



**Worship Address**  
The Natelli Family YMCA  
3481 Campus Drive  
Ijamsville, Maryland 210754  
(next to Urbana High School)

**Sundays at 9:30am**

**Mailing Address**  
3520 Sugarloaf Parkway  
Suite F-03-58  
Frederick, Maryland 21704  
  
www.livinggraceurbana.org  
Facebook: @livinggraceurbana

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## FALL/WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

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### **The Pastor's Ponderings**

*“To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing, his humble song is quiet and near yet fills the earth with its ringing; music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness, the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.”*

*“Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn” music/text by Marty Haugen*

As a child, this time of the year appeared so magical – brightly colored lights were starting to appear on houses, holiday music filled the air, the smell of Grandma’s cooking wafting through the house. It was a happy time, a joyous season. Soon we would be singing Silent Night at the Christmas Eve service, falling asleep afterwards with the anticipation of Santa’s arrival. We awoke early on Christmas morning to shouts of happiness as wrapping paper was thrown around the room revealing our many gifts. Life was merry and bright. But now as an adult, I struggle to rekindle that joyous spirit as I trudge through the business of this season. Combined with the many worries about the state of our world, and the visible yet unquenchable need of those on the margins of society around me, I can easily become glum and have to fight my way to the cheery state that is characteristic of this season. I am sure many of you feel the same way. Amidst the many work, family, and social responsibilities, the increasing financial pressures of high inflation, an extremely negative cultural climate, and multiple wars and conflicts throughout the world, it is very difficult at times to tap into that Christmas cheer that once came so easily and readily.

But as God so often does, hope comes to me; just as I am feeling the lowest, God speaks in some form, calling me out of my self-imposed misery and into the light of heavenly embrace. For me, I find a lot of hope and comfort in the words of the Advent hymns; the songs of a coming Messiah, one who raises up the valleys, lowers the mountains, and makes straight the path are what give me hope in these times of uncertainty and anxiety. The song “Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn” is a hauntingly beautiful melody written with lyrics that cut right to the soul. Verse two is printed above, and its text has adopted a new meaning for me this Advent season. To us, to all in sorrow and fear, to a world enthralled in conflict and division, Jesus comes. God comes to all not just in the silence and calm of night, but when the storms of life are raging, the burning sun is blazing, or the winter winds blow with force. Jesus, our God made flesh, comes as a humble child like you and me, one born to parents struggling to find time, resources, and means needed to carve out a life in safety and security. Jesus is born a regular child unlike the millions of others born each day. The hymn “Once in Royal David’s City” puts it this way:

*“For He is our childhood's pattern Day by day, like us, He grew. He was little, weak, and helpless, tears and smiles, like us He knew. And He feeleth for our sadness. And He shareth in our gladness.” (verse 4; text: Cecil Francis Alexander 1818-1895)*

Jesus is one of us, he knows the feelings of anxiety, stress and worry. Jesus can identify with us about the concerns for our lives, our families, and our world. In Jesus we have a redeemer who knows our inmost feelings, for he felt them too. Jesus understands, he gets us. Jesus has *been there, done that*. There is no surprise in life that Jesus hasn't heard, seen, or experienced.

And yet Jesus comes to us with a song, one that while quiet and soft, fills the earth with its ringing. The Song Jesus brings is composed of love notes from God in heaven to us here on earth. This song is a melody that surpasses time and space, one that transcends cultures and conflicts. It is a song of redemption from this world of woe by the love of a gracious God who cares humanity, fashioned in a divine and holy image. The song Jesus sings is good news to all people. Its tune is easy to sing, and the lyrics bring peace and justice to all who sing them. The song Jesus sings is a love song from God and breaks through earthly labels, barriers, and constraints. It is music that heals with tender compassion, bringing solace to those who are harmed or hurting. A song to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving kindness. And for those who refuse to listen, the volume becomes increasing louder and unavoidable. The unconditional and unending love of God through Christ Jesus thunders out in words and deeds to shatter the shackles of hatred, violence. God's song reverberates throughout the world calling to us and to all people to live in the hope of a redeeming love made flesh in a small baby born over two-thousand years ago and who lives today as Counselor, Prince of Peace, Messiah.

