



Food Pantry Sunday

Our next food pantry collection is Jan 4. Suggestions and ideas are in the weekly update email and Grace Notes newsletter. Bring your non-perishable donations on Sunday and set them before the altar.

Pictures into Memories

January 4 | Between Services

Join Joel Lorentzen and Paul Lewellan for the fourth installment. You're invited whether or not you came to prior sessions. Bring a photo that captures a notable event, treasured person, or moment in time. We'll share stories and collect pieces of writing. Help us add to Grace's Memory Book. Don't let your memories get lost.

Coffee with Council

January 11 * 18 | Between Services | PBH

You are invited to join members of the Church Council and Treasurer Dawn Matthews in Pat Bell Hall between services. This is your chance to examine the Annual Report prior to the Congregational Meeting on January 26. Review the 2026 Budget, talk about your vision for 2026, ask questions, share your joys and concerns. Celebrate all Grace has accomplished in 2025.

2026 Altar Guild

A very important part of our worship experience relies on members to prepare communion, set the altar table, and manage worship supplies like candles and wine. This is a wonderful way to support worship here at Grace and is a great "behind-the-scenes" job if you prefer not to be in the spotlight. Contact the church office with any questions, and a sign-up sheet is on a clipboard in the narthex.

Acolytes Wanted

The easiest of all the worship volunteer positions - at the 8:30am service you simply light the altar candles before worship and then extinguish them once the service is over. That's it! Let the office know if you'd like to help. It's a simple, yet meaningful way to give of your time at Grace.

Looking Ahead

- **December 28** 9:30am Joint Worship
Christmas Hymn Sing
- **January 1-2** Church Office Closed
- **January 4** Pictures into Memories
- **January 5** Annual Reports Due ◀◀◀
- **January 7** Special Council Meeting
- **January 11 & 18** Coffee with Council
- **January 15** ImpactLife Blood Drive
- **January 25** Joint Worship & Annual Meeting
- **January 30** Kids Winter Party
- **January 30** Hope at the Brick House Dinner
- **February 7** Spiritual Growth Retreat
- **February 18** Ash Wednesday

Social Ministry Mitten Tree



The Grace Social Ministry Team is collecting hats and gloves (all sizes) for our local elementary schools.

These items can be new or very gently used, should be unwrapped, and can be placed on or under the tree in the narthex. Thank you for helping with this important ministry!



⬆ **We are collecting hats and scarves through this week!**

Thrivent Choice Dollars



Thrivent members can direct their choice dollars to Grace! By directing Choice Dollars, eligible clients with membership can recommend where some of Thrivent's charitable outreach funds go. For more information talk to your Thrivent representative or go to thrivent.com/thriventchoice.

