# AMAZING GRACE

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, 607 S. Main St., Jackson Center, Ohio 45334 <a href="https://www.jcgracelutheran.org">www.jcgracelutheran.org</a>, jcgracelutheran@outlook.com, 937-596-6516

## "We Need Light"

There it was—the true Light [the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light] which, coming into the world, enlightens everyone. John 1:9 Amplified Bible

In the Church year, the months of January and February in 2025 are the Season of Epiphany. It is the season in the Church year in which our lectionary Sunday readings point each of us to the light and revelation of who Jesus is as Savior, Lord, King, Healer, Provider. It is also the time of the calendar year in which we move toward the vernal equinox and the daylight grows longer each day minute by minute. It is not so noticeable from one day to the next, but it is noticeable over a week and a month.

The months of winter with its shorter days and longer nights of darkness can lead many to depression or despair, a sense of hopelessness or complaining. The world can feel like a dark place. However, the Light of Christ, shines in that darkness offering you hope since it is Jesus, the true light that holds your future. Through your immersion in the Bible readings of Epiphany, week after week, Sunday after Sunday, and day after day in your personal Bible reading plan, the Word of the Lord God is working on you, strengthening you in faith and your reliance on Jesus your Lord. Through God's Word, the Holy Spirit enlightens you in how the Lord is working in your life day after day.

Living in darkness and hopeless despair is what many people in eastern Europe experienced in the past. I share with you a portion of the SON ministries newsletter. The Spiritual Orphans Network (SON) of Christians has dedicated their work and service to engage, reclaim, and transform the lives of the people in eastern Europe who had been robbed of the right to worship God. As Christians in the United States, we give thanks for our ability to worship Jesus Christ in freedom and without fear. For many Christians around the world, this cannot be said. Imagine over four generations robbed of the right to worship God — where gathering in His name was met with imprisonment or death. Imagine living in a culture where the Gospel was silenced, leaving behind a palpable hopelessness. Even decades after the oppression ended, this is their reality. But we are reminded of Immanuel, Jesus Christ who is with us and His light pierces through even the darkest wilderness. Today because of the ministry of SON, many are coming to know the hope and light of Jesus Christ. They are beginning to know that they have a bright future. They are no longer living in spiritual darkness. Jesus Christ is their Light.

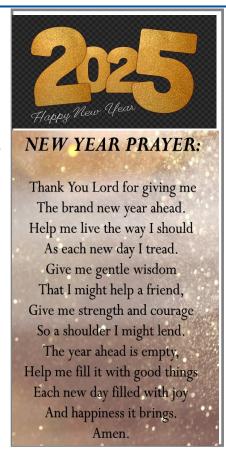
But Jesus Christ is not only their Light but yours also. The good news of Jesus, the Light of the World, is that He shines in the dark places of each life of each person to offer forgiveness, reconciliation, and a bright hope.

See You in Worship, Pastors Bert and Shelly

We give thanks for you remembering you in our prayers.

Many, many thanks for your kindness to us with your Christmas greetings and the gift from Grace.

The Lord has truly showered blessings upon blessings to us here in our ministry with you. Pastors Bert and Shelly



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Deadline for the next newsletter is January 24

## Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Church Administrative Council Minutes December 8, 2024

John Pence, called the December 8, 2024, meeting to order with the following CAC members present: Scott Klopfenstein, Bert Regula, Garrett Serr, Pastor Bert, Pastor Shelly, Matt Kohler, Kent Leininger, Trent Platfoot, and Tanya Hinegardner. Also, Andrea Kirtley, who was elected as a 2025 CAC member joined us.

Pastor Shelly had the devotion. How many licks does it take to get to the center of a tootsie pop? (3) A lot of us are running during this season. What is a disciple of Jesus? What do we need from the Holy Spirit to be a better disciple? What do you need from your pastor to be a better disciple? Faith formation is a slow on-going process of the Holy Spirit and Jesus is at the very center.

Pastor Shelly opened the meeting with prayer.

Secretary's report was approved as read.

