

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, LASALLE, IL 61301

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

PASTOR:

REV. DR. SOLOMON SUDHAKAR, PHD

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Grace United Methodist Church

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LaSalle, IL 61301

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Website: gracelasalle.com

Office Hours:

Mon – Fri 9 am – 1 pm

Worship Times:

Sunday 9: 00 AM

Wednesday 5: 30 PM



The Word Became Flesh

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all humankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1: 1-5, 14

Dear Friends:

Greetings to you all in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ!

Hope you all had a great Thanksgiving Day! It is now December and the joy and peace of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ is already in the air. Across La Salle and Peru, I see decorations are already up. Bright lights, Christmas greens and trees, carols are what we see and hear everywhere. It was a glad sight to see so many of you decorating our beautiful church on Sunday Nov 26th after service. Continue to support and prayerfully uphold our church during this transition. I request special prayers and thanks to the members of SPRC, particularly Nancy Otto and several others who are extending their time and effort for the smooth running and transition of the church. Please take time to thank the members of our leadership team. Now most of you might have already done your Christmas shopping and sent out Greeting cards to family and friends, especially for contributing for 'Friends of Fosters', a big thank you to you! Remember, you are making a difference in the life of a child. Season of Advent and Christmas brings joy and expectations. We wait for the coming of Christ into our lives and our world. During the season of Advent we all sing the Hymn:

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appear.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

I encourage everybody to make this hymn a personal prayer to release us from our own captivity. When we look closely at our own selves, we can identify the areas of our own captivity – being captive to sin, captive to anger, bitterness and hatred, loneliness, illness, so



on and so forth. Let us pray and ask our loving God to release us. And my prayer for all is that we rejoice in and experience the promise of Immanuel. **God with us!**

This is the start of a special season. We have a month of special holiday worship services, family gatherings, and parties to look forward to. Though for many it is simply a season of shopping and merriment, but the spiritual message of Christ's birth is something we share and live out through our life and relationships. In a world so torn apart by distractions, differences, hostility and hatred of the 'other', we need to always be reminded that our God is a living and loving God who still wants to fellowship with us and with one another! God still wants to dwell with us and help us create a world without war, a world without discrimination and hatred, a world where we pay attention to the needs and well-being of others also.

Therefore, let us remember and pray for all the unfortunate people and communities that are struggling to survive and find dignity of life and happiness this season. Let us pray for all those who are mourning the loss of a loved one. Let us live as channels of God's love, peace and mercy in this world and particularly in our own community.

Wish you all a Blessed Season of Christmas!

Your,

Pastor Solomon



FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Hanging of the Greens!

Reminder that the Friends of Fosters gifts need to be returned by Sunday, Dec. 3. Please remember to check your gift off the sign-up sheet when it is returned.

Pick up your Giving envelopes in the foyer of the church. If you cannot find it please let Nancy Otto know.

Dry Pantry – “Where’s the beef? It is in the Grace grocery cart! Bring a can of stew, spaghetti sauce with meat, tuna in cans or packets, canned hams, cans of chicken and dumplings, tamales, spaghetti, canned Chili con carne, individual tuna or chicken salad with crackers or anything that sounds good to you.

Winter warmth--It is getting colder and winter coats, hats and gloves are needed! We appreciate all donations.

Christmas Caroling—Everyone is invited to go caroling on Sunday, December 17. Meet at Grace Church at 3:30.

Change for Change for November was \$45.00 for a total of \$539.00 for the 2023 year so far. Thank you.

LADIES IN FELLOWSHIP TOGETHER (L.I.F.T.) upcoming dates:
Saturday, December 9 - Meet at Four Star Family Restaurant in Peru at 11:00 am.

P.A.D.S. The Men's Group will provide the next meal for PADS on December 26.
If you can help on Thursday, January 25, contact Lynn Perry at lperry72@comcast.net or
Diane Davis at ddavis8226@hotmail.com.

Chancel Choir- New chancel choir members are welcome throughout the year. We rehearse and perform on the second, third and fifth Sundays of each month. Practice is at 8 AM.

Missions: Another way to help those in need is to donate to P.A.D.S, 1320 Menards Ave, Peru 61354; Illinois Valley Food Pantry, 122 Wright St. LaSalle 61301; and the Hall Township Food Pantry, 500 N. Terry St., Spring Valley 61362. Thank you for your generosity and the way you care about the people in the Illinois Valley.

Shut ins—How about sending a greeting to one of Grace UMC's shut ins? If you know of anyone else that should be included on this list or of any corrections, please contact Leann Wilcoxon at llwilcoxon@comcast.net or 815-223-1143.

Dick Graff - 505 College Ave, Ottawa, IL 61350
Harold & Mary Fran Walter- 259 N 2559th Rd Peru, IL 61354
Don Kubberness- Manor Court, 3230 Becker Dr. Peru, IL 61354
Rose Marie Redeen- 714 12th St. Peru

Eyeglasses- Put your old glasses, frames, or lenses in the I Care International Eyeglasses Box in the foyer at Church. We have collected 5 big bags of glasses so far.

Prayer Chain - If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Chain, Please contact Nancy Leonard at nancyleehall38@gmail.com.

