

Advent Celebration

“Heaven Cannot Hold Him”

Sunday, December 4 at 4:00 p.m.

An Advent service of:

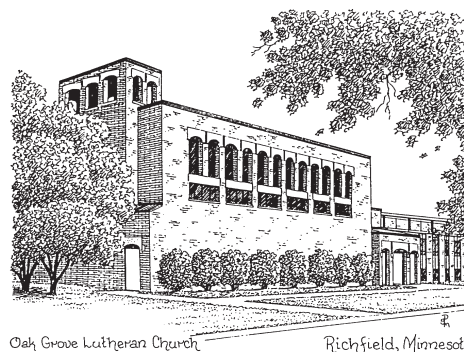
- Readings
- Music
- Candlelight
- Congregational participation
- Featuring Guest artists:

Daryl Carlson, cello
Essie Commers, violin



Come and listen to our guest string players, the Chorale, Messenger, Joy Bells, vocal soloists, flute, small groups, brass players and readers.

A freewill offering will be taken. There will be goodies for all after the service. Invite your friends and family to attend this special service of preparation for the coming of the Christ child.



Oak Grove Lutheran Church Richfield, Minnesota

Christmas Celebration Schedule of Services

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Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 11 at 11:00 a.m.

New this year, the Sunday school children of Oak Grove will be presenting their Christmas program “Checkin’ It Twice” during the 11:00 Worship service on Sunday, December 11th. Dress rehearsal will be Saturday, December 10th from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Advent Communion Service

Thursday, December 15 at 1:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve

Saturday, December 24 at 4:00 & 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day

Sunday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m.

December 2011

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December Birthdays

- 1 – Sydney Becker, Kyle Whited
- 2 – Jami Johnson, Mark Sotebeer
- 3 – Cody Blades, Kathie Curry, Jeffrey Hanson, Brian Moe
- 4 – Doris Bender, Jeffrey Lewis
- 5 – Nicole Bigbee-Oien
- 6 – Brenda Hartke
- 7 – Eric Nycklemoe
- 8 – Doris Bloom, Nicholas Schulze
- 9 – LaVonne Seemann
- 10 – John Schroeder
- 11 – Kathryn Strating
- 14 – Katherine Meinke, Eric Olson
- 15 – Steven Suneson
- 17 – Martha Eichlersmith
- 18 – Nancy Buck, Edna Carlson, John Frankovich
- 20 – Beatrice Fure, Kristine Stromstad
- 21 – Elaine Hafertepe
- 22 – Dan Bjostad, Michael Phillips, Diane Strom
- 23 – Kent Peterson
- 24 – Ryan Fors
- 25 – Elaine Davis, Julie Lundberg
- 26 – Michona Johns
- 27 – Jennifer Budinski Behnke, David Francis, Pam Lindquist, Joshua Myroniuk, Michael Stok
- 28 – Joseph Carney, Megan Highum, Matthew Lupkes, Craig Molm, Joan Ryks
- 29 – Georgeanne Clifford, Clara Malicki
- 31 – Sherry Anderson, Jennifer Aura, Matt Bohler, Kristin Hueg, Scott Olson

Do you have questions about church, theology, the Bible, the history of the church? ask.dr.dana01@gmail.com

Circle Meetings for December

All Circles are Tuesday, December 6, unless noted

Esther – 6:30 p.m. at Donna Pakkonen’s house.

Bring an appetizer to share.

Katherine – 1:30 p.m.

Lydia Ruth – 6:30 p.m. at the home of Carol Tveite’s. Bring an hors d’oeuvre to share, a gift for your prayer partner, and the unwrapped gift for the families at Loaves and Fishes if you signed up to bring one or cash towards gift cards.

Rebecca – 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Hostess is JoAnn Beggs.



Deaths

We extend our sympathies to the following families:

Lynette Stertz, who died October 24. Her memorial service was held at Oak Grove on October 28. She and her husband, Tom, joined Oak Grove in 1975.



Baptisms

November 6 – Sean Patrick Lesney

Remember Oak Grove in Your Estate Planning: When you make your will, consider naming Oak Grove Enduring Gifts as one of your beneficiaries. Already have a will? You can update it to include Oak Grove Enduring Gifts as a beneficiary. You can help Keep Oak Grove Alive and Growing. Contact Pastor Tom or Maynard Wood for more information.

