

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish
PO Box 10
Belgrade MN 56312

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320-254-3249

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Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

January 2024



Junior High Youth Gathering
participants

L-R Coby Schoumaker,
Owen Miller, Jackson Kirckof

Free Spirit youth Christmas
shopping. Nineteen 7-12th
graders went shopping for
area children in need on
December 6th.





Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

417 Washburn Ave,
PO Box 10
Belgrade, MN 56312



Greetings Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish,

Happy New Year!

The first Sunday in January we will be celebrating Baptism of Our Lord. This is a Sunday in which we remember Jesus' baptism as well as our own baptisms.

In past newsletter articles, I have shared devotions from one of my favorite devotional books, which is by Henri Nouwen and called, "*You are the Beloved: Daily Meditations for Spiritual Living*". The devotion that I am sharing with you this month is from Henri's book, *Beyond the Mirror*. It is the devotion for January 2nd and speaks about Jesus' baptism and anchoring yourself in God's love.

Anchor Yourself in God's Love

"When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan, he heard a voice from heaven saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased' (Matthew 3:17). These words revealed the true identity of Jesus as the beloved. Jesus truly heard that voice, and all of his thoughts, words, and actions came forth from his deep knowledge that he was infinitely loved by God. Jesus lived his life from that inner place of love. Although human rejections, jealousies, resentments, and hatred did hurt him deeply, he remained anchored in the love of the Father. At the end of his life, he said to his disciples, 'Listen: the time will come – indeed has come already – when you are going to be scattered, each going his own way and leaving me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me' (John 16:32)."

January Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

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: Mark Thompson
Secretary: Megan Imdieke Treasurer: Eric Johnson
Financial Secretary: Diane Hanson

Crow River

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

Grace

President: Les Thompson Vice President: Megan Klaphake
Secretary: Sue Jensen Treasurer: Brenda Thompson
Financial Secretary: Brenda Kaiser

Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

Parish Council President: Darlene Barchenger (G)
Parish Council VP: Ryan Halvorson (CR)
Parish Council Secretary: Megan Imdieke (BG)
At large member: Laura Spanier (BG)
At large member: Clay Walstrom (CR)
At large member: John Anderson (G)

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

The text above is only an excerpt from the devotion but I believe it speaks to who we are baptized Christians. *We are God's beloved.* Just as a voice from heaven declared to Jesus, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased," so was declared to you in your baptism that you are a Beloved Child of God. God claimed you in your baptism and continues to claim you and love you each and every day of your life. Even when you are broken down by the ways of the world, by sin, by hurtful comments or actions, one thing remains constant, and that is the love of God.

May you remember: You are Beloved. You are Worthy. You are Loved.

~Pastor Lisa



Parish News:



All parish bible study meets on Thursdays at 10:00 am at Grace. All are welcome.



Congregational Annual Meetings

January 21st: Crow River after 10:30 am Sunday service.

January 28th: Grace after 9:00 am Sunday service.

January 28th: Big Grove after 10:30 am Sunday service.

Council Meeting Dates: City Hall in Belgrade

Parish Council:

Tuesday, January 9th, at 6:00 pm

Big Grove, Crow River, Grace Councils:

Tuesday, January 9th, at 7:00 pm

Baptism: Grace: Adalyn Kinzel, daughter of Paul and Katie Kinzel., December 16, 2023

Deaths: Crow River: Bill Norris, November 26, 2023

Grace: Gregory Anderson, December 4, 2023

Big Grove: Violet Irby, December 6, 2023

Funerals: Crow River: Bill Norris, December 16, 2023

Grace: Gregory Anderson, December 8, 2023

Big Grove: Violet Irby, December 16, 2023



All Parish Bible Study at Grace will be meeting on Thursdays at 10:00am. All are welcome.

ACOLYTE & CROSSBEARER SCHEDULE

Plan to be at church 20 minutes before service time on the day you are scheduled. If you are unable to be there, try to switch with someone else or find someone to fill in for you.