Scan for
the current
Weekly
Update email

Sunday, December 28

Pr. Kirsten Vacation

9:30am Joint Worship Christmas Hymns

10:30am Coffee Hour

Monday, December 29

Pr. Stephanie Vacation; Pr. Kirsten Vacation

10:30am Staff Meeting

4:30pm Centering Prayer

7:00pm Council Meeting - PBH

Tuesday, December 30

Pr. Stephanie Vacation; Pr. Kirsten Vacation

10:00am Pastor's Text Study - PBH

Wednesday, December 31

Pr. Stephanie Vacation; Pr. Kirsten Vacation

12:00pm Men's Lunch Group

Thursday, January 1

Pr. Stephanie Vacation; Pr. Kirsten Vacation

Church Office Closed



Friday, January 2

Pr. Stephanie Vacation; Pr. Kirsten Vacation

Church Office Closed

Saturday, January 3

Pr. Stephanie Vacation

1:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal

Sunday, January 4

Food Pantry Collection

Pr. Stephanie Vacation

8:30am Traditional Worship & Livestream

9:30am Pictures into Memories

10:30am Contemporary Worship

Monday, January 5

Pr. Stephanie Vacation

4:30pm Centering Prayer

Tuesday, January 6

10:00am Pastor's Text Study - PBH

1:30pm Personnel Committee Mtg

5:00pm Property Committee Mtg

6:00pm The Anxious Generation Book Study

Wednesday, January 7

12:00pm Men's Lunch Group

5:30pm Grief Support Group - PBH

6:00pm Special Council Meeting

End-of-Year Giving ◀

All year-end offerings (including Required Minimum Distributions) need to be **received in the office by Monday, December 30**, in order to be deposited on December 31, and counted for 2025. Thank you for your continued support of our missions!

Annual Reports Due January 5 ◀

Annual Reports are due to the office **no later than Monday, January 5**, to have time to prepare for distribution on January 11 (two weeks before the annual meeting). They can be sent anytime before and up to January 5, in any format convenient for you, as they will be reformatted for consistency (and to save on paper, we just need a brief summary of your group's activities). Please email the office with any questions.

Story of Paul Bible Study

Classes resume Thursday, January 15, 11am New participants are always welcome - Pr. Stephanie can answer any questions.

Grief Support Group

Next Meeting: January 7 Grief Support Group meets the first and third Wednesdays month 5:30pm in Pat Bell Hall. Anyone is welcome at anytime, and please be assured our conversations are kept in confidence. Questions? Cindy Lee 563-370-5386.

Service Day Quilters

Next Meeting Dates: January 13 & 14 | 9am-Noon

Anyone can join to help at church or at home. Questions? Gloria Lange 563-271-1542 langej1@msn.com or Kathy Miller kathyk1679@aol.com 563-676-0914.

Page Turners Book Group

Next Meeting: January 17 We meet at 8:30am the third Saturday each month at different locations for breakfast, book discussion, and great fellowship (reading the book is not required). **January Book:** *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben
Location: Tony's Pizza (2297 Falcon Ave, Bettendorf) **Host:** Janice Gibbs 563-332-6791

Naomi Circle

Next Meeting: January 20, 9:00am Naomi Circle meets the third Tuesday of the month Sept-May for refreshments, fellowship, devotions, and bible study. All are welcome to join us! Questions? Joyce Marinaccio 563-343-3404 or gsgopher50@gmail.com.

Centering Prayer

Mondays 4:30pm via Zoom In the Christian tradition, Contemplative Prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God - an the opening of mind and heart. Cheryl Kritsch 563-343-0135 facilitates the group which meets via Zoom every Monday (except holidays) at 4:30pm (link emailed in the Weekly Update).

Men's Lunch Group

The Men's Lunch Group meets at noon every Wednesday at church. Bring a lunch from home or pick something up from a restaurant. Contact Dennis Boehme boehmed@aol.com or 563-320-2661 to be added to the email list.



