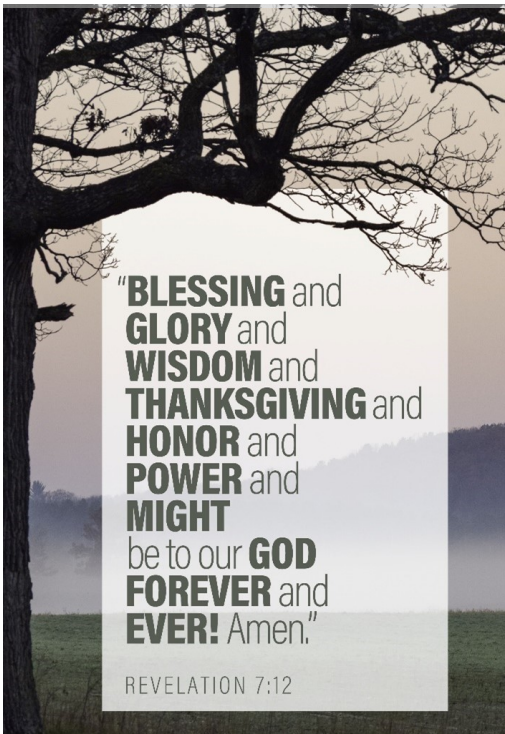


NOVEMBER 2023 • VOLUME 22, NO. 11

Forever and Ever, Amen

I don't know where my parents want to be buried. To be fair, they don't quite know either. My parents grew up on the north and south sides of Chicago, where they live now isn't where they raised my sisters and me, and they



haven't lived within a half-hour drive of their church community for over thirty years, so the question of where feels complicated. I have made a note though, that my dad would like the Moody Blues and the Beach Boys' music to be played during a visitation. I have perhaps annoyingly asked my parents about burial locations from time to time, always trying to be clear that I ask because a part of my vocation is to be on the other end—asking bereaved families so many questions during funeral planning, and I want to know how to be able to honor their wishes whenever that time arrives. And I ask because I filled out my own notes for funeral planning over eight years ago, when we only had one child and had just created a will, and I had last presented here about the history of Christian funerals and funeral planning at Grace.

I invite you into these conversations, too. Talk with your loved ones about your hopes for what end-of-life care might look like, what you'd prefer as far as burial and/or cremation, find a lawyer for creating or reviewing your own legal documents, let me know if you'd like to be connected to our ELCA Regional Gift Planner if you would like to know more about remembering your church in your estate planning, and reach out to a funeral home to learn more about arrangements that can be made in advance.

And I invite you to join me on **Sunday, November 19** after worship in **room 101** to hear a little about the history of Christian funerals, the practice of accompanying loved ones with singing, and the funeral

planning worksheets we have at Grace. Over the years, several people have kept a copy of their funeral service plans in the church office, and lately we've had several more people request these planning sheets. I invite you all to gather to learn more and reach out with any questions.

In November, we begin with a powerful remembrance of all saints, remembering before God all who have died, and then draw near to the end of the church year at the end of the month. Our scripture readings take a turn toward apocalyptic, which means revelation, an uncovering and revealing. How is God being revealed in this changing of seasons, in the remembrance of beloved dead, in the festive meals and gatherings of thanksgiving, in the weary world we are living in, in the anticipation of Jesus' birth and presence and return? I pray God's love and grace are revealed anew for you, as you continue to remember and gather and give thanks and grieve and live among God's faithful people, ever committed to being church together.

*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), Bob & Carolyn Brackett (parents of Kari Gippert), Nancy Brown, Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Barb Carmichael, Jim Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Joe Evanoff, Lucille Fergen (mother of Karen Hansen), Connie Fischer, Barbara Gehrke, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tom Goggin, Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Liz Henniges, 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), Tom Meyer, Ben Miller (nephew of Jerry & Mary Johnson), 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 McMahan), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Bev Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Nick Wedoff, Caitlin Wilcox (niece of Anne Johnson)

Sorrows: Leonard Haulotte (brother of Laura Boal), Phyllis Reed, Gary Schauer

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 Job Opening

Applications are requested for the following part-time job:

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.

