Announcements**

Next council meeting is February 10, 7:00 p.m.

Received a Thank You from Lesly Tradewell, Coordinator for the Back Pack Program for our donation.

Received a Thank You from the Essentia Health Fosston Foundation for our donation to the Fosston Hospice Fund.

#### **Adjourn**

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

Respectfully submitted,

*Yvonne Salvason*



A portion of the back pew, that was removed to make room for our new video equipment, is up for grabs. It's not in perfect condition and will need some work, BUT, some the best Lutherans I know have sat in that pew.

If you're interested, let the church office know.

#### **FROM THE PASTOR, con't.**

The man answered – yes, not only did he have to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on it the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left even a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silver-smith, 'But how do you know when the silver is fully refined?' He smiled at her and answered, 'Oh, that's easy - **when I see my image in it.**'"

Suffering isn't pleasant. Sometimes it's from God... and sometimes it's from our bad decisions. But no matter where the suffering comes from, God is never far from us. His loving eyes are always on us. He never allows us to remain in the fire longer than we can stand. And when we have gone through the fire, and the impurities have been burned away, then others around us can see the reflection of our God in our lives." And God Himself sees His own image in us.

It is my prayer and wishes that the year 2021 will be a joyful and year of success to all of you.

Happy New Year!

Pastor Tsena Dinssa

**GRACE COUNCIL, continued** month's oil/gas revenue.

- Oil Fund - Missions reflects a portion of this month's oil/gas revenue and the year-end payout of the balance (\$300.45) to Samaritan's Purse as approved by the congregation at the last annual meeting. A payment was not made at the end of June due to the small balance in the account at that time.

- Organ Fund – Transferred balance of -\$179.00 to the General Fund.

- SS Fundraiser Fund – Reflects a donation.

- SS Offering Outreach Fund - Reflects the monthly donation of \$38 to Compassion International as well as a donation to the fund.

- VBS Fund – Reflects a donation.

#### **Brovold Investment Valuation Report**

- The ending balance decreased approximately \$4,000 from the previous month.

This is the highest balance since August 2020.

#### **Gunderson Investment Valuation Report**

- The ending balance increased \$1,400 over last month.

- There have now been 7 months of increases!

It is the highest balance ever!!

#### **Other Information**

- The Christmas Offering of \$70 will need to be designated.

I am currently working on the

traditional reports related to the Annual Meeting.

All the designations were sent out. Dec. was the highest giving for any month of the year. No labor has been paid on the new furnace at this time.

Nick made motion to approve. Ryan seconded. Motion carried.

**Pastor Report** Gary will meet Pastor Tsena in Fargo on Monday and bring him to Erskine. Mavis and others have the parsonage ready and we thank them. Jason has visited briefly with Pastor Mike regarding transition plans, but nothing formal has been decided upon. Jason talked to Pastor Lyle and he has been in contact with Pastor Tsena regarding installation plans. Pastor Mike and Pastor Tsena will coordinate the transition.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**Stewardship:** No report. Please let the committee know if you have questions or suggestions.

**Education:** Ann reported. Christmas Program was completed and it was very successful. Digital lessons started last Sunday as did Confirmation Class. Families are aware that decisions are being made month to month regarding SS.

**Youth Group:** No report.

**NALCW:** Hollie reported. They are not meeting these months so no report. Hollie will meet with Mary regarding plans when Mary gets back.

**Trustees:** Wade reported. Ryan will store the ½ pew that is still

**Trustees:** Wade reported. Ryan will store the ½ pew that is still in the Sanctuary until a decision is made about what to do with it. Will need to put some finishing repair on the carpet due to the pew that was removed for the AV equipment. Wade is checking on the white truck in the parking lot. Door has been installed but the finishing work wasn't complete. Brian S. came in after work and did the finishing work. Key access has not been discussed yet. Jack finished the lights downstairs. He will complete the work upstairs. Jack will write up the forms to get rebates from Ottertail. Jack was excellent to work with.

**Deacons:** Gary and Gene reported. Pioneer Care Center requested 30 more communion sacrament packs for Sunday. Gary will deliver them.

**Food Shelf:** Gene reported. Food 15 families served on the second day this month totaling 1,510 pounds. For Dec. they helped 39 families (which is a record for a month) and 3,704 pounds of food. (also, a record) First distribution day they averaged 91.4 pounds per family, and 12/17 (2<sup>nd</sup> distribution day) averaged 100 pounds per family. Recognition given to Rose Koch a volunteer who has been very dedicated and is now leaving. Thank you Rose for all your hard work and you will be missed! Another freezer is being purchased. They have talked about putting it in the furnace room, but that is a bit warm.

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