

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

PO Box 10, Belgrade MN 56312 / 320-254-3249

Pastor Lisa Meshke pastorlisaanne@gmail.com

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BELGRADE, MN 56312

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

January 2023

Thanksgiving Eve All Parish Choir:

Right: Fifteen members from all three churches participated in an All Parish Choir directed by Deacon Brenda.

They sang “A Round of Thanks” arranged by Donald Moore.



Confirmation Christmas Party:

Left: Jennah Koenig and Lillian Thompson making a craft at the Christmas Party.

23 students from 7th through 9th grade attended the party on December 14th.



Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish



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From the desk of Pastor Lisa Meshke

Happy New Year Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish,

Looking back on 2022, it really was a good year for our parish. We welcomed Deacon Brenda and Andy in August. Deacon Brenda has brought new life and vitality to our congregations and we look forward to the new year.

As you look to a new year, what are your hopes and dreams? One of my favorite devotional books is by Henri Nouwen called, "You are the Beloved: Daily Meditations for Spiritual Living". The devotion for December 15th speaks about living as a joyful person. "Joyful persons do not necessarily make jokes, laugh, or even smile. They are not people with an optimistic outlook on life who always relativize the seriousness of a moment or an event. No, joyful persons see with open eyes the hard reality of human existence and at the same time are not imprisoned by it...They suffer with those who suffer, yet they do not hold on to suffering; they point beyond it to an everlasting peace."

May you feel that everlasting peace this year—in the midst of good days and bad days. Blessing in 2023!

God's grace and peace be with you,
Pastor Lisa

January Birthdays and Anniversaries

1	Sarah Shelton	19	Dan Struthers
2	Paul Thompson		Kurt Kirckof
3	Aaron Nelson		Gretchen Jones
4	Patti Hagen		Wyatt Lewis
	Stacy Steffensen		David Clark
	Jennifer Hellickson	21	Janet Raveling
5	Wayne Schoeppach	22	Mark Ziemer
	Larry & Vicki Freese		Clay Walstrom
	Richard & JoAnn Nelson		Shannon Wander
	Vance Jensen	23	Becky Mueller
6	Gladys Hellickson		Emery Halvorson
	Jerry & Cindy Torgerson	24	Lisa Olson
	Joe Carson		Myra McGarvie
7	Kylee Norris	25	Cathy Thoen
8	Wesley Hammer	26	Pearl Anderson
	Catherine Prentice	27	Bruce Paulson
	Margaret Olson	29	Cassie Ziemer
	Ashton Terhaar	30	Kent Bouwman
9	Scott Ziemer		Mhina Reed
11	Mike Steffensen	31	Warren Hagen
	Jordyn Walstrom		Melanie Lundberg
12	Kara Kirckof		
13	Harlyn & Bonnie Freese		
	Anton Imdieke		
	Jannah Koenig		
	Tanner Shelton		
14	Megan Olson		
	Dustin & Angela Nelson		
16	Owen Miller		
	Roxanne Olson		
	John Olson		
17	Georgia Martinson		
	Jason Ziemer		
18	Kim Carson		
	Gary Berndt		
	Mark Wander		

If you have any corrections or would like your name added to the Birthday & Anniversary list contact the church office at 254-3249.

Church and Parish Councils

Big Grove

President: Scott Stueckrath Vice President: Jenny Stueckrath
Secretary: Megan Imdieke Treasurer: Eric Johnson
Financial Secretary: Diane Hanson

Crow River

President: Doug Mohs Vice President: Patti Hagen
Secretary: Melanie Lundberg Treasurer: Julie Jensen
Financial Secretary: Travis and Nichole Szczesniak

Grace

President: Bruce Wing Vice President: Megan Klaphake
Secretary: Erin Krug Treasurer: Carol Westaby
Financial Secretary: Brenda Kaiser

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

Council Members:
Laura Spanier (BG) Megan Imdieke (BG)
Ryan Halvorson (CR) Brian Ziemer (CR)
Darlene Barchenger (G) Connie Wold (G)

Lead Pastor: Pastor Lisa Meshke
Deacon: Brenda Handel-Johnson
Office Secretary: Sue Wiener
Parish Treasurer: Connie Wold

From the desk of Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year BGCRG sisters and brothers!