Date	BIG GROVE	CROW RIVER	GRACE
JAN 7	Lydia Deters	A: Coby Schoumaker C: McCoy Detloff	Kaleb Torkelson
JAN 14	Elliot Spanier	A: Lauren Herding C: Noa Jensen	Lillian Thompson
JAN 21	Carter Heinen	A: Jace Mueller C: Livia Szczesniak	Reid Dickhoff
JAN 28	Elliot Spanier	A: Aubrey Anderson C: Jaylee Jensen	Kamie Fischer

Crow River Worship Duties

Ushers:

Jan 7: Quenemoen family

Jan 14: Dan and Sharon Struthers

Jan 21: Herding family

Jan 28: Ryan Halvorson family

Lector/Readers:

Jan 7: Kyle Quenemoen

Jan 14: Dan Struthers

Jan 21: Theresa Herding

Jan 28: Jesi Halvorson

Greeters:

Jan 7: Jordan and Amber Anderson

Jan 14: Gary and Karen Theis

Jan 21: Ricky and Cathy Prentice

Jan 28: Jason and Amanda Halvorson

Livestream:

Jan 7:

Jan 21:

*Thank
You!*



Parish Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 1 pm

New processes in place for your offering envelopes at Crow River and Big Grove churches.

Crow River Lutheran will be starting new offering envelopes on January 1, 2024. The new envelopes **will NOT** have dates on them, so that they can be used at anytime. They will continue into the following years. Each individual will NOT have a membership number going forward. **You will need to Write Your Name On The Envelope.** The new envelopes will also be much easier to mail in if you choose to go that route. We will have extra envelopes at church which will come in bundles of 15, plus we will have individual envelopes in the Narthex if you forget to bring one. We have also made available an ACH Form if you would like to utilize automatic withdrawals going forward. There is also the option of Venmo available which is **@CrowRiverLutheranChurch**. If you have any questions, please contact Travis Szczesniak at 320-429-4021 or Nichole Szczesniak at 320-295-1899.

Big Grove Lutheran will be starting new offering envelopes on January 1, 2024. The new envelopes **will NOT** have dates on them, so that they can be used at anytime. They will continue into the following years. Each individual **will NOT** have a membership number going forward. **You will need to Write Your Name On The Envelope.** There will be a basket in the back of church so you can pick up the bundles of envelopes. As you need more, you can pick them up. If you need them mailed to you or have questions, please contact Diane Hanson at 320-295-1957.

Thank You!

Grace children's Christmas program: Thank you to all the kids, parents and anyone else who helped make this years Christmas program an enjoyable event.



Crow River Christmas program: Thanks to all the parents who helped with the program and brought their children to practice. We can't do it without you! Special thanks to Angie Gerhardson who helped the preschoolers each week! Thank You!!

Sunday School will resume after the holidays on Sunday, January 7th.

Thank You!

Big Grove Christmas program: Thank you to all the parents, kids and anyone else who made our Christmas program a memorable and enjoyable event again this year. Special thanks to lone Pillard for providing our music.

Bonnie Lien will have a new address as of December 26th and would love to hear from all her old friends in the community. Her phone number stays the same 320-254-3117.

Bonnie Lien
Heather's Manor
3000 Douglas Dr #309
Crystal, MN 55422

Nursing Home Sing - Along

Join us to sing at the Belgrade Nursing Home on Monday, January 8th at 5:15 in the dining room when we sing some old favorites to warm us up like "You are My Sunshine" and "Unchained Melody", "Que Sera Sera" and a Beatles tune or two. This will be sure to make you smile!