Share the Warmth: Winter Coat Drive

Woodstock Area Community Ministries (WACM) asks that you please consider donating your gently used winter coats in all sizes, in labeled bins located in Grace's narthex. They will be used for WACM's annual coat drive. If possible, deliver your outerwear to Grace by Sunday, Nov. 5. The drive itself runs Friday, Nov. 10 from 3 - 7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 11 from 9 a.m.- noon at First United Methodist Church in Woodstock. Beginning Thursday, Nov. 9 at 1 p.m., WACM will set up for the event.



Bulletin Sponsors

We still have Bulletin sponsor sheets available for November and December 2023 in the white binder at the Welcome Center. A month prior to your sponsorship, a form will be sent to you requesting information plus a \$20 donation. Thank you for helping Grace fund the weekly bulletins.

GRACE FOR TODAY—The deadline for the **December 2023** newsletter is **November 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 November

We begin November by remembering all of God's saints, those baptized in the past year, those who have died in the past year, and all for whom we grieve, remember, and give thanks to God.

SUNDAY, NOV. 5, ALL SAINTS SUNDAY. You will be invited to share in a time of remembrance and candle lighting. First, a candle will be lit for each person baptized at Grace this past year. Then, those gathered in the sanctuary will be invited to come forward to light a candle in remembrance of family and friends who are now with God eternally. If you are worshipping via [YouTube livestream](#), or the posted worship videos on our website, you are invited to share in this time of remembrance and prayer in your home.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21. We gather on Thanksgiving Eve for worship at 7 p.m. Join us as we try this new date, a day earlier than in the past and before possible travel, cleaning, meal prepping the day before a holiday. We gather in worship for the great thanksgiving—giving thanks and praise to God and sharing in Holy Communion where all are welcome and all are fed.

SUNDAY, NOV. 6, CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY. We close out the liturgical year at the end of the month on this day, before entering into the season of Advent leading up to Christmas.

See you soon, for worship together on Sundays **9 a.m.** in the sanctuary, or worship wherever you are via [YouTube livestream](#) or the posted worship videos on our website.

Thank you to all who volunteer their time in support of weekly worship. If you have questions or would like to learn more, please reach out to the people listed below or call the office at **815-338-0554** if you'd like assistance in signing up for an opening.

- If you have questions about volunteering as an [Usher](#), [Greeter](#), [Reader](#), or [Communion Assistant](#), please contact Fay Wilson.
- There are currently four people who facilitate worship being audible in the sanctuary and accessible via livestream. If interested in joining this A/V team rotation, please contact Bill Nattress.
- 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.
- Please contact Jan Burns if you are interested in learning more about a choir, band, or opportunity to share your gifts with a vocal or musical instrument solo/ensemble.

*****Save the Date***** **SUNDAY, DEC. 24, CHRISTMAS EVE.** We will worship at 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Family Sharing

Christmas is coming, the Goose is getting fat! You can't actually give a goose but you can give a chicken or a goat or a pig or food or any number of other items to help people in our local community and throughout the world.

Stop by to visit the Christmas Family Sharing (CFS) Giving Tree and table display in the narthex starting November 5.

We have several different ways to help support our ministry partners: [Family Health Partnership Clinic](#):

The CFS Giving Tree will have ornaments with items that FHPC can use in their clinic and food pantry as well as Walmart gift cards.

Turning Point: Ornaments on the CFS Giving Tree for Turning Point will supply gift cards for families and craft items, games, and toys for their gift closet.

ELCA Good Gifts: Ornaments on the CFS Giving Tree for ELCA Good Gifts will have envelopes attached. You can choose from a wide variety of items – from chicks, to goats, to school uniforms – to help support people in need around the world.