Christmas Season 2023
Services at Grace UMC, La Salle Il 61301

3 December 2023

1st Sunday of Advent-Holy Communion Service @ 9 a.m.

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

10 December 2023

Choir Singing, 2nd Sunday of Advent @ 9 a.m.

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

17 December 2023

Choir Singing, 3rd Sunday of Advent @ 9 a.m.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Christmas Caroling

Everyone is invited to go caroling on Sunday, **December 17.**

Meet at Grace Church at 3:30 pm.

20 December 2023

Blue Christmas Service @ 5:30 p.m.

This service is especially designed for people who have lost loved ones in the past year and for all those who remember their loved one today.

Psalm 80:1-7 UMH 737; Hebrews 10:32-39.

24 December 2023

4th Sunday of Advent @ 9 a.m.
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:46b-55

24 December 2023

Christmas Eve Service @ 6 p.m.
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20

31st December 2023

New Year's Eve Service @ 9 a.m. Choir Singing
Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Barb Donahue | 3. Pam Wolf |
| | Char Goff |
| 4. Diane Davis | 5. Mary Donovan |
| 6. Matt Hassler | 9. Kurt Rimmele |
| | Jim Detmers |
| | Steve Davis |
| 11. Karen Welch | 13. Marybeth Ferrari |
| | Dale Bielema |
| 17. Kerri Borelli | 20. Chris Kelsey |
| 22. Tabby Chandler | 24. D.J. Wilmot (Bridget son) |
| 25. Holly McCormick | 26. Jim Kardas |
| | Samantha Whiting |
| 29 Delmar Tunnell | 31. Mary Donnell |

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve, the day of final preparation for the long-awaited Christmas Day and the celebrating of the birth – the birth of Jesus the Christ come down to earth.] In the story we are told after traveling long and far there was no room – no room except a stable for the Son of God to be born. And yet from a lowly stable he came to be born for all mankind.

Christmas Eve comes to us as we prepare our hearts, our homes, and our lives to welcome him and in the quiet silence of Christmas Eve there comes the realization that this is not where the story ends but is only the beginning of the Christmas story and the journey, He took for us while on earth.

So, in the quiet stillness of Christmas Eve let us open ourselves to make room for Christmas Day to celebrate His birth!

By: Elizabeth Schuetz

LaSalle Grace UMC LAY LEADERSHIP

(Effective January 1, 2024)

Church Council

Rev. Dr. Solomon Sudhakar, Pastor
David Donahue - Chair
TBD - Staff Parish Chair
Steve Davis - Finance Chair
- Finance Secretary
- Treasurer
Victor Croasdale - Trustee Chair
George White, -Lay Delegate &
Trustees Rep to Council
Pastor Solomon Sudhakar, Worship Chair
Trudy Forkner, -Education Chair
Leann Wilcoxen -Missions Chair
Abigail Cervantes -Summit Director
Barb White, -Lay Delegate
-Membership Chair

Non-Voting Members:

Melonie Thompson, Accountant

Finance Committee

Steve Davis – Chair
Pastor Solomon Sudhakar,
Barb White, Lay Delegate
George White, Lay Delegate
- Financial Secretary
- Trustee Chair
- Staff Parish Chair

David Donahue, Church Council

Nancy Otto

George Hodgson

Abigail Cervantes, Summit Director

Non-voting Members

Melanie Thompson, Accountant

Membership Committee

Pastor Solomon Sudhakar
Elizabeth Scheutz
Leann Wilcoxen
Virginia K

Education & Summit Advisory Committee

Pastor Solomon Sudhakar,
Trudy Forkner, Chair
Abigail Cervantes, Director
George Hodgson, Asst. (Confirmation)
Karen Swain
Nancy Otto
Barb Marusick

Lay Minister: Toni Lucas

Lay Servant: Kerry Izzo Dauber

Choir Director: Chris Kelsey

Nominations Committee

Pastor Solomon Sudhakar, Chair
Annette Byrns (2024)
Elizabeth Schuetz (2024)
Charlotte Goff (2024)
Stephanie Free (2025)

Board of Trustees

Victor Croasdale - Chair (2025)
Pastor Solomon Sudhakar
George Hodgson (2024)
Ken Webber (2024)
George White (2025)
David Stacker (2024)
Dan Wilcoxen (2024)
Steve Woods (2025)
Kathy Letwieller (2026)
Greg Hybki (2026)

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Pastor Solomon Sudhakar
TBD, Chair
Jim Kardas (2024)
Mary Donnell (2024)
Barb White (2025)
Kathy Letwieller (2025)
Roman Poroshyn (2026)

Worship Committee

Pastor Solomon Sudhakar, Chair
Leslee Stacker
Kathy Letwieller
Victor Croasdale - Head Usher
Chris Kelsey-Choir Director
Linda Kadrass
Bridget Wilmot
Lois Croasdale
Annette Byrne
Mary Landsiedel

Missions & Stewardship Committee

Pastor Solomon Sudhakar
Leann Wilcoxen - Chair
George White, Barb White
Mary Landsiedel
Elizabeth Schuetz (Confirmation)
Sue Myers
Trudy Forkner
Karen Swain
Lynn Perry
Diane Davis
Nancy Otto - Friends of Fosters
Claudia Mikyska - Friends of Fosters



Recipient Name

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code