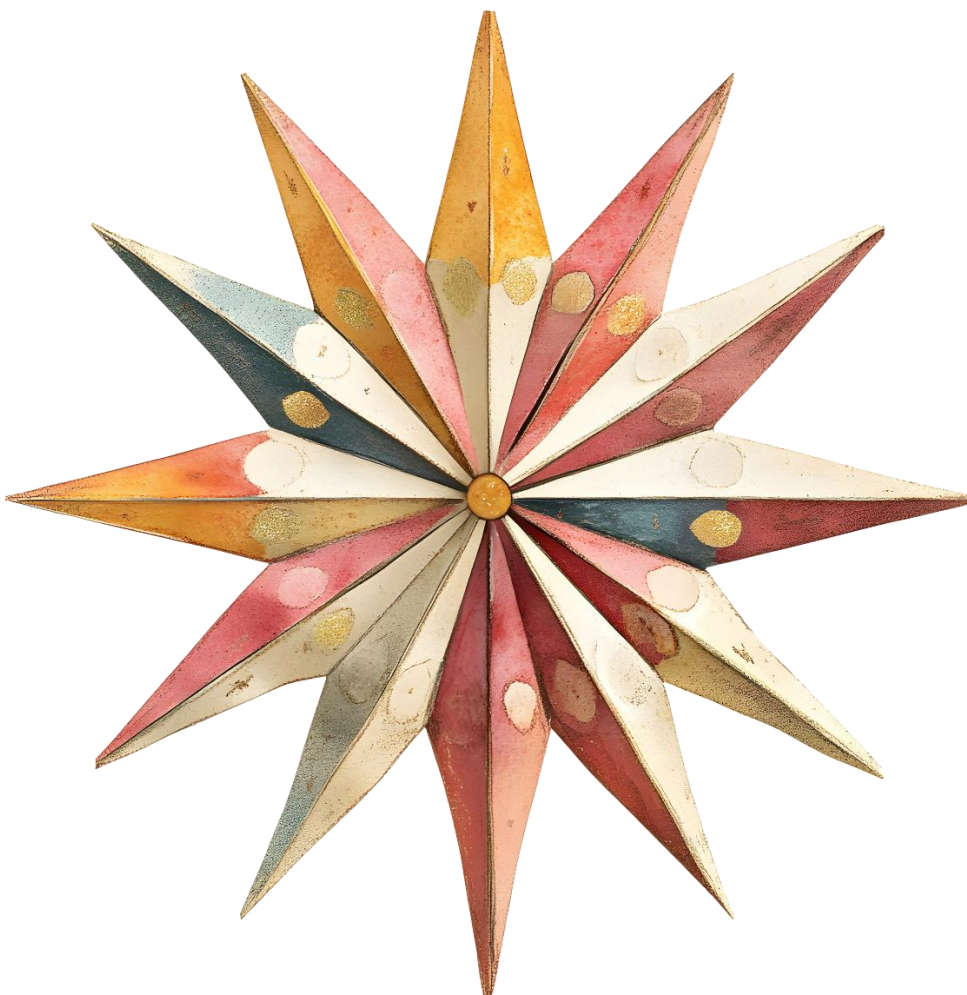
Following Jesus' teachings, Grace seeks to educate, lead, and partner with all people through discipleship to worship, service, and faith celebration.

PEACE AT CHRISTMAS

December 28, 2025 9:30am

Grace Lutheran Church, Davenport, Iowa

Pastor Stephanie Wood † Pastor Kirsten Lee



Welcome! We are so happy you have joined us!

Please complete an attendance card – located in the pews or at the usher’s table.

*Please stand as you are able. **Congregational response in bold.**

Prelude

Go, Tell It on the Mountain arr. by Melody Bober

Announcements

Call to Worship

Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shine light in the world.

By day and night he shines for all to see.

Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty.

That the world may see the justice and richness of God.

God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,

So that all who believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.

Jesus is the light of the world.

Jesus is the light of our lives.

Sing to God a new song!

A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.

A Reading

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,

Christ, the true and only light,

sun of righteousness, arise,

triumph o’er the shades of night.

Dayspring from on high, be near;

daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn

unaccompanied by thee;

joyless is the day’s return,

till thy mercy’s beams I see.

Till thy inward light impart,
Glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
fill me, radiancy divine,
scatter all my unbelief;
more and more thyself display,
shining to the perfect day.

~ Hymn to the Light of Christy, Text: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Opening Hymn

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice ELW 288

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.** Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *(Silence for reflection.)*

Let us pray. Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. Throughout this past year we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us and renew us. As we begin this new year, lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Throughout this new year may our Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prayer Litany

Open unto us - **light for our darkness**
Open unto us - **courage for our fears**
Open unto us - **hope for our despair**
Open unto us - **unity for our divisions**
Open unto us - **peace for our turmoil**
Open unto us - **joy for our sorrow**
Open unto us - **strength for our weakness**
Open unto us - **wisdom for our confusion**
Open unto us - **forgiveness for our sins**
Open unto us - **tenderness for our toughness**
Open unto us - **love for our hates**
Open unto us - **thymself for our selves**

Renew our hearts and minds, so the word which always brings us together will be "sibling," and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam! **Amen.**

~Howard Thurman (1899-1981) and Pope Francis (1936-2025)

Trivia & Hymn Selection

While you choose a hymn (269-300), can you answer these trivia questions?