Oak Grove’s Talent Show

Our Annual Talent Show will be coming up on Friday, January 27th at 7:00 pm – be sure to put this on your calendar!

If you’re interested in sharing your talent and personality with us, please contact Del Hamaker at (612) 807-8111.



Heaven Cannot Hold Him

“In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan...” So begins Christina Rossetti’s Christmas poem that serves as the inspiration for our Advent Celebration service this year. It’s always struck me as a bit melancholy for a Christmas song. Maybe it’s the wintry scene it pictures, with its images of the earth, frozen hard as iron, and water, hard as a stone. The third line has only nine words and five of them are the word “snow.” We’ve had a gentle lead-in to the midwinter season so far, but fresh in our memories is last year and Ms Rossetti’s description of “snow, on snow, on snow, on snow.”

The title for our program comes from the 2nd verse, where it makes the claim about God: “Heaven cannot hold him.” It’s an interesting thought: heaven, not large enough, or strong enough or glorious enough to be the abiding place of the almighty?

But I guess that’s not really the point. It’s more like what Paul had to say about Christ not clinging to the heavenly glories, but emptying himself, taking the form of a servant—not in heaven, but among us here. God’s love for us could not remain bottled up in some heavenly realm beyond the

veil. It had to gush outward, overflowing, breaching the very gates of heaven itself to come to us. That’s the mystery, the strange glory, that we contemplate and celebrate this season.

A word of thanks...

Most every month this newsletter carries at least one message of thanks to you people for your kindness and support—spiritual and otherwise. Gratitude is expressed for cards, visits and prayers after an illness, for words of comfort and hope at the time of a death, and for the rich blessing of being part of a community of faith. Every month I add my own thoughts of gratitude for you, as well; for the faith that motivates your works and for how God’s Spirit works through you.

Now I’m glad for a chance to offer my own thanks to you. You’re always generous with your affections and I know of your prayers for me, but, during a time of surgery and being away, those things are even more meaningful than ever. Thank you so much for all you’ve done. I appreciate you deeply, and ever thank God for you. What a church!



Pastor Tom Zarth

Send FREE Ecards to Family & Friends

Did you know that you have this opportunity with Thrivent? Go to Thrivent.com and.....

Get a jump start on the holidays. Don’t wait ‘til the last minute to prepare your Thanksgiving and Christmas greetings. Get started now with the Lutherans Online eCards. Create your cards today, and select to deliver them any date within the next 90 days.

Thank you to all Thrivent members who have chosen to give their choice dollars to Oak Grove.


*For
unto
you is
born this
day in the
City of David
a Savior, who is
Christ the Lord.*


It's time to Play the Feud. . .

. . . and have your cake and eat it too?

Coming in January, Oak Grove will host the first ever Oak Grove Family Feud where teams will face off for the rights to claim the championship title. This event will be held January 29, Annual Meeting Sunday, and will be a fundraiser for youth campers attending camp at Wapo or Castaway next summer.

The event will start with a soup and bread lunch starting at 11:00 (after the annual meeting) and serving until after the second service (app. 12:30). The Feud will start sometime shortly after the second service. During the event, we will also hold the first ever Oak Grove Dessert Auction. Dessert items, brought by our Oak Grove Youth Campers and their families will be auctioned off to the highest bidder. The winner will be allowed to take their dessert home, or if desired, share it at the event.

Starting in January, we will be looking for up to eight teams to sign up and compete tournament style (the more you win, the more you play) in front of a LIVE audience. These teams should consist of 3-6 people of all ages, ideally 5th grade and older, and can include anyone you chose – members of your family, or a team formed from your Oak Grove family. Be aware that members of smaller teams will need to answer more individual questions than the larger teams.

Also in January, we will be polling the congregation for answers to questions that we will include in

our Oak Grove Feud game. Some samples of these questions: Past or present, provide the name of an Oak Grove intern: Name one of the twelve disciples: Name a book of the Old Testament.

Watch for youth who will be doing the polling so that your answers can affect the outcome of the game.