This time of year is fun and joy-filled for many of us. Seeing family and friends over the holidays and hearing from people who have been a part of our lives is always a treat. I love getting Christmas cards, but confess I am not so great at sending greetings out to people. There is an art to sending a card that reminds us that we are important enough for someone to sit down and take the time to write a letter and send their love across the miles.

Lately, as I have been reading the scripture readings for upcoming Sundays - planning and thinking ahead, I started to think about the Apostle Paul - the great letter writer who worked for the Roman government and persecuted early Christians; then he met Jesus and his life changed. He started churches, helped people get a grasp of who Jesus was and what he was all about and encouraged and scolded communities when they were bickering about small or large matters. He was a champion letter writer. Even though he wasn't living in a community, working side by side with people, he was still holding people in prayer, thinking about them, writing to them and continuing to preach the gospel through his pen. If he wouldn't have written those letters, a good portion of the New Testament wouldn't exist. He heard back from those communities through people and letters and then took the time to respond to their questions - he kept the fire and excitement of the gospel alive for them. He truly was a light for those churches.

The time after Christmas is a season of light - Epiphany. How are we being a light? The good news of great joy isn't just something to receive, accept or consume. We need to be a little more like Paul and offer great joy in kind, loving relationships with those we love and those we haven't even met yet. The good news of great joy belongs to ALL people. How will we share the news? Who and how are we being in this world says much about how we share that good news. Families are a terrific place to start.

God's peace to all!
Deacon Brenda

Parish News:

Grief Support meetings begin in January

A parish wide Grief Support group will begin on the 3rd Monday of each month beginning January 16 to process feelings of grief and loss for anyone who is coping with loss. Our lives are not static and we go through seasons of loss when we grieve the death of a person or the end of a job or marriage. The purpose of the Grief Support group is to create a safe place for people to do the work of mourning in a way that allows you to reconcile the loss and go on to find continued meaning in life and living. Check the January newsletter for more info. The Grief support group will meet at the Parish office (4:30pm - 6:30pm) and is open to anyone in the area to join.

Coming in 2023 - Bible Study

Sunday Bible study at each church - Evil, Suffering and God. This 4 session bible study is a place to look at scripture and discuss the hard questions we all ask of God in times of tragedy. We, as members of the Christian community (and specifically Lutheran community), have something to say in the face of evil and suffering in the world. Check the announcements for the bible study schedule at each church.

Births: Crow River - Tate Allen, son of Jason and Amanda Halvorson born on 12/19/2022

New Members: Crow River - Spencer Amundson and Haily Meyer

Baptisms: December 23rd, Blair Jo Rooney, daughter of Patrick and Taylor Rooney

Funerals or Deaths: none

Weddings: None

ACOLYTE & CROSSBEARER SCHEDULE

Plan to be at church at least 20 Minutes before service time on the Sunday you are scheduled.

NOTE: If you are unable to be there, try first to switch with someone or find someone to fill in for you. If this does not work and you cannot be there, call the Parish Office by Friday evening (320-254-3249).

DATE	BIG GROVE	CROW RIVER	GRACE
Jan 1	Ashton Terhaar	A: Jocelyn Commerford C: Taya Hanson	Lillian Thompson
Jan 8	Lydia Deters	A: Macey Roering C: Owen Miller	Josie Buckentine
Jan 15	Elliot Spanier	A: Coby Schoumaker C: Natalie Mueller	Colin Evenson
Jan 22	Isaac Johnson	A: Mhina Reed C: Jocelyn Commerford	Kacey Fischer
Jan 29	Ashton Terhaar	A: Taya Hanson C: Jaylee Jensen	Logan Oeltjenbruns
Feb 5	Lydia Deters	A: Aubrey Anderson C: Macey Roering	Cameron Loe



Congregational Annual Meetings:

January 22nd: Crow River after 10:30 am Sunday service

January 29th: Big Grove after 10:30 am Sunday service

January 29th: Grace after 9 am Sunday service

Parish Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 1 pm

Crow River Worship Duties

Ushers:

- January 1: Patti Hagen, Linda Olson, Roxanne Haugen & Karen Theis
January 8: Travis, Nichole, Ian and Dacia Szczesniak
January 15: Larry Henjum, Dan Struthers, Brian Detloff & Gary Theis
January 22: Tony, Jodi, Coby and Abbey Schoumaker
January 29: Jerry & Cindy Torgerson, Doug Mohs & Quentin Koll