Bert Regula, presented the treasurer's report for December 2024. Total receipts for November were \$21,102.76 and expenses were \$16,518.09. The ending balance on 11/30/2024 was \$62,878.33. The ending balance of the savings account was \$104,838.50. The Mutual Fund balance as of 11/30/2024 was \$43,546.01. November was a good month. Garrett Serr moved and Kent Leininger seconded the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

## \*Pastor's Report for the month of December 2024

### **Pastoral Visitation for November 2024**

Home and Office Visits	12
Ministry Meetings	20
Hospital Visits	1
Bereavement Visits	1

We have also participated in a variety of other parish and community interactions which include phone calls, emails, texts, and other activities.

#### **Informational Updates**

- Completed 6-week lay preaching class through Saint Paul Seminary with 5 Grace members, October 20-December 5, 2024
- Continuing an eight-month Life-to-Life discipleship group that is joining Jesus on His Mission.
- Pastor Bert attended NALC mission district dean's meeting in Dallas, TX November 11-13.
- Young Adult Leaders YALs ages 18-30 initiated a ministry group November 17 with 13 participants for study, service, and fellowship.
- Participated in the JC community Thanksgiving Eve worship

- service at the JC Methodist Church, November 27 at 7:00 pm.
- Received new members into the fellowship of Grace Lutheran Church, by baptism Nathan Cummins and Jason Helton, Jr. and by affirmation of faith Jim Kirtley and Holly Landreth, December 1.
- Catechism youth and families decorated the church for Advent and Christmas December 1. A big thank you to the Catechism youth and families, Susan Ware, and Cheryl Burch.
- Youth presenting Live Nativity at the JC Village Christmas, December 8 at 5:30 pm.
- The steering committee for LifeWise Academy (release time religious education program in the school) for Jackson Center schools hired a director – Aimee Tully; need 1 board member from Grace.
- Seeking more people for the Lay Witness Committee to visit homebound.

## **NALC Informational Update**

- NALC Clergy Retreat-January 27-30, 2025, San Antonio, Texas. Pastor Shelly will be a breakout presenter on "Discerning a Pastoral Call".
- Thank you from NALC Disaster Response.

#### Vacation

December 26 – January 1 on-call pastor for pastoral emergencies: TBD. Fritz Serr to lead worship services at 8:00 and 10:30 am December 29, 2024.

## **Action Item**

Designation of housing allowance for 2025. The pastors are asking for \$24,000 in 2025. Scott Klopfenstein moved and Kent Leininger seconded the \$24,000 in 2025 for the pastors housing allowance. Motion carried.

#### \*Old Business

- Fresh Eyes update. No update.
- Match day update. We have exceeded the amount. The Endowment Committee will meet after January 9.
- Website update. No update.

#### \*New Business

- Community Faith Night Bank Account. The Audit Committee recommended that they go through our 501c3 and start an account. Bert Regula moved and Matt Kohler seconded that the Community Faith Night can run their account through our 501c3. Motion carried.
- 2025 Budget Review.
- Housing Allowance for Pastors. It was approved above.
- Wedding Policy Booklet Update. Trent Platfoot moved and Bert Regula seconded approving the Wedding Policy Booklet Update. Motion carried.
- Staff Christmas Gifts. Scott Klopfenstein moved and Kent Leininger seconded the recommendation of the staff Christmas gifts. Motion carried.
- This Sunday, Nativity Scene at JC Village Christmas at

School 5:30 pm

- January 11, 2025 CAC Retreat. We will think about doing our own CAC Retreat.
- December 26-January 1, 2025 Pastors Vacation.

## **Committee Reports:**

Choice: Tanya Hinegardner – Thrivent Choice Fund Meeting November 13, 2024. The minutes were read from the meeting on August 13, 2024, and approved by Traci Myers and Jodi Dickman. The treasurer's report was read and as follows: \$700.00 left to spend in 2024. \$167.00 in deposits. \$1,490.00 to spend in 2025 so far. We agreed to donate \$350.00 for Quake, \$200.00 for Luther League to help with their Christmas. Talked about the need for another member and about moving some of the money to a money market checking account.