You may also access ELCA Good Gifts online at

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Revised Constitution Congregational Meeting Nov. 12 after 9 a.m. Service

We will hold a congregational meeting Sunday, Nov. 12 after our 9 a.m. service.

Just a reminder, we received notification that our revised constitution involving changes from the 2019 and 2022 ELCA churchwide assemblies was approved by the Northern Illinois Synod on Sept. 9. We need to hold two congregational meetings for membership approval.

Quorum of 50 voting Grace members is needed. Copies of the revised constitution were sent via email on Oct. 10. A limited number of paper copies can be picked up at the Welcome Center in the narthex. Our second voting meeting will be our February annual meeting.



As we begin to near the end of the year, we look back in thanksgiving for the ways in which we have been able to love and serve God and neighbor as a faith community, and we look forward to the future of ministries through Grace Lutheran Church in the year ahead. The last Sunday in October marks our Commitment Sunday, where you are invited to return your Estimate of Giving cards for 2024. If you are not able to be in worship that day, you are welcome to place it in the mail or return it at your earliest convenience.

Without God's grace and one another, we would not be a church. As our individual commitments and giving are gathered together into one, we are better equipped to respond to God's call for faithful living in relationship with God, each other, and neighbors near and far. Thank you for being a part of Grace Lutheran Church and thank you for communicating your giving intentions for the year ahead.

Christmas Flowers At Grace

Help provide decorations for our sanctuary this Christmas. Give a gift in "honor of someone" or "in memory of a loved one" or "to the glory of God."

Mail in or drop off your coupon below, along with

your \$16 gift to Grace Lutheran Church, 1300 Kishwaukee Valley Rd., Woodstock, IL 60098

Please **print clearly**, as you want it to appear in the bulletin. Payments due in the office by **Monday, December 11, 2023.**

Thanksgiving Altar Display

We need pumpkins, squash, colorful gourds, apples, potatoes, Indian corn, and corn stalks for our Thanksgiving altar display. Please be sure that these items are cleaned of any dirt or mud before you bring them into the building.

All edible produce will be donated to the Food Pantry after Nov. 27. Please leave your donations in the entryway on the upper level by Sunday, Nov. 19. If you have any questions, please contact Judy Reilly at jreilly038@gmail.com.

Pinochle

Pinochle games are played both days and nights. Players meet on the first and third Wednesday afternoons of the month and the second Tuesday evening of the month.

In November, they'll play at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 1 and Nov. 15. They also play Tuesday, Nov. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

CFS

Continued from page 3

<https://goodgifts.elca.org> or at <https://www.GraceCFS.org>.

Items can be returned to the labeled bins in the narthex anytime with all donations needing to be at Grace by Dec. 3.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Christmas Family Sharing program! If you have any questions, stop by the table, or feel free to contact Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia (815-245-1242) or (mbmartinbellavia@gmail.com).

Amount: _____

CHOOSE ONE PER COUPON: (Please print)

In Memory Of: _____

In Honor Of: _____

To the Glory of God: _____

GIVEN BY : _____



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 postings will include event info., sign-up links, and more. Follow Grace Lutheran Church on Facebook for announcements and to see what YSJ is up to!

Wednesday Drop-In

Nights - YSJ meets **EVERY TWO WEEKS** for refreshments, 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 - 8:30 p.m. Fall drop-in dates: Nov. 1, 15 & 29.

Christmas Party

Wednesday, Dec. 13

The YOUTH GATHERING "Direct Ask" Fundraiser

is underway! We have nine high schoolers to send to New Orleans in July 2024...PLEASE VISIT our YOUTH GATHERING DONATION BOARD in the narthex. TAKE AN ENVELOPE with an amount of your choice and GIVE A GIFT of a life-changing experience for our youth as they

GROW in the FAITH JOURNEY together! Any amount gets us one mile closer...THANK YOU! Please return your envelope and gift to the church office or offering plate during any service.

