

TWAG

This Week At Grace
Grace Episcopal Church
4110 S. Ridgewood Ave.
Port Orange, FL 32127
386-767-3583

www.egracepo.org
parish@egracepo.org
[facebook.com/egracepo.org](https://www.facebook.com/egracepo.org)
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs.
9 am – 1 pm

FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT

Dec. 1 – Dec. 7, 2024

Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36; Psalm 25:1-9

<https://www.lectionarypage.net/>

Sunday:

8:00 am **HOLY EUCHARIST**
9:15 am Graceway Café
9:15 am ADVENT STUDY
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
10:30 am **HOLY EUCHARIST- livestreamed**
10:30 am Children’s Sunday School

Monday:

Birthdays: David Fleming

Tuesday:

Birthdays: Buck James
Anniversaries: Nick & Terry Cheremsak
12:00 pm BAM with Artie

Wednesday:

Birthdays: Betty Stecker
6:00 pm **Healing Service – livestreamed**

Thursday:

Birthdays: Sam McClure, Jamie Roberts, Maggie Thompson
Anniversaries: Scott & Tinny Ryder

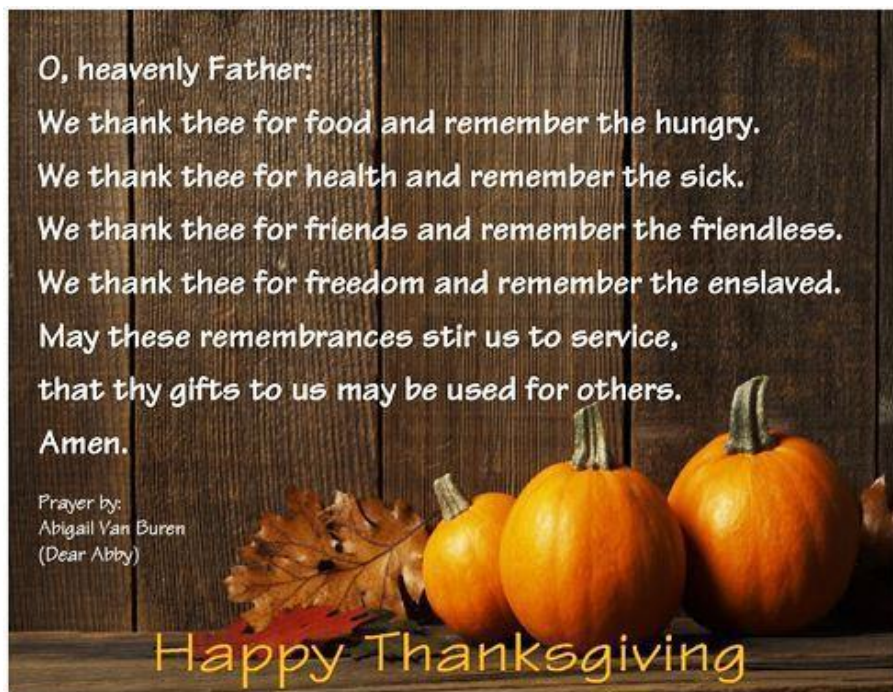
Saturday:

9:00 am Men’s Bible Study
1:00 pm DOK Christmas Tea

Gospel for this Sunday:



COLLECT for SUNDAY: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - this Sunday, DEC. 1

The word Advent means “coming.” It is a time to slow down, be quiet and meditate about the real meaning of Christmas. These four weeks before Christmas are a time to prepare our hearts and our lives as we wait for the coming of Jesus.

We focus on the promise that God made to his people and how that promise was fulfilled in Jesus. Advent is also the beginning of the liturgical year. The season begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and ends on the day before Christmas. It may also be a time for a new beginning for us as Christians.



ADVENT STUDY SERIES BEGINS THIS SUN. DEC. 1.

“HOPE, PEACE, JOY, AND LOVE: AN ADVENT JOURNEY”

Join us on this Advent journey as we explore the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Through Scripture, reflection, and prayer, we will prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and experience the fullness of the season.

Get a cup of coffee and a snack from Graceway Cafe and join us at the stage end of Goddard Hall at 9:15 am between the services. Rev. Dave Whitman leads this special four-week Advent study. **Please bring your bible.**



HEALING SERVICE
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 4 at 6:00 pm in the Chapel

Healing Services are the first Wednesday of every month offering Holy Eucharist, anointing with holy oil, and the opportunity to receive special prayers and the laying of hands by Clergy, Healing Ministry, and Prayer Team members.