It is in these lyrics that I find the hope of Christ that sustains me during these difficult times. Advent is about finding hope amidst the darkness, finding the light of Christ in a troubled world. To us, to all, Jesus comes. In sacred scripture, Jesus is found speaking to us, calling us to rest in the promised hope of God's love. Our biblical texts provide endless examples of how God loves us in the words and actions of Jesus. God's love is manifest to us each time we receive the sacraments, the bread and wine made body and blood of our Lord outpoured for us on the Cross. To us, to all, God's love through Christ Jesus comes bringing hope for a better tomorrow. To us, to all, Jesus sings God's love song for the world and we respond in refrains of service. To us and to all, that is good news.

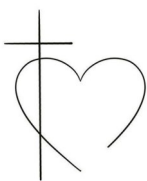
May God's peace surround you this Advent season, may the love of Christ be with you and your families this Christmas, and may the Holy Spirit grant health, safety and wellbeing in the coming year.

God's blessing to us, to all.

*The Rev. Kristofer Roberson*

*Inspired by Jesus Christ, Living Grace strives to be a welcoming community that will love you, care for you, and serve you.*

May we remember in prayer:



Dr. Chet Anderson, The Bodie family, Neil and Janell Brawley, Geoff and Jenny Buchanan, Katie Buchs, Catherine and Nick, Elva Rae Cooley, Margaret Cooper, the family of Vickie Curtis, Bill Deutermann, the family of Chris Dodrill, Pastor Robert Driver-Bishop, Hannah Fix, Joseph Gaunt, Barbara Harris, Randal Hemp, Pastor Bob and Lynn Hoats, John and Linda Hoffmann, Diane Kane, Elijah Kyle, Sheila Layton, Mychelle Lee, Meara, Aislinn and Lochlan, Bonnie Miller, Susan McClean, Dottie Moore, Steve Roth, Linda and Fill Ruegg, Matt Sileo, Becky and Scott Slater, Pastor Dave Simpson, Susie Smith, Harold Travis, Rev. Sharon Watts, the family of Erin Zielinski

Readings for December 1, 2024

### First Sunday of Advent

1st Reading Jeremiah 33:14-16  
Psalm Psalm 25:1-10  
2nd Reading 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13  
Gospel Luke 21:25-36



## Today in Scripture

O Lord, may you ordain peace for us, for indeed, all that we have done, you have done for us.

*Isaiah 26:12*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Loving God, we praise you for the new life that you have given us and the service you have called each of us to do. We are so blessed to be your chosen people, to be your servants, and to be your stewards. We pray that we will be faithful. In your name, we pray. Amen.

## CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Living Grace is looking for volunteers to assist with three ministries that are essential to Sunday Worship.

**Greeter Group**  
**Assisting Ministers**  
**Stage Crew**



You should have received an email from Pastor Kris with details about what each ministry entails as well as a link to sign up.

Here are a few FAQ's for those who are new to serving in these ministries.

## Pastor's Places

*Need to contact Pastor Kris?*

Email pastor@livinggraceurbana.org  
Phone 240-285-7932  
Instagram @revkrisroberson  
FB Kristofer Roberson

### Schedule for Dec 2-6

Mon Sermon Prep/Office Work  
LG Information Meeting—6:30pm  
Tue Pericope Bible Study—8:30am  
Leadership Planning Meeting—1pm  
Appetizers for Advent—6:30pm  
Wed Sermon Prep/Office Work  
Confirmation—7pm  
Thu Coffee & Conversation—8:30am  
Sermon Prep/Office Work  
Vestry Budget Meeting—6:30pm  
Fri Vacation

### What if I've never done this task before.

There is no need to fret. We will teach you. There are plenty of people who are already in ministry or who have previously served that are willing to help show you the way.

### What if I can't serve on my scheduled day?

No worries! Simply send out an email to the other members of your ministry and ask someone to either switch or cover for you. If you know in advance, you can make arrangements to switch with someone. We are flexible and grateful that you volunteered.

### How far in advance will I know when I am serving?

Once all volunteers have signed up, a listing of each Sunday for the 2025 year will be compiled and sent out to the ministry group. A weekly email will be sent out on Monday with reminders of who is on for that week.

