

AUGUST 2023 ▪ VOLUME 22, NO. 8

Cosmos & Seed

“The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed ✚ bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age. Amen.”

At the close of worship recently, these words have been our sending blessing. God, capable speaking to the farthest expanse of the whole of creation and in the smallest of seeds, blesses, knows, loves, cares for, and will sustain you now and always.

Over the past month this summer, I've had a chance to talk to so many new people through summer camps (participating with our confirmands at Living Water Ministries, dropping off & picking up our child from Lutherdale, and most recently serving as pastors of the week with Jon at Covenant Point Bible Camp). And in each conversation and connection, I've been blessed to enter the stories of people from near and far — campers, staff, and leaders from nearby suburbs, other states, and from several other countries.

It is a gift to be reminded, even in this small way, of the breadth and depth and interconnected nature of God's love through people. As people gather around our shared faith in Jesus — the holy spirit opens space for reflection on both God's presence in one's life in the past, activity in the present, and promised future. It has been an amazing honor to hear how God shows up in so many people's lives in so many different ways.

At Grace, we are ready to see how different seeds that have been planted, grow and flourish into something new. In the weeks ahead, I hope you'll consider what new or returning way you will seek out opportunities to grow in faith. Throughout this newsletter, find invitations for fellowship, education, music, and service. Perhaps the time is right for you to share in teaching — joining a Sunday school team with our preschool through sixth grade students twice a month, or perhaps you'd like to be a guest teacher with middle school confirmands. Maybe you have been considering joining a choir or band, or your children are now old enough to participate for the first time.

Come and share in worship, show up for acts of service, and join me in witnessing the wonders of God at work in one another's lives. May God be with you in the newness of the school and program year ahead, and may God keep weaving our lives and stories together in the communion of the saints, beloved of God both near and far.



“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labour of each. For we are God's servants, working together, you are God's field, God's building.”

-1 Corinthians 3:6-9

*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), Sally Sheahan, 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)

Sorrows: Diane Schulz

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**).

Current Opening

Applications are requested for the following part-time position:

Director of Worship & Music

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

Kitchen

Last month, on July 11, Tyler Palak, director of youth education, facilitated an online training session for Grace members to become certified food safe managers.

If you missed his training session but would be interested in becoming a certified food safe manager — because you support the use of Grace's kitchen — you're in luck.

Although Tyler will not be physically by your side to walk you

through the process, the materials are available online for you to do on your own in your home, which will be followed by a proctored online exam OR you can attend an approximate eight-hour, one-day training and test in Crystal Lake on set days.

Grace will cover the training and exam expenses. If you have any questions about how to begin, contact Tyler at tpalak@gracewoodstock.org.



Sunday Book Club



All are welcome to join the Adult Book Club Sunday School for lively discussions of "Dogwood" this month. The group meets every Sunday after worship in the Parlor. They will not be meeting on Aug. 27 due to the Congregation Meeting.

GRACE FOR TODAY—The deadline for the **September 2023** newsletter is **August 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 August

"Come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout with joy to the rock of our salvation!" (Psalm 95:1). See you soon for worship on Sundays at **9 a.m.** in the sanctuary, via [YouTube livestream](#), or the posted worship videos on our website.

We'd love for you to support weekly worship by volunteering. 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 in 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 four 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 setting up or cleaning up after worship, and there's room for you to join or form a team. To learn more, please contact Karen Reinhard at kereinhard@yahoo.com.
- If you play an instrument and/or are interested in solo/ensemble opportunities to support worship, please contact Jan Burns at shelty2@sbcglobal.net; and reach out with returning or new interest in choirs as they regather this fall.

Worship And Music

Each week we gather around word and sacrament, in the pattern of gathering, word, meal, and sending.

A part of our shared act of worshipping God includes the gift of music. This fall, you are invited to join a musical group or reach out to learn more if you are interested in being a part of the worship life of our congregation through music.

Each of these groups will be gathering for rehearsals in the coming weeks, consider trying something new and reaching out with any questions.