We invite the healing nature of the Holy Spirit into our midst for those who seek prayer for themselves, family, or friends for healing in mind, body or spirit.

For livestreaming, go to our website or Facebook page.



THANK YOU for FILLING our WALK in LOVE HEART!

We have now received 97 returned Pledges!

These hearts are the names of all those who returned their pledges for 2025.

Thank you for choosing to “Walk in Love” with Grace Church in 2025. Your pledge allows us to continue the vision and mission of Grace and to continue the work of our 71 ministries through your gift of Time, Talent, and

Treasure.

OUR GOAL IS 100 PLEDGE CARDS RETURNED – We are close! If you have not had a chance to return your pledge card, please return by this Sunday so the Budget Committee and Vestry can finalize and approve the 2025 budget. There are extra pledge cards in the narthex. Thank you and God bless you.



GRACE CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARD POST OFFICE IS NOW OPEN!

This is a cost-effective way to send Christmas cards to your Grace Church family.

Bring your addressed but **unstamped** cards for members of Grace and drop them in a mailbox in the narthex. Post Mistress Sue McIlrath sorts the cards alphabetically and they are ready for pickup during December.

Please also think of our shut-ins and those who have not been able to attend church, who might enjoy some Christmas cheer.



NEXT LUNCH BUNCH- THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5 at 12:30pm

We will meet at **Nonnie's Italian Kitchen**, 5901 S. Ridgewood Ave, Port Orange.

Sign up in the narthex by Dec. 1 so we have enough seats for everyone.
Their menu is here: <https://www.nonnesitalian.com/menu>.

Lunch Bunch normally meets on the LAST THURSDAY of each month at different restaurants. We are combining Nov. and Dec. Lunch Bunch on Dec. 5 because of the holidays. All are most welcome.

Christmas Tea
Saturday, December 7, 2024
Grace Episcopal Church
4110 S. Ridgewood Avenue
Port Orange, FL 32127

\$20.00 Donation
Benefit for The Order of the Daughters of the King®
International Daughters

Contact: Sue McIlrath for Tickets
386-852-7543 or McIlrathSueMac@cfl.rr.com

Seating is limited

GET IN THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT !

This festive Christmas Tea will benefit :

The Order of the Daughters of the King -International Daughters

Tickets are available this Sunday in the narthex for a \$20 donation.



ANGEL TREE is almost Empty!
Return Gifts by DECEMBER 8 with the angel tag securely attached.

Please wrap the gift if your angel contains a child's name. All others, please leave it unwrapped. They will be given to the appropriate children by the school guidance counselors.

Thank you for taking these gift tags for children in need at Port Orange, Sugar Mill and Horizon Elementaries as identified by their Guidance Counselors.

We share God's love and grace with over 150 children and their families each year. Questions? Call Roseann Kurrle, 386 235-7360 *See handout on page 10.*

CHRISTMAS PARTY

ECW GENERAL MEETING AND CHRISTMAS PARTY LUNCHEON
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14 at 10:00 pm

God's work. Our hands.

All Grace Church women and all GEMs (Grace Episcopal Men who helped us during the year) are cordially invited to attend our last General Meeting of the year followed by a fun fellowship Christmas Party Luncheon.

General Meeting: 10:00 am
Party: 11:15 am

Join us as we celebrate our hard work and accomplishments in 2024 on behalf of Grace Church and our mission.

ECW Mission Statement: To respond to Jesus Christ, to witness, work and pray for the spread of God's Kingdom; submitting to and being guided by the Holy Spirit and to provide for the needs of Grace Church and its people.



SIGN-UP SHEET for CHRISTMAS ALTAR FLOWERS in NARTHEX.

If you would like to donate Christmas altar flowers as a memorial or a thanksgiving, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

Place your donations on the offering plate and sign the sheet by **Sunday, December 15.** Thank you.

Names and dedications will be printed in the Christmas bulletins.

HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 18 at 6:00 pm in the CHAPEL

Join us as we celebrate a special service of remembrance and HOPE.

Let us gain strength through the Lord as we make space during this busy holiday season to provide a special time for those of us who are experiencing loss, grief, loneliness, or any other struggle.