**Education:** John Pence & Marcia Davis – No report received. **Endowment:** Matt Kohler – Match day is complete. We won't have the final results until January 9 but we're confident we hit the \$5,000 to get the match. Endowment committee won't meet until after the ninth to make recommendations on how to divide the money

Friendship: Marcia Davis – No report received.

Lay/Witness: Bert Regula – No report. Fritz & Deb Serr and

Karen Hatfield are joining the committee.

Youth: Garrett Serr – Luther League – 12/1 - held a breakfast after the Early Service – donations will be going to families and seniors in need for Christmas. 12/4 – 6 Luther League members went Christmas Caroling around Jackson Center. 12/8 – Members and Advisors will be going Christmas shopping for the families and seniors in need mentioned above. Gospel Gang – Participated in Christmas Caroling with the Luther League. Confirmands, parents, and other adult Church members – visited approximately 30 homes between all 5 groups. In addition to caroling, providing gift bags that included a wooden cross ornament, an invitation to worship at Grace, as well as the dates and times of our Christmas Services, Sunday worship times, Gospel Gang schedule, and Vacation Bible School. After caroling, all the kids came back to the Church for fellowship with cookies and hot chocolate.

Worship: Kent Leininger – No report received

**Mission:** Scott Klopfenstein – No report received. They have applied for more grants.

**Property & Trustee:** Scott Klopfenstein, Trent Platfoot, & John Pence – Updated us on the work that was done on the parsonage and church. We have not received an invoice for the church yet. An approximate amount for the expenses - \$92,800.00.

\*Any other business before adjourning?

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be held in January of 2025.

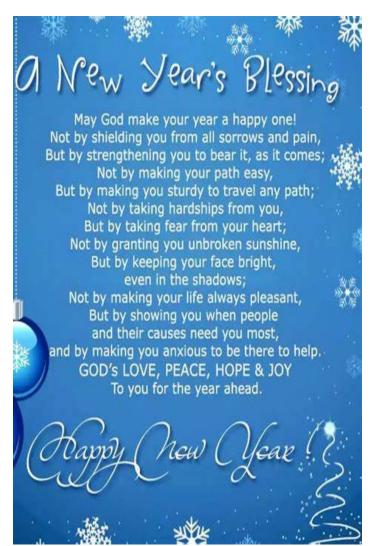
Respectfully submitted by, Tanya Hinegardner, Sec.

## Catechism Class



#### Catechism Connection

The Lord God makes us members of His Church through the power of Baptism. He washes us clean from sin, forgives sins and gives eternal life. Continuing on Wednesdays in January, our catechism youth will be studying God's gift of Baptism into the life of Jesus Christ. We meet 6:15 – 7:45 pm each Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall. Sundays' studies this school year focus on "apologetics." Which means why do we believe what we believe as Christians. Thanks to Lori Wiswell, Greg Woolley, Bonnie Kaufman, and Pastor Shelly for their connections with our 7th and 8th grade youth. THANK YOU to all the catechism families who will undecorate the church and put away all the Christmas and Advent decorations on Sunday, January 5 at 2:00 pm.



## **Upcoming Events**

Friday, January 3rd-5th: Youth Quake Retreat.

Sunday, January 5: Catechism families undecorate the Church.

Sunday, January 5: Luther League Breakfast.

Wednesday, January 8: Gospel Gang Meeting.

Wednesday, January 15: Mission Committee Meeting.

Sunday, January 19: Lay Witness Meeting.
Sunday, January 19: Mission Breakfast.

Sunday, January 19: Congregational Meeting.

Monday, January 20: Men's Group Meeting.

Monday, January 27-30: NALC Convocation San Antonio, TX.



We are in need of Deacons for our Grace worship

So, what is a Deacon, you ask? A deacon is a server during worship. Here at Grace Lutheran, a Deacon assists with serving Holy Communion, receiving the offering,

counting the offering after worship, assisting the worshipers when needed, assisting with Baptism

Sundays at 8:00 and 10:30 am and other special worship times throughout the year

Contact Chris Stengel 8:00 am or Greg Woolley 10:30 am if you will serve as a deacon as needed.

Training is available.







