

MAY 2023 • VOLUME 22, NO. 5

I do, and I ask God to help and guide me

On these Sundays after Easter, we have been beginning worship with a word of thanks, a thanksgiving for baptism. We give thanks for God's word, the water, and the promise and claim that we are all beloved children of God.

Last month, a few of our children met for First Communion class, and we gathered around the baptismal font to dip a finger in the water and trace the sign of the cross on our foreheads to remember our baptism. I invite you to do the same each time you enter the sanctuary.

And this month, we will witness our confirmands as they "say yes to their baptism." At the affirmation of baptism (confirmation) service, these children of God will say yes to God's promises that were proclaimed in baptism, and they will now communicate their intent to continue in God's covenant.

"Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:
to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?
I do, and I ask God to help and guide me."

-ELW, page 236

And then you will be invited to respond, and likewise, publicly promise your support for these siblings in Christ and pray for them in their lives in Christ:

"We do, and we ask God to help and guide us."

I invite you to live into this promise as often as you can, for you are invited to support and pray for everyone, all of the newly baptized, all who have affirmed their baptism, all of God's creation near and far.

Consider these commitments and tend to your own lives of faith. In the next month that is filled with changing seasons and routines—how will you be living among God's faithful people? How will you dedicate time and space to hear God's word and receive Holy Communion? How will you share the good news in what you say and what you do? How will you serve all people, follow Jesus' example, and be a participant and advocate for justice and peace?

Whether you consider these commitments even once in the month ahead, weekly, or daily—remember you are not called to this life of faith on your own. Look around, phone a friend, invite someone to journey with you—and rely on our God who promises to help and guide you, too.

May you be renewed in the promises of baptism, nourished in the meal we share, and equipped for faithful living. May God's love surround you, dear beloved of God, now and always.

Peace,
Pastor Amanda

Prayers

Please lift up these petitions in your prayers—To become a praying member of the Friends in Prayer, please submit name and e-mail address to dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org.

World: Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, churchwide staff & their families, Bishop Stacie Fidler, synod staff & their families, those serving in military conflicts, Arusha Town Lutheran Parish in Tanzania (our companion parish)

Woodstock: Pastor Amanda Bergstrom & her family; Grace Staff; Grace Council

Health Concerns: Charlie Bell (friend of Jamielynn Wedoff), Nancy Brown, Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Jim Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Joe Evanoff, Lucille Fergen (mother of Karen Hansen), Barbara Gehrke, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tom Goggin, Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Leonard Haulotte (brother of Laura Boal), Gloria Holy, Denise Hoover, Nicholas Karasch (nephew of Jamielynn Wedoff), Steve Kosmen (loved one of the

Koehn family), Tiffany Kurth (niece of Sue & Al Beckman), Amanda McNally (grandniece of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Donald Miller (brother of Mark Miller), Kem Moran (friend of Barb Aavang), Linda Nogan (sister of Sheila Readel), Gloria Ogle, Georgia Petersdorf (sister-in-law of Gladys Renner), Pat Peterson, Dorothy Potoczky, Ila Randolph, Barbara Readel, Sheila Readel, Jayne Reicher (great niece of Barb & Wayne Japp), Herb & Bev Renner (brother & sister-in-law of Ken & Gladys Renner), Nick Resek (son of Tammy Resek-Goggin), Jessie & Sue Robertson (friends of Ron, Mary & Kimberly Koehn), Diane Rouse (cousin of Lisa Washkowiak), Nathan Ruffino, Nicholas Ruffino, Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), Nathaniel Shipp (family friend of Brian Meyers), Hollis Shutt, Ann Sinnett (friend of Shirley Berna), Kathy Stone, Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahon), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Bev Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Nick Wedoff, Caitlin Wilcox (niece of Anne Johnson)

Sorrow: Judie Kunzie, Dale Michael Stenoien (son of Borgia Stenoien)

Prayer Requests

If you wish to add a prayer request for the newsletter, please call the church office at: **815-338-0554**.

Your prayer concern will run for one month and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* email may be submitted by telephone to the church office or via email to grace@gracewoodstock.org.

Due to confidentiality laws, hospitals no longer notify churches or pastors when a member is hospitalized.

If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or is admitted to the hospital, please call the church **(815-338-0554)**.