We will gather to remember that God is our strength. God is good. God is strong. God is near. We are not alone, and we have the HOPE of Christ.

DECEMBER 22 – ADD Christmas DECORATIONS TO GREENERY after the 10:30 Service.



Many hands and many ladders will be **needed again on Sunday, Dec. 22** as we add the festive Christmas decorations for our Christmas Service celebrations.

Thanks to those who helped us last Sunday to set up and hang the Advent greenery.



Christmas Eve Family Candlelight Service - 6:00 pm
Christmas Day Service in the Chapel - 9:00 am

PLEASE PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR!



GRACE CHURCH 134th ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2025

As is our tradition:

We start the day with ONE COMBINED 9:00 am service.

We gather together for a Potluck Brunch:
(bring your favorite dish to share).

We convene our short Annual Meeting and present the church budget for 2025.



MINISTRY LEADERS REPORTS DUE JANUARY 3, 2025



The summaries of each ministry's 2024 activities on behalf of the mission of Grace Church is an important part of our annual written report.

Ministry Leaders are asked to submit their 2024 Summary Reports by January 3. Please email your summary to Parish Administrator, Demetria at parish@egracepo.org. Thank you!



THANK YOU! The Outreach Committee is truly grateful for your generous donations to the **Virtual Bake Sale**. You donated **\$869** and Outreach provided \$500 in matching funds, totaling **\$1,369**.

The money collected goes directly to purchase gift cards for those in need and struggling during this holiday season.

Thanks to your loving generosity, we are able to provide another opportunity for us to reach out into our community with Christ's arms of love and help fulfill our **Vision**:

"Grace Church is a welcoming community of hope and healing, where all can experience and share God's transforming love."

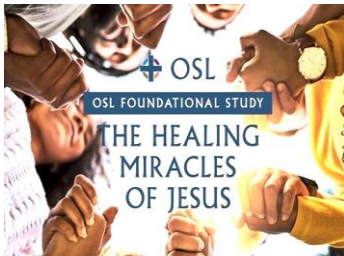


A NEW GENERATION OF ACOLYTES!

Members of our Children's Sunday School class were trained last weekend to serve as torch bearers and crucifers.

Thank you, Rev. Jonnette and the LEMs who helped provide this training.

Sunday School teacher Carol Wilhelm has also been providing the youngsters with hands-on instruction about the duties and significance of the role of acolytes on the altar.



WEEK BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES EVERY WEEK

On FRIDAYS at 1:00 pm

This fourteen-week Bible Study of the miracles in the Gospels started on Nov. 8 and is sponsored by The Order of Saint Luke, an international, inter-denominational, Christian healing organization dedicated to offering healing prayer in Jesus' name to all who are in need.

Participants discover that in studying the healing accounts of Jesus, they also develop a deeper, spiritual, and profound relationship with Him and they learn how to read the bible in a new way. Jamie Roberts and Sherri Davids have been studying & training for 2 years to qualify to teach this course.

It is not too late to register (contact Jamie Roberts). You do not have to sign up as a member of OSL. Or you can register for an online class, held via zoom by going to:

[OSL – A Ministry of Christian Healing](#) Click on Courses & Events in the upper right corner of the blue bar. Click 26 Healing Miracles of Jesus and choose a class that fits your schedule.

Our Vision: Grace Church is a welcoming community of hope and healing, where all can experience and share God’s transforming love.



Our Mission: We are the church of Open Arms.

Our Guiding Principles as a community of faith:

Through worship, we experience the presence of God through Word, Sacrament, Music, and Community.

Through outreach, we serve others by providing for their physical, spiritual, and social needs.

Through congregational care, we express our love for one another.

HUM PANTRY CURRENT NEEDS:

This month HUM can use donations of MAC and CHEESE

GRACE CHURCH PET FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

Dry or Wet Cat & Dog Food Dog/Cat Treats

Gallon Ziploc Slider Style Bags

For monetary donations, make checks out to “Grace Episcopal Church” with “Pet Food Pantry” on the memo line.

QR CODE FOR ELECTRONIC GIVING



Many parishioners are finding it more convenient to donate to Grace electronically. This QR code will connect you to Donor Box which accepts Google Pay, PayPal, Venmo and credit and debit cards. It is also printed on your 2024 Pledge Card. Note: this QR code is on your bulletin each Sun.