Scripture | Genesis 1:1-5 and John 1:1-5

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

He was with God in the beginning.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."

And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Scripture | John 1:6-14

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

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.

A Reading

*I cannot tell you
how the light comes.*

*What I know
is that it is more ancient
than imagining.*

*That it travels
across an astounding
expanse
to reach us.*

*That it loves
searching out
what is hidden
what is lost
what is forgotten
or in peril
or in pain.*

*That it has a fondness
for the body
for finding its way
toward flesh
for tracing the edges
of form
for shining forth
through the eye,
the hand,
the heart.*

*I cannot tell you
how the light comes,
but that it does.
That it will.
That it works its way
into the deepest dark
that enfolds you,
though it may seem*

*long ages in coming
or arrive in a shape
you did not foresee.*

*And so
may we this day
turn ourselves toward it.
May we lift our faces
to let it find us.
May we bend our bodies
to follow the arc it makes.
May we open
and open more
and open still*

*to the blessed light
that comes.*

—Jan Richardson, “How the Light Comes: A Blessing for Christmas Day

Trivia & Hymn Selection

While you choose a hymn (269-300), can you answer these trivia questions?

A Reading

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!

Hail the Sun of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings,

ris'n with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by,

born that we no more may die,

born to raise each child of earth,

born to give us second birth.

~ Charles Wesley, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Scripture | Isaiah 2:2, 4

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

The Lord shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more.

A Reading *(The congregation reads the text in bold.)*

He did not wait till the world was ready,

till men and nations were at peace.

He came when the Heavens were unsteady,

and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.

He came when the need was deep and great.

He dined with sinners in all their grime,

turned water into wine.

He did not wait till hearts were pure.

In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.

To a world like ours, of anguished shame

he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.

**We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!**

~Madeleine L'Engle

Trivia & Hymn Selection

While you choose a hymn (269-300), can you answer these trivia questions?

Scripture | Ephesians 2:14-18

For Christ is our peace; in his flesh he has made both into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us, abolishing the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to our God.

Reading

Christ our Lord did not come to bring peace to the world as a kind of spiritual tranquilizer. He brought to his disciples a vocation and a task—to struggle in the world of violence to establish his peace not only in their own hearts but in society itself.

~Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

Litany

At this Holy Instant, we celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ into the great religions of the world. We jubilate the precious advent of trust. We shout with glorious tongues at the coming of hope. All the earth's tribes loosen their voices to celebrate the promise of Peace.

We, Angels and Mortals, Believers and Non-Believers,
look heavenward and speak the word aloud. **Peace.**

We look at our world and speak the word aloud. **Peace.**

We look at each other, then into ourselves
And we say without shyness or apology or hesitation.

Peace, My Brother.

Peace, My Sister.

Peace, My Soul.

~Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

Sharing the Peace

With the peace of Christ that rules in our hearts, we are one body, one community. The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

A Reading

Do you think you could contain Niagara Falls in a teacup? Is there anyone in our midst who pretends to understand the awesome love in the heart of the Abba of Jesus that inspired, motivated and brought about Christmas? God entered the world not with the crushing impact of unbearable glory, but in the way of weakness, vulnerability and need. On a wintry night in an obscure cave, the infant Jesus was a humble, naked, helpless God who allowed us to get close to him... You could more easily catch a hurricane in a shrimp net than you can understand the wild, relentless, passionate, uncompromising, pursuing love of God made present in the manger.