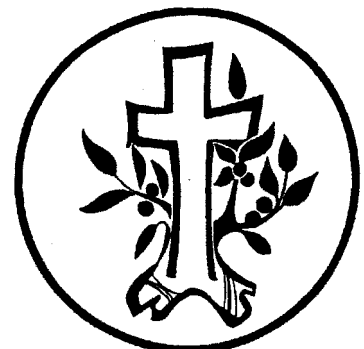
- **Cherub Choir** (3 years - 1st grade), Wednesday evening rehearsals at 5:30-5:45 p.m.; first rehearsal Aug. 23; contact Tammy Baier, baier5@comcast.net
- **Joyful Messengers Choir** (2nd - 6th grade choir), Wednesday evening rehearsals at 5:45 - 6:15 p.m.; first rehearsal Aug. 30; contact Tammy Baier, baier5@comcast.net
- **Laudate Choir** (7th - 12th grade choir), occasional Sunday morning rehearsals after worship; first rehearsal Sept. 17; contact Carrie Filetti, bcfilet@att.net
- **Chancel Choir** (adult choir), occasional Wednesday evening rehearsals at 7 - 8 p.m.; first rehearsal Sept. 13; contact Carrie Filetti, bcfilet@att.net
- **Revelation Ringers** (adult handbell choir), occasional Wednesday evening rehearsals at 6 p.m.; first rehearsal Sept. 20; contact Terry Aavang, taavang@yahoo.com
- **Contemporary Band** (instruments & singing), occasional evening rehearsals; contact Jon Bergstrom, jon_bergstrom2@hotmail.com
- **Instruments & Small Groups**- do you play an instrument or would you be interested in singing occasionally in a small group?, contact Jan Burns, shelty2@sbcglobal.net

See You on the 27th for Our Congregational Meeting!

Please mark your calendar and then join us in the sanctuary or on Zoom for our Congregational Meeting on Sunday, Aug. 27 at 10:15 a.m. following the 9 a.m. worship service.



It is important for everyone to join us and learn what is going on at Grace as elections will be held. Reports will be available to members by Aug. 13 at the Information Center and in your email inbox.



ELCA Service Day ... A Decade of Service

Purchase Items for Lutheran World Relief Kits

WOW! This is Grace's 10th year of "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday! That means we have assembled and donated 900 Kits — School and Personal Care — to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to help children around the world so far.

This year we will be assembling 100 School Kits **AND** 50 Personal Care Kits! As with the School Kits, these Personal Care Kits are distributed to individuals in need worldwide through LWR.

We need your help to collect the supplies needed to create these kits. As of July 23, please visit the bulletin board in the narthex to see what items are needed for both the School and Personal Care Kits. You may also sign up to provide the needed items through the SignUpGenius link in Grace Notes or right [here](#).

Back-to-school sales are starting, so it's the perfect time to shop for the School Kit items. Cash donations are also welcome to fund non-donated

items. Those worshipping from home who would like to make a donation, please see Mary Beth's contact information at the end of this story. Contact her, and she will coordinate with you.

Items for both types of kits may be returned to the labeled bucket in the narthex.

It is a huge help to have all of these items returned to the church by **Sunday, Aug. 27** in order to allow time to purchase any additional items needed.

Contact Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia (815-245-1242/ mbmartinbellavia@gmail.com) with any questions about the School and Personal Care Kits. Thank you so much for your support!



ELCA Service Day Sept. 10

We hope you are ready to worship and serve on Sunday, Sept. 10. We are gathering a variety of sites and team leaders for upcoming service projects (See the Lutheran World Relief Kits story on

the left). One project on Sept. 10 will be building the kits from items purchased. We hope you will be joining in this 10th annual ELCA Service Day.

God is ever at work in the world and our lives, and we are blessed to be a part of God's redeeming and renewing love. Join us Sept. 10 to serve alongside neighbors and new friends in Christ as we share God's grace.

If you would be willing to serve as a team leader and/or have a new community partner idea, please contact Pastor Amanda. Keep your eyes open for a service site sign-up sheet posted in the narthex or a link that will be available in future Grace Notes.

Pinochle

Ready for some friendly games of Pinochle this month? Join the group either during the day or at night in Room 101. Haven't played before? They teach novices.