# Information Meeting

Learn about the revised “*Lord’s Prayer*” text, why there was a change in language, and how it reflects our understanding of God’s love and grace.

LIVING  
GRACE

URBANA

*A Lutheran-Episcopal Ministry*



**Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>  
at 6:30pm**

*on Zoom*

Join the conversation at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88574957388?pwd=Mm84SDZKUkFHUkpDZCtJUzNCVm9EUT09>

## The Lord’s Prayer

*For the season of Advent we will be using the version below for The Lord’s Prayer.*

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.

## Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 19, 2025

Immediately following worship

Vote on the 2024 Budget  
Hear the Finance Report  
Pastor’s Report and Visioning

# Pastor's Office Hours

Pastor Kris+ is available by appointment to meet for prayer, discussion, or visitation.

**Mondays 8am-11am**

To schedule an appointment, call 240-285-7932  
or email [pastor@livinggraceurbana.org](mailto:pastor@livinggraceurbana.org)



# Coffee & Conversations

**Thursdays from 9-11am**

**Panera Bread in Urbana**  
3622 Bennett Creek Avenue

Join Pastor Kris+ and others from the Urbana community in casual conversations while enjoying a cup of coffee and perhaps a bagel.





# Appetizers for Advent

Join Pastor Kris on Tuesdays during Advent for delicious appetizers, beverages, and lively discussion.

Dec. 3rd – *What's with these Angels?*

Dec. 10th – *Who was this Mary girl?*

Dec. 17th – *Was it really a Silent Night?*

6:30pm at the

**Atlantic Grille**

5331 John Simmons Drive In Urbana

# Christmas Breakfast Church

Join us for breakfast fellowship and morning prayer.

**Sunday, December 22, 2024**

**9:30am**

**Natelli Family YMCA**



# CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

*A Candlelight Tradition*

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2024**

**AT 5:30PM**

Natelli Family YMCA  
3481 Campus Drive in Urbana

Experience the joy of Christmas through scripture and song.

# A Service of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 29, 2024

At 9:30am

Natelli Family YMCA, Urbana

**They looked up and saw a star shining  
in the east beyond them far.**

## The Epiphany

Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 9:30am

Natelli Family YMCA



*An Affirmation of God's Love for All the World!*

## The Baptism of Jesus

Sunday, January 12 at 9:30am

Natelli Family YMCA



# SERVING IN WORSHIP

## Assisting Minister    Altar Guild    Technology

Dec 1	Judi McKnight	Kuntz	Soraya Travis
Dec 8	John Jeffries	Zabroske	Katie Buchs
Dec 15	Ruth McClean	Egan	Ray Kuntz
Dec 22	Ronnie Jones	Roberson	Scarlett Roberson
Dec 24	Leah Jeffries	Kuntz	Will Barnhart

**4th Sunday Snacks—Bill & Cynthia Deutermann**

## Giving Totals

September	\$4,784.95
October	\$6198.31
November	\$5,929.30

### September Attendance

Date	On-Site	On-Line	Total
9/1/24	40	56	96
9/8/24	46	75	121
9/15/24	36	51	87
9/22/24	36	36	72
9/29/24	33	47	80
<i>Average</i>	38.2	53	91.2

### October Attendance

Date	On-Site	On-Line	Total
10/6/24	40	61	101
10/13/24	34	57	91
10/20/24	26	74	100
10/27/24	43	62	105
<i>Average</i>	35.75	63.5	99.25

### November Attendance

Date	On-Site	On-Line	Total
11/3/24	46	63	109
11/10/24	41	47	88
11/17/24	41	51	92
11/24/24	40	61	101
<i>Average</i>	42	55.5	97.5



*Save these dates!*

Monday	December 2	6:30pm	Lord's Prayer Meeting via Zoom
Tuesday	December 3	6:30pm	Appetizers for Advent
Tuesday	December 10	6:30pm	Appetizers for Advent
Monday	December 16	7:15pm	Vestry Meeting
Tuesday	December 17	6:30pm	Appetizers for Advent
Thursday	December 19	6:00pm	Worship Committee Meeting
Sunday	December 22	9:30am	Christmas Breakfast Church
Tuesday	December 24	5:30pm	Christmas Eve Worship Service
Sunday	December 29	9:30am	Service of Lessons and Carols
Sunday	January 5	9:30am	Epiphany Worship Service
Sunday	January 12	9:30am	Baptism of Jesus Sunday
Sunday	January 19	10:45am	Congregational Meeting