Find us on Facebook



You are welcome to join Grace Lutheran Church's Facebook group for news and ministry opportunities.

You will be directed to the site via this QR code.

Grounds Cleanup

Please join us Saturday, May 13 from 8 a.m. to noon for our Spring Grounds Cleanup. We will need help with pulling weeds, raking, or completing other sprucing-up projects. The rain date will be May 20 from 8 a.m. to noon. Thank you in advance for your help! See you there.

Current Openings

Job descriptions have been posted and applications are requested for the following part-time positions:

1. **Director of Youth Education;** and
2. **Director of Worship & Music**

We invite you to encourage interested candidates to submit a cover letter and resume; job descriptions are posted on the front page of the website until positions are filled.

Kitchen

Do you enjoy cooking and hosting meals? Are you already or would you be willing to become a Certified Food Safe Manager and support the use of Grace's kitchen? If so, please call the church office **(815-338-0554)**.

GRACE FOR TODAY—The deadline for the **June 2023** newsletter is **May 15**. Please send articles to Kari Gippert at kgippert@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Call the office at **815-338-0554**.

Worship this May

Alleluia! Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia! In worship this May, we continue to celebrate Jesus' resurrection as we journey through the Easter season. On May 7, our eighth grade confirmands will affirm their baptism; on May 14, we'll recognize high school graduates, and then conclude the month with Pentecost Sunday.

We gather together for worship on Sundays **9:00 a.m.** in the sanctuary, via [YouTube livestream](#), or the posted worship videos on our website.

Worship Volunteers. During Holy Week we had more than 82 people volunteer for a role in worship! Thank you!!

Each Sunday, in addition to staff support for weekly worship, we gather for worship alongside the hospitality, generosity, and talents of the following volunteers: 1 or more A/V technicians, 2 greeters, 3 ushers, 1 to 3 acolytes, 1 reader, 1 children's sermon presenter, 2 to 5 communion assistants, an altar guild team, and musicians.

We'd love for you to share your time and gifts in supports of our worship life. If you have questions about how you might participate, please ask people listed below, or call the office at **815-338-0554** if you'd like assistance signing up for an opening.

- Could you consider serving as an [Usher](#), [Greeter](#), [Reader](#), or [Communion Assistant](#), once a month or every other month? If you have questions about volunteering as an Usher, Greeter, Reader or Communion Assistant, please contact Fay Wilson at faymwlsn@yahoo.com;
- Or would you be willing to learn more about joining the A/V team? There are currently three people who facilitate worship being audible in the sanctuary and accessible via livestream. If interested, please contact Bill Nattress at bill.nattress@gmail.com.
- The altar guild teams are expanding and welcoming new volunteers to join the rotation. To learn more, please contact Karen Reinhard at kereinhard@yahoo.com.
- Our choirs and music groups continue to gather and welcome new musicians and singers. If interested in rehearsal dates, contact Jan at shelty2@sbcglobal.net, Carrie at bcfilet@att.net, Terry at taavang@yahoo.com, Tammy at baier5@comcast.net, or Jon at jon.bergstrom2@hotmail.com.

Deacon Judy Rooney's Grief Support Group continues this month on Tuesdays, May 9 and 23 at 1 p.m. in the Parlor. These two dates conclude a four-week session that began in April.

Faith-based, the group offers biblical insights on grief, as well as an education about the many aspects of the grieving process. Time will be given to reflect and share or just to listen.

Contact the church office at **815-338-0554** to participate, or drop in.

If this time does not fit into your schedule, but you are interested in a grief support group, let the church office know your availability for a possible future group.



Pinochle

Pinochle continues in May and meets on the first and third Wednesday afternoons (May 3 and 17) at 1 p.m. in Room 101.

On May 9, play at 6:30 p.m. in Room 101. Enter the lower level. Beginners are welcome! For more details, contact **Sally Sheahan** at **314-910-0541**.

Adult Book Club Sunday School

This month after church, the Adult Book Club Sunday School meets in the Parlor at 10 a.m. on Sundays.

The club will read and discuss "Finding God in the Story of Amazing Grace," written by Kurt Bruner and Jim Ware.