RSVP's or Questions Call Kirsten Green at **815-236-6904** or email her at stylin1020@gmail.com.

Your YSJ Co-Leaders are Gretchen Hutchens, Kirsten Green and Tyler Palak.

Sunday School & Confirmation

This month, Sunday School meets on Nov. 5 where youth attend the 9 a.m. service and complete a service project at 10 a.m. as the students will create Christmas ornaments and cards.

On Nov. 19, the students worship at 9 a.m. and attend their lesson, which focuses on The First Sin, at 10 a.m.

Last month, Sunday School went to Aldi and shopped for goods to place in the Blessing Box.

Confirmation meets Nov. 1, 8, 15 & 29 this month. However, there will be no class on Nov. 22 as Community Unit School District 200 is closed Nov. 22 – 24.



On Oct. 1, Sunday School children filled the Blessing Box with items purchased at Aldi.

Property Fall Cleaning

Church grounds fall clean up should take place on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 8 a.m. - noon. If it rains that day, the rain date will be scheduled on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 8 a.m. - noon.

Sunday Book Club

Grace's Sunday Book Club will meet after worship each Sunday in November discussing and reading, "The Chosen: Book I: I Have Called You By Name." All are welcome.

Ministry Opportunities

A couple of Grace's committees are continuing or restarting to support ministry opportunities within our congregation and community. Committee Night is held the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m., and church council members serve as a liaison to one of Grace's committees.

If you would like to participate and connect with people with similar interests, we hope to see you soon. Please call the church office or reach out to a council member or Pastor Amanda if you are interested in learning more.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

As we approach Thanksgiving, it is always important to remember those less fortunate by sharing with them. One way we can do that is to support our local Woodstock Food Pantry.

On Sunday, Nov. 19 we'll have that opportunity with a food drive at Grace.

Paper bags will be distributed on Sunday, Nov. 12 at the 9 a.m. worship service. You are asked to return that bag with offerings.

A great way to contribute is through cash donations. The Woodstock Food Pantry can purchase canned goods from the Northern Illinois Food Bank cheaper than can be bought at a local grocery store. Cash also can be used to purchase perishable items such as milk, eggs, and meat.

For those who prefer to donate tangible items (i.e. paper goods) such as toilet paper, tissues, paper towels and toiletries are greatly appreciated.

A Food Pantry volunteer said, "The need in our community is increasing. One recent morning eight families were lined up at the door needing food when we opened."

Your participation will be greatly cherished.

Thank You, Grace Lutheran

A thank you from Cathy Meyer & family:

Thank you for your prayers, support, and loving kindness we have received during Tom's medical crisis beginning Sept. 2.

We ask for your continued prayers as he works to regain strength and continues to heal.

Presence Light Sponsors:

Nov. 5:

- To the glory of God

Nov. 12:

- In memory of Reed G. Larson, given by Dallas, Ellen, Kirk, and Evan

Nov. 19:

- In memory of Mrs. B. (Dorothy Bartram), given by her family

Nov. 26:

- In memory of Bob Shook, given by his family

Bulletin Sponsors:

Nov. 5:

- In honor of Bill's upcoming birthday, given by the Kreznor family

Nov. 12:

- To the glory of God

Nov. 19:

- To the glory of God

Nov. 21:

- To the glory of God for all our blessings, given by Don & Marylee Steinwehe

Nov. 26:

- In memory of Bob's passing on Nov. 24, 2022, 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
Carrie Fiorina
cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org

Communications Coordinator

Kari Gippert
kgippert@gracewoodstock.org

Director of Youth Education

Tyler Palak
tpalak@gracewoodstock.org

Organist & Interim Coordinator of Worship & Music

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, Carrie Jarnecke,
Kevin Kleinjan, Nancy Kreznor,
Amanda Kurka, Matt Meiners,
Mark Miller, Mary Noe,
Bruce Rosborough