# Living Grace Urbana Vestry Meeting Minutes

## Monday, October 21, 2024

### **In attendance:**

Dana Burns, Kerry Davis, Robin Davis, John Jeffries, Linda Kuntz, Pr. Kris Roberson

### **Welcome/Opening Prayer by Pastor Kris**

### **Approval of the September minutes.**

John motioned to approve the September meeting minutes; Dana seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as is.

### **Worship Committee Report**

Worship met two weeks ago and brought up the idea of having more coffee/fellowship time. To make this happen, we need more people to coordinate this time. Herb & Dottie Moore and Diane ?? have volunteered to take this over – it will be on the 2nd and 4th Sunday. They will try this for 2025 to see how well it works. Starting in December we would like to do something different for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday worship celebration.

Steve Silvius has purchased and donated 30 Lutherpalian t-shirts for us to sell as a fundraiser. They are \$10 each; Pr. Kris is working on an order form to purchase them.

*Spirituality of fundraising book – Kris purchased copies for vestry committee.*

### **Begin FY25 Budget Process**

Dedicated giving accounts to offer our members.

Once these items are added as a line item they can't be changed until next year's budget.

Benevolence or budget – if we make it a line item in the budget the congregation will have to approve.

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday we will have a special offering for one of our accounts (outdoor ministry, social ministry, etc.)

Reviewed suggested list of line items to include in the FY25 budget.

The Diocese has decided to discontinue using Faith X, so we will no longer have that \$8,000 payment.

Plan to discuss finances much more moving forward. Have a quarterly discussion among the vestry next year to evaluate

Will be setting dollar amounts next month for the FY25 budget (Kris will send out a formula for deciding benevolence).

This year's business meeting will be different than in past years. The vestry will be planning and putting together what we want to share with the congregation so there is transparency.

**Kris closed the meeting with prayer.**

**Next meeting:** Monday November 18th at 7:15pm

# Living Grace Urbana Vestry Meeting Minutes

## Monday, November 18, 2024

### **In attendance:**

Joe Bentzen, Jay Boggs, Dana Burns, Kerry Davis, Robin Davis, Linda Kuntz, Pr. Kris Roberson, Jazmin Simms

### **Welcome/Opening Prayer by Pastor Kris**

### **FY25 Budget Discussion**

Reviewed budget spreadsheet with breakdown of yearly costs.

Jay shared that we can obtain Microsoft 365 for free instead of the yearly payment of \$99 (will find out more about this before the end of the year).

It was decided to cancel our zoom subscription and using Google Meeting moving forward to save \$190/year.

Discussed looking into what our insurance covers and if we can save on that premium.

According to the church constitution, we must send a hard copy of the proposed budget to all congregation members at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting (scheduled for January 19). Will get them in the mail the week of Christmas.

Joe shared a statement of activity from January 2024 to now (forecasting the last two months of 2024), as well as an estimate for the 2025 budget. Compared our forecasted budget for 2024 with actual budget totals.

Jay mentioned that a common practice in the Episcopal church for sustaining members - they can pledge a monthly offering commitment for **X** number of years.

Kris suggested that finance/budget conversations should not be limited to once a year.

Discussed the special monthly offering to raise funds for various ministries. We could hold a silent auction for another way to raise funds for special programs.

Jay talked about how to use ministry accounts – for money coming in and disbursements (i.e., The Ranch, Appetizers for Advent, etc.)

Discussed compensation budget and what COLA increases are recommended from the Diocese and/or Synod (Jay mentioned that 3% has been the average).

Our goal for next year is to have the annual meeting in November (not January) to approve the budget before the end of the year.

Reviewed all line items for 2025 budget.

**Kris closed the meeting with prayer.**

**Next meeting:** Monday December 13th at 7:15pm