Campers will be asked to participate by bringing one dessert per camper, serving at least 6 people. Suggestions include (but not limited to) pies, cakes of any size, tortes, cheesecakes, plates of cookies or bars, cupcakes, baklava, etc. Desserts can be homemade or purchased and will need to be brought to church by 10:00 the morning of the event so that they can be displayed for presale viewing. Please package your dessert in a disposable container as it is to be auctioned off.

Campers will also be asked to work at the event, helping to set up, serve food, clear tables, and clean up after the event. You will have time to participate in the Feud if you are on a team.

Questions, please contact Kris Brehmer, Kathie Curry, or Michele Myroniuk.

Mark your calendars to join us on Sunday, January 29 (no football that day) and let's Play the Feud.

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Note of Thanks.

A special thank you to Tom Zarth for his support through the last days with my mom before her passing and for the blessing of her ashes before she was taken to her resting place in Milwaukee. Thank you, my Oak Grove family, for all of the support, cards and words of encouragement during a very difficult time. I really do appreciate it.

- Margie Risch

A Big Thank You to Members of Oak Grove,

Oak Grove congregation is amazing!! \$1,184.00 was the amount that was collected at the Meals on Wheels door offering that was received on Sunday, October 30th. With a matching amount of \$500 from Oak Grove's matching funds account, the total was \$1,684.00. Thank you to all of you who donated so generously. I know the recipients who receive this service are thankful for you also.

I also had three new people volunteer to deliver for Meals on Wheels. That is huge! Thank you to all of my current drivers. Your service does not go unnoticed. Anyone interested in becoming a driver for Meals of Wheels, please give me a call and I will give you the details that it entails. You can reach me at 651-452-3120.

Thank you again Oak Grove members for your generosity and volunteerism!

God's blessings to you all!

Becky Hanson, Meals on Wheels Coordinator

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for your gift for Trinity First Lutheran School. It was a joy to share our message with you. We thank the Lord for the opportunity we have to serve the families that bring their children to our school.

Our big event for October was our fall festival. A night of fun, faith and fellowship with games, petting zoo, bouncy castle, supper and concluding with a time to worship our gracious Lord. We welcomed our student families and those in our neighborhood to be acquainted with our school and we thank you for your support of our ministry. God bless you.

Serving the Master Teacher

Sarah Wippich, Principal

(an excerpt received from Trinity First Lutheran School for a donation of \$500 given to them by the Women of Oak Grove)

— Kitchen Konnection —

I pray that you had a blessed Thanksgiving and that this edition of the Messenger finds you happy, healthy, and awaiting a wonderful Christmas season.

As I write this I am sure that the plans are being made to decorate the church, the Advent Celebration is set for December 4, and the Sunday school children are already rehearsing for their program.

The hustle and bustle of the winter holiday season begins at OG and I do hope that you will be blessed by all of the activity.

Give yourself a Wednesday break and come for dinner at OG between shopping, visiting, or delivering early gifts. Or just come to relax and visit with friends. Don't worry about having to make dinner.

Remember, Wednesday evenings at OG are great food for the soul!

God bless, Margie

\$4.00 per plate.

All dinners served with salad bar and dessert.

Dinner served 5:45-6:30pm

December 7 Cheeseburger & Fries

December 14 Taco Bar

December 21 Chicken Breast & Rice Pilaf

December 28 **No Dinner - Winter Break -
Happy New Year!**

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. 1 Corinthians 10:31

Resume Workshop

I'm looking to host/hold a "Half Day Employment Education Seminar" at Oak Grove sometime in the next 4 - 6 weeks and would like to see how many folks would be interested in attending.

I will be providing resume/cover letter reviews, mock-interviews, access to my job tips blog and offering my normal services for a discounted rate after the "Half Day" event is over for those in attendance. Let's try to help cut the unemployment in our community.

If you, a family member, a friend or someone you know could use some pointers, tips, tricks and possibly just someone to listen, forward this information to them and let me know @ tfolstad@mail.com. I need to know as soon as possible so I can get this day on the calendar. Please let me know of time of day preference, morning or afternoon.

Thanks - Todd Folstad.

Milestone Updates

First Graders with active hands learn Lord's Prayer in Sign Language

Led by Kris Swan, first graders with their parents learned the Lord's Prayer in a memorable way. Swan taught this important Christian prayer using American Sign Language at a faith milestone event on Sunday, November 13.