Players meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month and the second Tuesday evening of the month.

In August, play on Wednesday, Aug. 2 and Wednesday, Aug. 16 at 1 p.m. or at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 8. Enter through the lower-level parking lot entrance.



Grace Lutheran participants in the 2022 "God's Work. Our Hands." ELCA Service Project Day.

YSJ—High School Youth

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. Future drop-in dates: Aug. 9 & 23; Sept. 6 &

20; Oct. 4 & 18; Nov. 1, 15 & 19; and Dec. 6 & 20.

Save the Date - Saturday, Aug. 19 from 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.. We are team building and taking a Zipline Tour! Sign up for a day of outdoor fun at Lake Geneva Ziplines and Adventures.

No experience necessary, and we can't think of a better way to kick off the year than laughing and screaming our way through the trees together.. RSVP is required by Aug. 6.

Cost is \$40 per person. Grace Lutheran covers 50 percent of the cost. As always, we are committed to helping everyone participate and can

provide financial assistance. Please reach out to the church office at **815-338-0554** or Pastor Amanda.

2023-24 HIGH SCHOOL

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!

Call Kirsten Green at **815-236-6904** or email her at stylin1020@gmail.com to RSVP for Aug. 19.

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

Big Sunday School Announcements for All



Church News

Calling all youth, their parents, and church members. Sunday School has a number of dates this month that affects all.

Backpack Blessing, Pray & Play

On Aug. 13, Sunday's School's annual Backpack Blessing takes place during the 9 a.m. worship service. Sunday School will not

be held on the 13th, but a Pray & Play follows the worship service.

Everyone is welcome to join the Pray & Play festivities for games, laughter, fun, and fellowship.

First day of Sunday School

On Aug. 20, the first day of Sunday School begins at 10 a.m. Youth parents/guardians are asked to attend with the children.

Educator orientation

As we begin the new Sunday School year, we are thrilled to announce that an orientation session is scheduled Aug. 8 at 6:30 p.m. for current Sunday School teachers or anyone interested in joining our dedicated team of educators.

This orientation is designed to provide valuable insights, resources, and support to enhance teaching skills and create an engaging learning experience for our youth.

If you are unable to attend this session, please contact Tyler Palak via the church office or email.

Confirmation Class Update

Confirmation's first class will begin Aug. 23 at 6:30 p.m. More information will follow.

Kindness Projects

Thank you to all who participated in rock painting last month! God Rocks!

Want to participate with projects? August has two work meetings. Gift wrapping will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 8 at 2 p.m.

Then, pillow stuffing takes place on Tuesday, Aug. 22 at 6:30 p.m.

Sally Sheahan who leads the Kindness Project, said, "It is early for Christmas presents, and I know it's not Thanksgiving yet, but we will be stuffing pillows so mark your calendars. Many hands make light work."

Contact Sally Sheahan by phone call or text at 314-910-0541 for more information.



Kindness Project participants paint rocks last month.

Presence Light Sponsors:

Aug. 6:

- In honor of my birthday buddy-Leslynee, "Happy 3rd birthday!"; given by Geeg

Aug. 13:

- In honor of my father, Bill Kearns' heavenly birthday; given by Anne Johnson

Aug. 20:

- In honor of Steve & Ellen Schulz; given by Diane Schulz

Aug. 27:

- To the glory of God

Bulletin Sponsors:

Aug. 6:

- In honor of Mark & Beth Miller's 43rd anniversary; given by the Millers

Aug. 13:

- In honor of our August celebrations, Rach & Sarah's birthdays and Zach & Sarah's anniversary; given by Andy & Mary Beth

Aug. 20:

- In honor of Julie Volckens; given by Diane Schulz.
- In honor of our daughters Kim & Tracie's birthdays, given by Ken & Kathy Zank.

Aug. 27:

- In loving memory of my mom, Mollie Beardsley; given by Charlotte Beardsley.

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

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Jan Burns

Music Group Directors

Terry Aavang, Tammy Baier,
Jon Bergstrom, Carrie Filetti

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