# Grace at Worship ...



Feast of the Epiphany

The word Epiphany refers to a "manifestation" or "appearance" of God. Throughout this season of the Church year, we hear many stories of how Jesus manifested the power of God in his earthly ministry, teaching with authority, performing miracles, casting out demons, and healing diseases. We celebrate this Season of Light by giving glory to Jesus Christ, the True Light who has come into the world.

Worship Servants for Sundays in January 2025						
	Second Sunday of Christmas January 5	Feast of the Epiphany January 12	Second Sunday after the Epiphany January 19	Third Sunday after the Epiphany January 26		
Lessons	1 Kings 3:4-15; Ps 119:97- 104; Ephesians 1:3-14; Luke 2:40-52	Isaiah 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-11; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12	Isaiah 62:1-5; Ps 128; 1 Corinth. 12:1-11; John 2:1-11	Nehem. 8:1-3,5-6,8-10; Ps 19:7-14; 1 Corin. 12:12-31a; Luke 4:16-30		
	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM		
Organists	Cheryl Burch	Nancy McName	Cheryl Burch	Nancy McName		
Acolytes	Archer Copeland	Claire Morris	Julia Burch	Archer Copeland		
Crucifers	Archer Copeland	Claire Morris	Julia Burch	Archer Copeland		
Lay Readers	Fritz Serr	Aaron Klopfenstein	Linda Jenkins	Rick Russell		
A/V	None	ТВА	None	ТВА		
	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM		
Acolytes	Kaydree Withrow	Lake Woolley	Braxton Roberts	Bryson Scott		
Lay Readers	April Platfoot	Matt Kohler	Greg Woolley	Jen Woolley		
Communion Preparation	8:00 AM	10:30 AM	8:00 AM	10:30 AM		
A/V	ТВА	TBA	ТВА	TBA		
Song Leaders	Greg Woolley Krista Withrow	ТВА	ТВА	ТВА		

## Women of the Church

## Circle 1

Circle one met at Mama J's Pizza in Jackson Center for our annual Christmas luncheon. Eleven members and Pastor Bert enjoyed our fellowship and meal together. Karen shared a reading "The Unexpected Gift of Christmas" and led us in prayer to begin our meal.

After our meal, we traveled to Judy Sampson's beautiful house for warm drinks and desserts. Our treasury balance is \$182.40. We drew our Secret Sisters for 2025. Paula shared a reading and gift for all to celebrate Christmas. Other members also shared with our fellow circle members. Susan played a reverse bingo game which was enjoyed by all.

Our next meeting is Thursday, January 2 at the church. Secretary, Barb Wical

## **WOC January Collections**

Please remember to save your greeting cards for the WOC January collection. Linda Jenkins is the chairperson for this project. Please put in the Church vestibule baskets, collection will take place the whole month of January.

## Men's Ministry

We met on December 16th. Opened the meeting with prayer by Dennis Weaver. Completed Session 2 which was about the things that distract us from being the spiritual leaders of our families. It also gave us some ideas about how to overcome our distractions so that we would be better able to lead our families. We closed this session with the prayer included in the material and started Session 3, "Commitment" with its opening prayer. Finding the strength and energy to lead our families each day is tough! We viewed the video from this session, which is about commitment to our wives and families. Apostle Paul gives us a wonderful illustration, that the best marriages are modeled after Christ and His bride, The Church. We will meet on January 20, 2025 at 7:00PM to continue this topic. The meeting was closed with prayer by Pastor Bert.

Submitted by: Dennis Weaver

## Thank you's

Friends at Grace Lutheran, Thank you so much for your assistance cooking turkeys, baking pies or helping to serve or deliver meals to our 342 guests at the 10<sup>th</sup> Community Thanksgiving Dinner. What a blessing it is to live in such a caring community serving others. Happy Thanksgiving to you all. Wanda Wildermuth

Thank you for all your thoughts and prayers given to us at this difficult time. A special thank you to Pastor Shelly for the beautiful service for Phyllis and the women of the church for the delicious meal. We feel very blessed to be a part of this wonderful church. The Zorn Family

Thank you very much for all of the Christmas cards and gifts. I greatly appreciate them. Thank you for your generous Christmas gift of money. I am blessed and thankful to have all of you as my Church family. Blessings to all of you!