PARISH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2023

(Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

November Income: \$18,418.37

November Expenses: \$17,186.48

General Fund Balance: \$21,781.35

- Pastors Report: 19 kids went Christmas shopping; there is a Christmas giving tree at Grace; the Free Spirit turkey dinner went well; preschoolers will be getting preschool bibles in December and January; fees for Green lake Bible camp are changing and there are discounts for early registration; 10 kids signed up for Montana trip and 1 for the New Orleans youth gathering; the Women's retreat had 8 from our parish attend; FCS breakfasts average 15 kids a week; Deacon Brenda did 7 in person visits and multiple on the phone last month.
- ERTC - should still receive \$4,018.13.
- Reviews for Pastor Lisa and Deacon Brenda will be January 2nd.
- With the new requirements for earned sick leave, the decision was made to front load 80 hours with no payout or carry over for full time employees, and front load 48 hours with no payout or carry over for part time office staff. Churches will need to develop a plan for custodians.

BIG GROVE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2023

November Income: \$12,040.33

November Expenses: \$8,568.99

General Fund Balance: \$24,403.44

Profit/Loss for 2023 as of 11/30/2023 \$(17,591.71)

- Trustee: working on snow blower and lights outside church.
- The new cleaning schedule is out.
- November income was good and switching to generic offering envelopes in January.
- Nominees for 2024 is finished.
- CAB funds will pay fees for camp if registered at early bird price.
- 2024 budget was approved.
- It was decided to have parsonage maintenance costs come from building fund instead of general fund from now on.
- Annual meeting is set for January 28th.

Big Grove Notes:

Big Grove has Venmo: @BigGroveLuth2022

Big Grow WELCA will be meeting after worship on January 7th. Hope to see you there!

Crow River Notes:

Crow River WELCA has a Mission Project each month. The mission project for January and February is personal care kits. Items we need: 20 x 40 inch to 27 x 52 inch dark, light weight towels, 8 to 9 oz. bath bar-sized soap, sturdy combs (no picks or fine tooth combs) and nail clippers.

We need help hemming quilts and sewing lullaby quilts. If you are able to help with quilts, they are in the small closet next to fabric room and lullaby kits are in a tub by the handicap door. Thank you!

Rachel Circle will be meeting on the 15th of January at 1:30pm.

Workdays are January 8 & 9. Bring sack lunch. If weather is bad workdays will be cancelled

Grace Notes:

Grace January Altar Guild:

Midge Lord and Mary Brenden

**HAPPY
NEWYEAR**

Jaguar Coffee Club invites any senior citizen in the community to join a free monthly coffee club on the third Wednesday morning (9:30 am) in the BBE Elementary cafeteria. Bring a friend and enjoy coffee or water and a small treat in the company of BBE elementary students. Next date is January 17th.

YOUTH HAPPENINGS:



Big Grove Sunday School:

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

Crow River Sunday School:

Sunday School will be held 9:45 am - 10:30 am on late worship Sundays.



FCS (Fellowship of Christian Students) Breakfast

Fridays, when school is in session,
7:30 am - 8:00 am at Grace Lutheran.
Grades 7-12 are all welcome.

FREE SPIRITS (Grades 7-12):

Glacial Ridge Curling (Willmar Civic Center) - Saturday, January 13th. Leave Grace at 6:00pm return 9:30pm.

Bean Bag Tournament - Sunday, February 18th at Belgrade Municipal Hall/Parish Office from 6:00pm to 9:00pm.

JAM (Jesus and Me) winter session for kids in Kindergarten through 6th grade, will start on January 17th, 3:45 - 5:00 pm at Grace Lutheran Church.

Sign up on our website:

<https://www.bgcrparish.org/youth.html>

Volunteers are needed for one or more sessions as teachers and assistants. Contact the office at 320-254-3249 if you can help.