This book tells the story of the origins of the song "Amazing Grace" through two men—William Wilberforce (an abolitionist) and John Newton (a captain of a slave ship

and the author of the song).

All are welcome to attend. Club participants will learn about the many ways we can be transformed by God's grace.

Their reading of this will end on May 21, when a celebration with brunch and a vote on the next book to read takes place. **Sally Sheahan** can be contacted at **314-910-0541** for questions.

Getting to Know Our New Members



Metze Family

Ann was raised Catholic, while John grew up non-denominational Christian. Once both visited Grace, they said “we feel at home in this church as it is a mix of both of our faiths.” John is a baseball fan, and Ann loves cooking, sewing, and shopping. Daughter Faith plays the violin and son Robert takes after dad, loving baseball, as well as video games. They currently live in Woodstock. Welcome Metze Family!



Thomas Family

This family has seven generations of Thomas' in Woodstock dating back to 1840. You will see them outdoors either camping, swimming, or building fires in a fire pit. Andrew is a woodworker, while Tanya works for District 200 and in her spare time plays in a billiards league. Son Kendrick (12), daughter Norah (9), and daughter Madeline (7) participate in many activities, including football, baseball, boy scouts, dance, choir, softball, basketball, and karate. Welcome Thomas Family!



Krause & Hyde Families

Carol Hyde was baptized, confirmed, and married in Grace Lutheran Church. Carol's granddaughter, Emma Krause, expressed interest in being baptized. This led to the renewed interest and evolved toward Carol, Emma, and Melissa Krause (Carol's daughter and Emma's mother) becoming members. All three live in Woodstock. Nature enthusiasts, they're passionate for animals and enjoy fishing and hiking. Welcome Krause and Hyde families!



Bruce Rosborough

An Illinois native, Bruce lived in 14 states during his lifetime. He returned to Illinois in October 2022, residing in Woodstock. You will find Bruce on the links as golf is his favorite activity. He also enjoys hiking, reading, playing cards, and bird watching. Welcome, Bruce!

YSJ—High School Youth “Youth Standing with Jesus”

FUN OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY PUTTING YOUR FAITH IN ACTION!

High School Families Please check your INBOX for YSJ updates via email ... These updates will include event info., sign-up links, and more. Also, follow Grace Lutheran Church on Facebook for announcements and to see what YSJ is up to!

Wednesday Drop-In

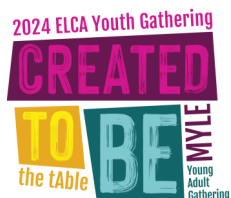
Nights - YSJ meets

EVERY 2 WEEKS for pizza, fun connection, meaningful conversation, activities, service planning, and more! (No RSVP necessary and you can even bring a friend!) **YSJ Welcomes all high schoolers ... this is YOUR**

SPACE! Join the fun from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. End-of-School-Year and summer drop-in dates: May 3, 17,

31; June 14, 28; July 12, 26 and Aug. 9.

HIGH SCHOOL and CURRENT 8th GRADE STUDENTS. SAVE THE DATES!!! The ELCA Youth Gathering will take place in NEW ORLEANS July 15-21, 2024, and we want you to attend this incredible experience!



*****PARENT & HIGH SCHOOLER MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, AT 7:30 P.M.*****

This is a great time to get info about the ELCA youth event and ask questions.

Contact Kirsten Green at **815-236-6904** or at stylin1020@gmail.com, with any questions.

Your YSJ Co-Leaders are Al Wilson, Gretchen Hutchens, and Kirsten Green.

Summer Camp Scholarship

We would love for families with elementary age children to consider summer camp as a part of their faith formation. Sunday school families have received information about financial support for registration fees, and how to learn more regarding two local ELCA camps, [Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center](#) in Oregon, IL and [Lutherdale](#) in Elkhorn, Wis. If you have questions about summer camp, or about this new camp scholarship opportunity, please contact Pastor Amanda. See you soon!

Grace Scholarship Funds

The Endowment Committee at Grace Lutheran Church is responsible for administering the Readel Memorial Scholarship Fund and Allen Memorial Scholarship Fund. Both of these scholarships are for post high school education.

The Readel Memorial Scholarship Fund is available to students pursuing a full-time Christian vocation or related areas. The Allen Memorial Scholarship is for students attending an accredited Lutheran institution.