Understanding the Lord's Prayer with phrases like "on earth as it is in heaven" and "lead us not into temptation" can be difficult.

However, explaining their meaning using the signs helps the youth remember the significance of the words.

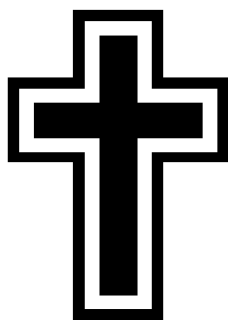
Oak Grove youth attending the milestone were Aidan Jones with father Zachary and Annika Zarth with mother Jennifer. Some favorite Lord's Prayer signs were power and glory.



Special Oak Grove guest Kris Swan helps Aidan Jones and Annika Zarth display their favorite Lord's Prayer signs they learned on Sunday, Nov. 13.

Baptism Birthday Milestone set for January

Anyone baptized in 2011 will be invited to a special birthday party set for Sunday, January 15. This special event gathers these families together to celebrate the blessing of baptism.



Women of Oak Grove Looking Forward... and Back

On February 14, 2012, the existing board and Circle members of Oak Grove will host our annual Birthday Party Celebration. I am not sure what number that 'annual' should have before it, but I do know that it has been happening for many years. I pray that you will mark it on your calendar now and plan on attending. The details are still in progress, so please watch the bulletins and future Messengers for more details.

In addition, before the party begins, there will be an important business meeting regarding the election of a new board of directors, or the possible demise of an official organization of the Women of Oak Grove. My term as president will come to an end, two other members have resigned, and the other three members do not want to move into the president's role. In previous letters over the last couple of months, I have asked circle members to talk about and pray for more leaders to come forward. Now, I am asking the entire congregation to pray for the future of the women of Oak Grove.

Ladies, you do not have to be a circle member to be involved in the activities nor do you have to hold back any passion that you might have to push others to become involved. Are you a leader? A co-leader? Want to get involved, but don't know where to start? If you answered yes to any of these questions, come to the Fellowship Hall on February 14. We will take care of business, and then have a party. Hopefully, it will be a big birthday bash along with the birth of a new Board of Directors for the Women of Oak Grove.

We need to look back in order to move forward. We need to remember the saints of OG. We need to learn from the legacies that they left us; we need to continue their work. Two days ago, we celebrated the women of Oak Grove as we led the worship service. It was a service of thanksgiving; a celebration of the work that we do at this church, a sharing of our talents, and a celebration of a life that comes from believing in God's love for all of us. I believe in that love, and trust that He will guide us in the days ahead. Pray for the leaders to come forward. I pray that you will hear His calling.

Have a Blessed Christmas...God's peace be with you.

Margie Risch

Circles meet **December 6** - Board meeting **December 8**
Ladies Night Out - Thursday, December 15

Can't find time in your busy schedule to get those cards ready to mail? We invite you to take a break from your routine and join us in the Fellowship Hall to do your cards with a group of friends? Enjoy coffee, hot cocoa, and listen to some Christmas music while signing those cards. Hope to see you there!

DECEMBER 2011

Collecting for Bridging

Last year we had a “Towels for Bridging” collection over the holidays until the Annual Meeting at the end of January -- collecting 200+ sets of towels!!

This year we have decided to collect kitchen utensils for Bridging. (Bridging is an organization with their main offices in Bloomington that collected furniture and household items for families that are in need. Ask Julie Tvette how you can donate furniture.)

Bridging gives a bundle of five kitchen utensils to each family that comes in to get furniture. Watch for boxes labeled with each of the listed items. We will bundle them and deliver them after the annual meeting, but thought you would like a heads up to watch for these items as you are out and about!

You are welcome to donate money to be used to buy these utensils as well if you wish. See Julie Tvette with questions.

Scrap Metal Drive

This fall's scrap metal drive was a huge success! More than we have collected on the other drives! SO- we are planning another scrap metal drive this spring (date to be announced!) Please continue to save scrap metal, aluminum, pop cans, soup cans, copper, small engines. Ask Julie Tvette, Alexis and Morgan Curry if you have questions.

Utensils needed for bridging:

- Can opener
- Mixing spoon
- Spatula
- Dish Towel
- Ladle
- Wisk
- Vegetable peeler

Items can be new or gently used.