~Brennan Manning

Scripture | Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Litany

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

~Prayer of Saint Francis

Call to Offering

The gifts we give today are but tokens of the blessings of the new life we live in Christ. Bring your gifts with joy, for they remind us of just how blessed we are to know this love that flows so generously from the spirit of God.

(The offering plates are at the back of the sanctuary. Members may leave their offerings before or after the service or by scanning the QR Code on the back of the bulletin.)

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. Gracious God, **May these gifts, given to these ministries of Grace, be a blessing to friends and strangers, those like us and those not, those deserving and those not, for in this way the love of God reaches all of God's beloved. Amen.**

Trivia & Hymn Selection

While you choose a hymn (269-300), can you answer these trivia questions?

Prayers of the People

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

A Reading

*Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me;
let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God our creator, children all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.*

*Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, may this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment and live each moment
in peace eternally.*

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

~Jill Jackson-Miller (1913-1995)

Letting Go & Letting God In

As we come to the close of one year and begin a new one, let us take a moment to lift up to God the places in our lives we seek to find God's peace from the past year and where we hope to find God's peace in the year to come.

When ready, you may come forward and light a candle to represent your prayer of peace. Then pick up a star word. These are words that we can prayerfully ponder throughout the year as God guides us with the light of Christ like the Maji following the star to Bethlehem.

Blessing for the New Year

Let us pray. O God, you have been our help in ages past, our hope for years to come. As we welcome this new year, bless us with peace. Fill our days with the light of Christ and lead us

on the path of life until we see you in our heavenly home. You live and reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

Star Words Prayer

The use of star words, also called “star gifts,” is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year. You are invited to take a star word and use it as a guiding word throughout the year. Place your word somewhere you will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word.

Let us Pray. God of open horizons and open roads, like the Magi so many years ago, we are here, seeking you. Step by step, we have wandered into this space with the hope of feeling you in our midst. Step by step, you have claimed us, loved us, and fed us.

Today we have drawn star words. For some, these words are full of meaning, challenge, and invitation already. For others, these words are a blank canvas—inviting you into our lives.

So as a new year dawns, we pray that just as you have spoken to the generations before us, you would speak to us again. Allow us to use these star words as a tool that might help us hear you more clearly. May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi.

And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again, with mouths full of praise for the ways in which you have been present with us. Together we pray, with the saints before us. **Amen.**

Benediction

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved. From generation to generation, God has been by our side. From generation to generation, we are not alone. The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, “Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon.” May it be so. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn

Joy to the World!Projected

Sending

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace.
Proclaim this good news. **Thanks be to God!**

Interested in Joining Grace? Please contact the church office office@gracewelcomesyou.org, for information about joining Grace Lutheran Church. All are welcome and we would be overjoyed to have you engaged in the worship, ministries, and congregational life at Grace.

Junior Bible Study is on Winter Break and will resume January 4.

Do You Receive the Weekly Update Email? Every Thursday we email out the Weekly Update with current announcements, links, birthdays, anniversaries, Synod/ELCA updates, and more. If you would like to be added to our email list, please contact Annie in the church office.

Serving in Worship

Director of Outreach & Youth Ministries.....	Pastor Kirsten Lee
Assisting Minister	Paul Lewellan
Acolyte.....	NEEDED
Greeter.....	Kathy Higgins
Usher	Scott Jewel, Mark Jepson
Sound System.....	Anne Pacha
Altar Guild.....	Gloria Lange
Heart & Voice Choir Director.....	Sally Meier
Organist.....	Susan Senn
Pianist	Kathi Parrish
Tech Assistant & Praise Band Leader.....	Vey Rodriguez
Coffee/Cookies/Snacks	Karen Jewel, Kathy Miller

Online Giving Supporting Grace is easy with e-giving.
Go to **bit.ly/GraceGivingOnline** or scan this QR Code
to donate one time or to set up recurring gifts. We
appreciate and thank you for your generosity!



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