Nikki Tontrup

## **Announcements**

Adult Sunday Morning Sunday School at 9:15
Did you know that Christmas and Epiphany were foretold in the
Old Testament? Christmas in Isaiah The advent of Christ was
prophesied in the Old Testament beginning with the words to
Adam in Genesis 3:15. The blessed promise is repeated throughout the Old Testament, and one of these choice prophets is Isaiah. We begin a series based on four texts from Isaiah entitled
"Christmas in Isaiah." The four texts are Isaiah 7:14, the prophecy
of the virgin birth of Christ, Isaiah 9:1-7, the promise of the great
light for a dark world, Isaiah 11:1-10, the promise of peace on
earth, and Isaiah 53:1-6, the picture of the Messiah from the manger to the cross. All these texts are of the promised Savior quoted
in the New Testament as the fulfillment of the prophecy of the
coming Savior.

Joining Jesus on His Mission – An Adventure for Your Life "Will alter the way you see your life as a follower of Jesus and take you beyond living your life for Jesus to living life with Jesus. Simple, powerful, and applicable insights show you how to be on mission and recognize where Jesus is already at work." Greg Finke

This once-a-month group will meet again on Sunday, January 12th at 3:30 pm at Grace Lutheran. Take the next step in your spiritual journey with Jesus.

Calling All Young Adults Ages 18-30 You and your friends are gathering Sunday, January 12 at 9:15 am in the Fellowship Hall (north end). Purpose: young adults doing life together as followers of Jesus. Our focus topic will be Relationships – Yours with God and Your Friends.

All Catechism students and parents will be undecorating the Church at 2:00 pm on Sunday, January 5th. All are asked to help participate.

The Backpack program is asking for donations for the program. They are asking for fruit cups, applesauce cups, pudding cups and peanut butter cups, small individual boxes of cereal, & small individual microwave meal cups. There is a labeled box in the south vestibule for your donations.

CHICKEN FRY Jackson Center American Legion Chicken Fry, January 4th from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. 627 East College Street. 1/2 chicken, coleslaw, french fries, and roll \$ 10.00. Presale tickets available at J. C. Village office as well as the J.C. Pro Hwd. Also available the day of the fry at the legion. Drive thru only. Thank you for supporting our veterans.



## **Immediate Need of Prayers:**

Brent Kerns, Todd Shroyer, Tom Taylor, Cindy Davis, Hayden LeVan, Ron & Linda Leininger, Cori Hughes, Reed Roloff, Mickie McGowan, Deb Wright, Richard & Beth Bailey, Michele Rodreguez.

## Prayers for Military:

Jay Clark, Kaiden Hinegardner, Caden Paavola

## **Prayers for Long-Term Situations:**

Doris Jean Frieders, Dwight Johnson, Mindy Steinbrunner, Autumn Regula, Lisa Williams, Paige Schneider, Logan Heath, Gary & Lee Bankert, Hayes Homan, Penny Borchers, Chris Burch, Diana Reese, Dick Wildermuth, Pat Woolley

#### Parish Statistic: December 2024

### **Deaths**

- Victoria Lynn Byrd joined her Father in Heaven on December 5, 2024.
- Phyllis Jeanette Zorn joined her Father in Heaven on December 14, 2024.
- Timothy Terry Herndon joined his Father in Heaven on December 21, 2024.

### **Baptisms**

- ◆ Baptism of Jason Allan Helton Jr. on December 1, 2024.
- Baptism of Nathan Joseph Cummins on December 1, 2024.

## **Welcome New Members to Grace**

Nathan Joseph Cummins December 1, 2024
Jason Allan Helton Jr. December 1, 2024
Holly Elizabeth Landreth December 1, 2024
James Matthew Kirtley December 1, 2024



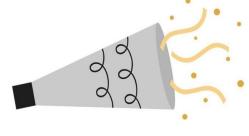
# Official Announcement Quarterly Congregational Meeting 9:15 AM Sunday, January 19, 2025

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church will hold the quarterly congregational meeting beginning at 9:15 am Sunday, January 19, 2025.

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!