Lector/Readers:

- January 1: Karen Theis
January 8: Nichole Szczesniak
January 15: Dan Struthers
January 22: Jodi Schoumaker
January 29: Sylvia Koll

Livestream:

- January 8:
January 22:
January 29:

Greeters:

- January 1: Doug and Joan Mohs
January 8: Jeff and Angie Gerhardson
January 15: Shelly and Brian Ziemer
January 22: Mark Walsh and Kristi Gronli

Council Meeting Dates: City Hall in Belgrade

- Parish Council:** Tuesday, January 10, at 6:00pm
Big Grove: Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00pm
Crow River: Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00pm
Grace: Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00pm

In memory of Nathan Nelson

The family of Nathan would like to thank each of you who made Nathan's 40 years of life so great! Muscular Dystrophy did not stop him from enjoying every minute of his life. From 4-wheelling with his Dad, friends and relatives or hunting with his buddies, he lived life to the fullest! He loved just visiting with his friends. He made an impact on anyone he met. Whether it was the long talks with his Mom and to the people he looked up to; his brother Dustin and his family, Angela, Wyatt, Lane and Emma, and his sister Keshia and Grandma Dorothy.

We would like to thank Pastor Lisa for the awesome service and to all the people who helped in the kitchen and who helped support us. Thanks also to the Padua Pub for the great meal.

We thank anyone and everyone who has ever helped Nate during his times of need-especially his aides who ended up being his friends. You will never be forgotten! Nate is now able to walk, run and use his arms! He is now free!

Jim and Linda Nelson

90th Birthday celebration for Arlene McCalmant

There will be a celebration honoring Arlene McCalmant on January 15, 2023 after the 9:30 service at the Paynesville Lutheran Church. All are welcome to wish Arlene a very happy 90th!



PARISH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2022

(Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

November Income: \$18,310.60
November Expenses: \$16,495.59
General Fund Balance: \$13,957.64

- * Still having some issues with the livestream. The idea of using YouTube is being considered.
- * The youth gathering in Willmar went well.
- * A motion was passed to pay Connie Wold \$200 a month for being parish treasurer.
- * A motion was passed to get an on-line subscription of *Sundays and Seasons*.
- * Reviewed the proposed compensation packages for Pastor Lisa and Deacon Brenda.
- * A motion was passed to approve the 2023 proposed budget as presented with additional \$300 added to the copyright line item.

BIG GROVE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2022 (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

November Income: \$4,782.94
November Expenses: \$8,192.02
General Fund Balance: \$37,889.45
As of 11/30/22 Profit/Loss for 2022: (\$14,361.51)

(There wasn't a quorum at the meeting)

- * The annual meeting will be on January 29th after the 10:30 meeting
- * Solar lights have been put up and are working
- * A new flag was ordered
- * The condenser pump on the furnace was replaced
- * The snowblower needs to be fixed
- * Blessing boxes: some will go to the school and some to the church office to get distributed
- * A cleaning sign-up sheet has been posted at the back of the church

Crow River Notes:

WELCA has decided to do a Mission Project each month. In January we are continuing Socks for Veteran's and their families. There is a box in the entryway of church. This project will end on January 29 as VFW Auxiliary needs them by February.

Crow River work days will be January 9th and 10th at 9:30am. Bring a sack lunch and a willing spirit! Many hands make light work.

January WELCA Meeting:

At coffee after worship on January 15th.

Grace Notes:

Grace Lutheran will be starting new offering envelopes on January 1, 2023. The new envelopes will NOT have dates on them so that they can be used anytime. They will continue into the following years. Each individual will NOT have a membership number. You will need to **Write Your Name On The Envelope.** The new envelopes will also be able to be mailed in, if you choose. There will be a basket in the back of church that you can pick up a bundle of 20 envelopes. As you need more, you can pick them up. If you need them mailed to you or have questions, please contact Brenda Kaiser at 320-249-5002.

Name _____

Address _____

Grace Lutheran Church
PO Box 10
Belgrade. MN 56312

January Altar Guild: Grace

Midge Lord and Mary Brenden

YOUTH HAPPENINGS:

SUNDAY SCHOOL:



Big Grove Sunday School will be held from 9:30 to 10:15 am on late worship Sundays.