**HELP BRIGHTEN a
CHILD'S CHRISTMAS**

For children in need at
**Port Orange, Sugar Mill
& Horizon Elementaries**
as selected by guidance counselors.

**Please return by Dec. 8
with angel tags securely attached.**

Take a photo of your angels in case they are misplaced.

Our Angel Tree gift collection
physically demonstrates God's love for children
in need at Christmas time.



We share God's love and grace with over 150
children and their families each year.

Questions? Call Roseann Kurrle, 386 235-7360

*Thank you from Grace Church Outreach Ministry
for reaching out into our community
with Christ's arms of love
during this
season of hope and joy.*

Sunday, December 1

Matthew 25:1-13 *“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”* (v.13 RSV)

Some of us live just for the moment, some for eternity. Today, the beginning of Advent and the church New Year, is a good time to start living for eternity.

“Long life” is a hope but it’s not a certainty. None of us knows the day or the hour when our earthly life will end. By resolving now to be a follower of Christ, we’ll know where we’re going, even if we don’t know when.

Sometimes folks say “...when the time comes...” seemingly not realizing that they won’t have advance warning. Perhaps one way to reach these people is to liken going to heaven to an airplane ride. If you plan ahead and make your reservation and buy your ticket and arrive at the airport in a timely manner and act responsibly, you’ll get on the plane. If you rush in at the last minute and are put on stand-by, the plane to your destination may leave without you!

In the same manner, if you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior and live according to his precepts to the best of your ability, you’ll go—non-stop—to heaven. Conversely, delaying the decision to follow Jesus may result in missing the plane. So, my wish for you is Happy New Year, and a safe voyage. Isaiah 1:1-9; Psalms 146, 147; 2 Peter 3:1-10

Monday, December 2

Psalms 1 *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.* (v.1)

Sometimes we think of being blessed as being rewarded but “blessed” in the Bible means “happy” as a result of something.

This psalm reminds me of a friend who was invited by a neighbor to a pool party. My friend said, “Great, I’ll get my bathing suit.” That’s when her neighbor said, “Don’t bother, we don’t wear suits.” My friend—certainly no prude—quickly replied, “I’ll have to decline. I really wouldn’t be comfortable.” She was blessed.

She was blessed because she didn’t hesitate in her reply. She let the neighbor know that she had standards that she refused to compromise, and she didn’t stand in the way, or judge. She really evangelized—not in a preachy manner, but in a way that projected comfort with her standards, a strong sense of right and wrong, and security in those beliefs. She was blessed.

Her blessing wasn’t a reward—it was the natural product of a godly life. She was faithful to her Lord. Did the neighbor go skinny dipping? It doesn’t matter. We aren’t called to judge. We aren’t called to be successful, either. We are called to be faithful.

Isaiah 1:10-20; Psalms 2, 3; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Luke 20:1-8

Tuesday, December 3

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 *Like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to lead a life worthy of God.* (v.11)

Here Paul is speaking to his brothers in Christ in Thessalonica. This was a faithful group, but they still needed encouragement—just as you and I do today.

This is such a great description of an earthly Christian father, isn’t it...one who encourages, comforts, and urges on his children? I see this with our children and their earthly father. By being

firm, yet fair; by letting each child at each point in his/her development know what was and was not acceptable, he gave a great witness. In turn, each of them is a witness to those with whom they live and work.

We each have our own method of witnessing. His is by example. Even today, with each child and adult, he is the yardstick they use. It even extends to grandchildren. In a “love letter” to him, a beloved granddaughter recently described her grandfather with words like “noble supporter,” “respect,” “extraordinary,” “a blessing.” This beautiful letter ended with “you created the best father in the world for me. My Dad learned from his Dad. You are a gift from God and you are cherished.” Isn’t he blessed to be leading a life worthy of God?

Isaiah 1:21-31; Psalms 5, 6; Luke 20:9-18

Wednesday, December 4

1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 *When you received the word of God...you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.* (v.13)

Yes, the Bible is the word of God, divinely and miraculously inspired by God, and physically recorded by humans. Scripture says so!

There are those who try to give you “enlightened” thinking—that Scripture is not applicable today—just something written for the ancients by a strange man named Paul. But here it is: “When you received the word of God.” In other words, if you’ve never received the word, you aren’t a believer.