These funds are for active members of Grace Lutheran Church who are in good standing. The money awarded each year depends on the amount available. Monies are to be paid directly to the institution and not to the student or parents.

Applications are available through the Church Office or on the Grace website (on the navigation bar at the top of the website go to education, then scholarships). Scholarship applications for both the Readel and Allen funds are due to the Grace Lutheran Church Office by July 1, 2023.

All scholarship applications are reviewed by the Endowment Committee and voted on during the quarterly meeting in July; payments are made in August.

Sunday School News

Thank you, thank you, thank you

We send huge shoutouts of “thank you” to all those who supported the annual Easter Egg Hunt with sweet treats. Sunday School children ENJOYED this fun tradition that Grace provides them. Three rounds of egg hunts were held before all the eggs were collected! One thing is certain that lots of sugar was consumed by children on Easter Sunday.

Thank you to the volunteers who stayed after church on Palm Sunday, helping stuff the eggs with the goodies.

Last month, we held our second intergenerational “Pray and Play.” Laughter filled the air as we played games in the gym and in Grace Center.

May

This month brings our Sunday School year to a close. We will have one more traditional Sunday School session on May 7 as we learn about weathering the storm.

On May 21, we celebrate yet another successful year with a fun picnic and outside games

First Communion

On April 16, we rejoiced with Lark Gibbs, Samuel Given, Jace Hanlin, Tyson Hanlin, Kaylee Lanham, and Braxton O’Leary as they received their First Communion.



Families gathered around their loved ones who celebrated their First Communion.

Presence Light Sponsors:

May 7:

- In memory of Sheri's dad, Stanley Russell, given by the Conover Family.

May 14:

- In memory of Mary Figard, given by the Figard family.

May 21:

- In memory of Pat Hahn, given by Gail Sorenson.

May 28:

- To the glory of God.

Bulletin Sponsors:

May 7:

- In memory of my mom, given by Janette Hess.

May 14:

- In memory of Mary Figard and Frank Holy, given by Terry Figard.

May 21:

- In memory of my mom, Gladys Martin, given by Mary Beth.

May 28:

- In honor of my family, given by Joyce Shook.

eGiving Options

In addition to weekly offering envelopes, Grace provides electronic giving options. Please give in the way that is most convenient for you and let us know if you have any questions.

Give Online at our website or via our QR code



Give by Text by texting **877-698-3604**

Enter the 10-digit number (877-698-3604) and the amount you wish to donate, then press send, and follow the prompts to complete your donation.

Give through Vanco Mobile App by downloading the app

- Go to the App Store or Google Play and search “**Vanco Mobile**” to quickly find and download the app for free.
- Search “**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**” to select Grace in Woodstock, IL, then select Give to select an amount, General Operating Fund, and frequency, and the app will prompt you through completing your donation.

Give through automatic withdrawal program. To participate, please complete an enrollment form and return to the church office to schedule pre-authorized electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your bank account. You can change, stop, or temporarily hold your giving by contacting Grace's church office four business days in advance of a scheduled contribution.

*Please contact the church office (815-338-0554),
if you have any questions.*

**Visit the Grace website for the most up-to-date information for all
that is happening at Grace! gracewoodstock.org**

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

Lead Pastor

Rev. Amanda Bergstrom
abergstrom@gracewoodstock.org

Administrative Secretary

Denise Klabunde
dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org

Financial Secretary &

**Asst. Administrative Secretary,
Confirmation Coordinator**

Carrie Fiorina
cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org

Communications Coordinator

Kari Gippert
kgippert@gracewoodstock.org

Organist & Interim Coordinator of

Worship & Music

Jan Burns

Music Group Directors

Terry Aavang, Tammy Baier,
Jon Bergstrom, Carrie Filetti

Sunday School Coordinator

Jamielynn Wedoff

Building Supervisor

Ken Zank

Custodians

Chris & Kim Ethridge

Officers & Council

Diana Frisbie, Lisa Gerloff-Banker,
Carrie Jarnecke, Kevin Kleinjan,
Mike Liedtke, Paul Lockwood,
Matt Meiners, Mark Miller, Mary Noe,
Robert Teuber