JAM serving schedule

January 17 - Crow River

January 24 - Grace

January 31 - Big Grove



Registration for Green Lake Bible Camp opened on December 16th. There are discounts for early registration (by February 15th). More information is coming. **Spots fill up fast so check it out at gllm.org.**

CROW RIVER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2023 (Complete minutes available in Parish Office)

November Income: \$9,339.17

November Expenses: \$8,965.01

General Fund Balance: \$10,695.54

Profit/Loss for 2023 as of 11/30/2023 (8,710.20)

- Council/Cemetery Board will discuss process of handling funeral income.
- Discussed substantial increase in insurance premiums for next year and will check on different insurance quotes.
- Parsonage repairs not completed yet.
- Richard Hanson memorial: the nursery has been painted and love seat purchased. Will check with family if remainder of memorial can be used for pillar repairs on the outside of church.
- 2024 election ballot is nearly complete.
- Mission Investment Fund will be renewed for a one year period.
- We will pay the same amount as last year from our General Fund for GLLM Bible Campers (\$1,080).

GRACE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - December 2023

November Income: \$8,203.69

November Expenses: \$9,918.79

General Fund Balance: \$67,940.10

Profit/Loss for 2023 as of 11/30/2023 \$65.44

- Trustee report: Paul Halvorson & Clay Walstrom will work on snow removal. We will be getting insurance quotes before making decision on who to go with.
- Parish Ed: Christmas program went well. There are 23 youth from the parishes enrolled in confirmation, JAM has 30-40 that attend. Judy Dickhoff was thanked for all her work for the parish.
- Nominating committee has nominees for all positions except Synod Assembly reps and Green Lake Ambassador.
- Sanctuary updates: material samples were presented & discussed. Will be getting bids. The laminate will be put on the windows this week. A letter was approved to mail to all members. A renovation fund will be set up for donations.
- Discussion was held regarding having a TV in front of church for services. No decision was made at this time.
- Policy on Earned Sick and Safe Time policy was established.

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
HC = Holy Communion LS = Live Stream SS = Sunday School	1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 9:30 am Sarah Circle	3 6:00 pm Confirmation grades 7-9	4 10:00 am Bible Study at Grace 4:00 pm Naomi Circle	5 7:30 am FCS Pr. Lisa - Sabbath	6
7 8:30 am BG 9:00 am Grace w/HC & LS 9:45 am CR SS 10:30 am CR w/HC & LS	8 9:00 am CR Work Day Bring Sack Lunch 5:15 pm Sing a long at Belgrade Nursing Home Deacon Brenda-Sabbath	9 9:00 am CR Work Day Bring Sack Lunch 6:00 pm Parish Council 7:00 pm Council Night	10 9:30 am Lily Circle 1:00 pm Rose Circle 6:00 pm Confirmation grades 7-9	11 10:00 am Bible Study at Grace 1:00 pm Daisy Circle	12 7:30 am FCS 1:00 pm Pansy Circle Pr. Lisa - Sabbath	13 6-9 pm Free Spirit Curling in Willmar
14 8:30 am CR w/HC 9:00 am Grace w/HC & LS 9:30 am BG SS 10:30 am BG w/HC & LS and Potluck	15 1:30 pm Rachel Circle Deacon Brenda-Sabbath	16 9:00 am Do Day at Grace	17 9:30 am Jaguar Coffee Club at Elementary Cafeteria 3:45 pm JAM 6:00 pm Confirmation grades 7-8	18 10:00 am Bible Study at Grace	19 7:30 am FCS Pr. Lisa - Sabbath	20
21 8:30 am BG w/LS 9:00 am Grace 9:45am CR SS 10:30 am CR w/LS and Annual Meeting	22 Deacon Brenda-Sabbath	23	24 3:45 pm JAM 6:00 pm Confirmation grades 7-8	25 10:00 am Bible Study at Grace 3:00 pm Nursing Home	26 7:30 am FCS Pr. Lisa - Sabbath	27
28 8:30 am CR 9:00 am Grace w/LS and Annual Meeting 9:30 am BG SS 10:30 am BG w/LS and Annual Meeting	29 Deacon Brenda-Sabbath	30	31 3:45 pm JAM 6:00 pm Confirmation grades 7-9			