When you receive the word of God, it’s like receiving an IV in a hospital—it’s a healing infusion that goes to work immediately. You don’t see it working on your body, mind, and spirit, but your life shows that it is, indeed, “at work in you believers.”

Just like the rest of life, we still make poor choices occasionally. That’s because we’re human and we’re sinners. Haven’t you seen plenty of bumper stickers that say this briefly and to the point? “I’m not perfect, just forgiven” is one that’s popular. My favorite, though, is “Please be patient with me—God’s not finished with me yet.”

Isaiah 2:1-11; Psalm 119:1-24; Luke 20:19-26

Thursday, December 5

Psalm 18:1-20 *I love thee, O LORD, my strength...he delivered me, because he delighted in me.* (vv.1, 19b)

How do I love You, Lord? Completely. Why do I love You? Because You love me, and when I call on You, You rescue me. Just reading this portion of the psalm, the word pictures strengthen me: “My rock, fortress, deliverer, shield, stronghold.” I know my Lord is not only dependable, but strong.

The fury of God’s anger in defending me is reassuring: “Earth reeled and rocked, mountains trembled and quaked...smoke and fire and coals and hailstones and arrows and lightning.” I know my Lord will stop at nothing to protect me. What do I have to do for all this protection, this guarding, this guiding, this receiving? All I have to do is what is pleasing to my Lord: He will deliver me because He delights in me, and because I love Him.

My faithfulness and attitude play a big part in whether the Lord will delight in me—I need to trust! Barbara Johnson, author of *Fresh Elastic for Stretched-Out Moms*, reminds us that “we are in the furnace to become gold, not to melt away to nothing.” If I remain confident that I’m being refined and not be negative and complain that I’m being melted, my Lord will delight in me and deliver me. Isaiah 2:12-22; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13; Luke 20:27-40

Friday, December 6

Isaiah 3:8-15 *The Lord...stands to judge his people.* (v.13)

Somehow, I find it disconcerting when I read that even back in the 8th century BC people were deliberately taking advantage of one another, especially the suffering, imparting evil, and refusing to change attitudes and perversions. Nothing seems to have changed. When are we going to learn?

God has created our universe with a certain natural order so that we eventually receive what we've given. It's called judgment.

If we're poor disciples and unfaithful, constantly sinning, we will be punished. God is our ultimate judge. It will do absolutely no good when we are judged to say that it wasn't my responsibility or my department, or that it was someone else's fault, for something they did or didn't do.

In this portion of Isaiah, Jerusalem and Judah are falling. They've been defiant and cruel and disobedient and it's now pay-back time. The Lord confronts these leaders and pronounces His judgment—just as we will hear God's judgment on our behavior, particularly in our treatment of the suffering.

How many times do we need to be reminded that we're sent to love one another? We aren't to judge—that's specifically not in our job description. But we are to love one another—not to be taken advantage of, or not to make the needy more dependent, but to love one another. It sounds so simple, but all these centuries later, we still fall short.

Psalms 16, 17; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; Luke 20:41—21:4

Saturday, December 7

Psalms 21 "You have granted him eternal blessings" (v.6)

If you ever encounter someone who doubts the efficacy of prayer, refer him to these psalms. They start out with lots of "maybes" and then go on to relate just how the prayer dialogue works. It's really very simple: You ask, the Lord responds!

Our parish, like most, has a "Prayer Chain-gang." We swing into action whenever needed, and our rewards are great. We're careful to pray for the Lord's will, and He always answers faithfully, and sometimes with spectacular results.

Once one of our grandsons was suddenly stricken with a rare neurological disease. Yes, he had wonderful, well-trained, tops-in-their-field doctors, and the nursing care was constant and efficient and caring. But the prayers from all over God's earth that stormed heaven on his behalf were what brought the result of total, complete recovery. This young man was totally paralyzed except for movement in one eyelid, has been completely healed, has confounded the experts, and has made medical history through the power of prayer.

After thanking the Lord for this miraculous healing, we're all standing by, waiting to see what the Lord has planned for him. He has certainly been granted eternal blessings.

Isaiah 4:2-6; Psalm 20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Luke 21:5-19

by Jeanne Curran

Used with permission from the BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP

PO Box 380, Winter Park, FL 32790

www.biblereading.org