W I H V V A X R N R Z G O A L S A Z Y F G R B K G Z T Y Z I Z Z J Q C O M P X B M D M B T B K T P X N S L T K C X X W T M I Q C R A E Y W E N O Z J K S K R N H L P D M V X P N Z J L O V Z V Y D Z Q G G P E X A X K O Q N C O U N T D O W N I F V Z N D S S M B P C Y W V F T W F B N T R S P S P A R K L E R S H Q T O J A D P J O L B Y V M S Y L N N N R C A F L I Y L P E N S K R O W E R I F Z N Y C L M X J K E B D P P G W B K N J U G J W O J W I S C F S F L D B R G P A J E X A O K Q S C A O W D J R M A W R T J H Q H N C F R Q K J N W P A R T Y P O P P E R S O K E P A U J F G X M I Z X R T S X K Q L V E N R I Y E E B G O Q Y I U P H K Y C Y H I S I R E O T J N O I T U L O S E R





Countdown Confetti Midnight Balloons

MQGQX

Celebration
Fireworks
January
Happy

YF

New Year Clock Cheers Goals

SE

HRRAYRYI

Party Poppers Noisemaker Resolution Sparklers









SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> New Year's Day Church Office Closed	2 1:30 pm Circle 1 5:30 pm Praise Band 8:00 pm Dartball Wapak UCC @ Jackson South	Youth Quake Retreat 3rd-5th 4:00 pm-6:00 pm Tim Hendon Viewing	4 11:00 am Tim Herndon Funeral
				Emerson Ludwig	Jim & Andrea Kirtley*	
5 2nd. Sunday of Christmas 8:00 am Worship w/ Communion 9:00 am LL Breakfast 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 2:00 pm Undecorate	6 7:00 pm Circle 2	7	8 6:15 pm-7:30 pm Gospel Gang 6:15 pm-7:45 pm Catechism 7:00 pm Choir Practice	9 5:30 pm Praise Band 8:00 pm Dartball Jackson South @ Anna	10	11
Church 7:00 pm Creative Clovers 4-H	Jason Platfoot Tucker Downing Tom & Barb Elsass*		Shelby Fite	Kay Frieders Elsa Stengel		
12 Feast of Epiphany 8:00 am Worship w/ Choir 9:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion 12:00 pm CAC Meeting 6:30 pm Pro. Live . 4-H	13	14	15 6:00 pm Mission Comm. Meeting 6:15 pm-7:45 pm Catechism	16 5:30 pm Praise Band 8:00 pm Dartball Botkins @ Jackson South	17	18
0.30 pm 1 10. Elve . 4-11	Ellen Brenner	Trevor Ludwig Rocco Shuff Dave Jensvold		Jodi Dickman Nate Cummins		
19 2nd Sunday after Epiphany 8:00 am Worship w/ Communion 9:00 am Mission B-fast 9:15 am Cong. Meeting 9:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	20 7:00 pm Men's Group	<b>21</b> 7:00 pm Circle 3	22 6:15 pm-7:45 pm Catechism 7:00 pm Choir Practice	5:30 pm Praise Band 8:00 pm Dartball Jackson South @ Moulton	24	25
11:30 am Lay Witness Meeting			Doug Burch	Jennifer Byrd Barb Weaver	Gabrielle Woolley Grace Woolley Jacob Frieders	
26 3rd Sunday after Epiphany 8:00 am Worship w/ Choir 9:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	27 10:00 am– 3:00 pm FISH NALC Convocation 27-30	28	29 6:15 pm-7:45 pm Catechism	30 5:30 pm Praise Band 8:00 pm Dartball Clay Twp. @ Jackson South	31	
Marlene Regula Jodi Rowles	Hilde VanDyke	Hershel Wright	Ann Langenkamp Rudy Ruppert Rudy & Jill Ruppert*	Lake Woolley Carolyn Jensvold	Dianne Ware	

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## The Mission of Grace...

**G**lorify God

Reach Out To The Unchurched

Accept And Share God's Love

Come Together In His Name

Equip People to Reach Christlike Maturity

# January, 2025



# Grace on-line

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## **Amazing Grace**

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Do Not Delay - Dated Material Enclosed