Crow River Sunday School will be held every other week from 9:45 to 10:30 am. (late service only).

Crow River Sunday School

Sunday school will meet at 9:45 the Sundays we have late service. Our last session for now, will be April 30th.

Thanks to all the kids, parents and anyone else that helped to make our Christmas program possible.

Big Grove Sunday School

Sunday School meets at 9:30 on Sundays that we have the late service. **Thanks** to all the kids, parents and anyone else that helped to make our Christmas program possible.

Grace Sunday School Program: Thank you to all the kids, parents and anyone else who helped with this years Christmas program to make it an enjoyable event.

JAM will be meeting at 3:45 - 5:00 on January 11th, 18th and 25th this month at Grace Lutheran.

JAM Serving Calendar:

January 11th: Grace

January 18th: Crow River

January 25th: Big Grove

CROW RIVER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2022 (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

November Income: \$6,481.11

November Expenses: \$16,582.07

General Fund Balance: \$17,165.97

As of 11/30/22 Profit/Loss for 2022: (\$7,685.92)

(There wasn't a quorum at meeting)

- * Need to vote on new members; we will vote by email
- * Discussed Halvorson scholarship; will have more info in January
- * Discussed budget for 2023; will email before January meeting
- * Will be ordering round tables in January.
- * Annual meeting scheduled for January 22nd after 10:30 service

GRACE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2022 (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

November Income: \$11,672.18

November Expenses: \$9,498.87

General Fund Balance: \$63,507.52

As of 11/30/22 Profit/Loss for 2022: \$8,186.03

- * 7 letters were sent to families regarding their church membership. We received 5 back 3 of those 5 want to remain members
- * more repairs will be made at the parsonage when the weather gets warmer
- * Sunday school will not be offered anytime on Sundays
- * The constitution update is done. Voted to only have 2 instead of 3 board of education members, bringing the council quorum to 7 instead of 8
- * Will be donating \$500 to Green Lake Bible Camp
- * There will be furniture pads added to our baptismal font to easily move it around
- * Annual Meeting January 29th after 9 am worship service

January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30am Crow River w/HC 9:00am Grace w/HC & Livestream 10:30am Big Grove w/HC & Livestream	2 1:30pm Rachel Circle <i>Deacon Brenda - Sabbath</i>	3 9:30am Sarah Circle	4 6:00pm Confirmation (7/8) 6:45pm Confirmation (9)	5 10:00am Bible Study 4pm Naomi Circle	6 7:30am FCS at Grace <i>Pr Lisa - Sabbath</i>	7
8 8:30am BG w/HC & Livestream 9:00am Grace with HC 9:45am CR Sunday School 10:30am CR w/HC & Livestream	9 CR Work Day <i>Deacon Brenda - Sabbath</i>	10 CR Work Day 6:00pm Parish Council 7:00pm Council Night	11 3:45 -5:00 JAM @ Grace 9:30am Lily Circle 1:00pm Rose Circle 6:00pm Confirmation (7/8) 6:45pm Confirmation (9)	12 10:00am Bible Study 1:00pm Daisy Circle	13 7:30am FCS at Grace 1:00pm Pansy Circle <i>Pr Lisa - Sabbath</i>	14
15 8:30am Crow River 9:30am WELCA Mtg 9:00am Grace w/HC & Livestream 9:30am BG Sunday School 10:30am Big Grove with Livestream	16 4:30pm Grief support @ Parish Office <i>Deacon Brenda - Sabbath</i>	17 Do Day	18 3:45 -5:00 JAM @ Grace 6:00 Confirmation (7/8)	19 10:00am Bible Study	20 7:30am FCS at Grace <i>Pr Lisa - Sabbath</i>	21
22 8:30am BG 9:00am Grace w/Livestream 9:45 CR Sunday School 10:30am CR w/Livestream and annual mtg	23 <i>Deacon Brenda - Sabbath</i>	24	25 3:45 -5:00 JAM @ Grace 6:00 Confirmation (7/8)	26 10:00am Bible Study	27 <i>Pr Lisa - Sabbath</i>	28
29 8:30am Crow River with Livestream 9:00am Grace w/annual mtg 9:30am BG Sunday School 10:30am Big Grove w/ livestream, annual mtg	30 <i>Deacon Brenda - Sabbath</i>	31			<i>Pr Lisa - Sabbath</i>	