



GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Grace for Today

MAY 2024 ▪ VOLUME 23, NO. 4



We have heard about you,
God of all power.
You made the world out of kindness,
creating order out of confusion;
you made each one of us in your own image;
your fingerprint is on every soul.
So we praise you.
We praise and worship you.

We have heard about you,
Jesus Christ:
the carpenter who left his tools and trade;
the poor man who made others rich;
the healer who let himself be wounded;
the criminal on whom the soldiers spat
not knowing they were fouling the face of God;
the savior who died and rose again.
So we praise you.
We praise and worship you.

We have heard about you,
Holy Spirit.
You broke the bonds of every race and nation,
to let God speak in every tongue;
you made the disciples drunk with grace;
you converted souls and emptied pockets;
you showed how love made all things new
and opened the doors to change and freedom.
So we praise you.
We praise and worship you.

-Iona Community

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

In baptism, as we profess our faith in the words of the creeds, when we make the sign of the cross, we have heard about, believe in, praise, and worship our triune God.

We may not have it all figured out, this mysterious trinity, but we have heard about God. We have heard the old, old story, and perhaps you too love to tell others about Jesus and God's love, trusting the Spirit intercedes for us in our prayers and living.

As we mark the endings in a program year and beginnings of the summer season—I give thanks for all the people who have shared their faith with you—telling you of God's love, mentoring you in the faith, and persistently pointing to the wonders of Jesus' amazing grace.

And I pray for your continuing lives of faith. May you continue to listen deeply for God's good news in a weary world in need, may you see signs of new life in Christ emerging even in trying times, and may the work of the Spirit stir up courage to be church together and join in proclaiming and embodying welcome and belonging.

You have heard about God; blessings as you go forth to share God's grace with others.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

*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, the Rev. Michael Burk, 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: Phyllis Aavang, Bob Beardsley (brother of Charlotte Beardsley), Charlie Bell (friend of Jamielynn Wedoff), Betty Boehmke, Nancy Brown, Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Barb Carmichael, Jim Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Lucille Fergen (mother of Karen Hansen), David Fish (son of Millie Luallen), Connie Fischer, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tom Goggin, Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Gloria Holy, Denise Hoover, Jerry Johnson, 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), Gloria Ogle, Jenny Perrone (friend of Cindy Walters), Georgia Petersdorf (sister-in-law of Gladys Renner), Pat Peterson, Dorothy Potoczky, Ila Randolph, Barbara Readell, Sheila Readell, 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, 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), Marilyn Vanskike, Bev Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Nick Wedoff, Caitlin Wilcox (niece of Anne Johnson)

Sorrows: Carol Nellesen (grandmother of Andy Nellesen), Ruth Rosenquist (mother of Sue Beckman)

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.

Book Club

The Book Club will not meet on Sunday, April 28 so members can attend the YSJ pancake breakfast held after worship service.



Coffee Ministry News

The Coffee Ministry will take the summer off!

The team will provide snacks and coffee through May and plans to restart in the fall.

We would like to thank Marylee Steinwehe, Bev Unglaube, Mary Beth Martin-Bellavia, and Janette Hess for providing some of the delicious snacks. Their assistance was appreciated.

Sewing Circle

Grace's sewing circle meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month from 8:30 a.m. - noon in Grace Center. Come when you can, leave when you must (enter through the lower entrance). All are welcome! Both sewing and non-sewing projects are available either at the church during our gatherings or at your home.

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: **GRACE FOR TODAY**—The deadline for the **June 2024** 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**.
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Worship this May

Join us in worship this month, rejoicing in the Easter season, celebrating the day of Pentecost, worshipping on Holy Trinity Sunday, always gathering around the word of God and gifts of baptism and Holy Communion.

Early this month we gather to witness Grace's 2nd year confirmation students affirm their baptism. It has been a joy to share in confirmation class and camp with these students, and we gather in prayer and blessing in worship as they say yes to God's promises and commit to continuing in lives of faith. Later in May, we will pray for graduates as they mark an important milestone in their lives. Thanks for living among God's faithful people and gathering in community to worship God.

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 people listed below, or call the office 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 the worship audibility in the sanctuary and accessibility via livestream. If interested in joining this A/V team rotation, please contact Bill Nattress.
- The altar guild teams are setting up before 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. Or reach out if interested in joining a choir when they regather after summer break.

Pinocle

Daytime

Stop on in at Room 101 on either the first or third Wednesday (May 1 & 15) of the month at 1 p.m. to play pinocle during the daytime. All are invited. Veteran players will teach beginners the rules.

Evening

This month, the evening group adds a twist, honoring Cinco de Mayo and Hispanic Heritage Month.

At the get together on Tuesday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 101, those who attend will play Mexican Train Dominoes. All are welcome to join.

Spring Grounds Cleanup

At press time, we didn't know if the April 20 spring cleanup went on or if it had been postponed due to inclement weather.

If weather kept us from cleaning up our grounds, then we will meet on Saturday, May 4, our scheduled rain date.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Mental Health Awareness Month (May) has been observed in the United States since 1949.

The McHenry County NAMI Chapter recently designed the magnet pictured at right. It provides key crisis and mental health resource contact information, reminding people *There is always HOPE!* You will see the magnet around Grace.

Key resources listed:

- 1) **Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Crisis lifeline, 988**, which is free, confidential and available 24/7/365.
- 2) **Medical & Public Safety Emergency, 911**. It also is free and available 24/7/365.
- 3) **Resource Support Line (housing food, etc.), 211**, is free and available 24/7/365.
- 4) **Warm Line, 1-866-359-7935**, which is for non-emergency emotional support recovery, education, self-advocacy, support and referrals. The Warm Line is free and available Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Also, do not forget the McHelp App, a local resource directory and confidential texting with licensed mental health counselor, free and available 24/7/365. For more information, visit <https://www.namimch.org>.



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE MAY 2024

from your Council President, Mary Noe

CONGREGATIONAL DISASTER PREPARATION PLAN UPDATE

On March 17 our congregation participated in our annual tornado drill. Thanks for your cooperation. Next on our list is to do a scheduled fire drill later this year.

AED PURCHASE:

With great appreciation to council member, Nancy Kreznor, who used her medical background to research defibrillators, we have ordered two Philips Heartstart Onsite Defibrillator units. One will be placed in the narthex current location and one will be placed downstairs by Luther Hall.



Grace Lutheran participated in the 2023 Woodstock Pridefest Parade. Mark June 9 on the calendar so you can join us in 2024!

WOODSTOCK PRIDEFEST PARTICIPATION

Once again, Grace Lutheran members will be marching in the Woodstock Pride Parade on Sunday, June 9. In addition, Grace will be joining several McHenry County ELCA congregations at a table during Pridefest. More information will be shared closer to that date.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD NEWS

The Northern Illinois Synod has a mission statement "Walking Together, Loving Christ, Loving all for the sake of the world." Four Grace members: Pastor Amanda, Lisa Gerloff-Banker, Paul Lockwood, and Mary Noe were able to attend the Congregational Resourcing Event on March 16 at Sauk Valley Community College. It was a faith-filled day spent with time with Bishop

Stacie Fidler, Keynote speaker Rev. Migual Gomez-Acosta, followed by two workshops in the afternoon. Last year's NI Synod guiding theme was "Be the Body." This year's theme is "Open God's Story." Next year will be "Live the Kingdom." We shared Bishop Stacie Fidler's video sermon on Sunday, April 7. It is a blessing to have these ties with our NI Synod.

LAST CALL TO MAINTAIN OUR VINEYARD

Last fall a request went out to recruit a member or team to maintain our 8 rows of grapes in our vineyard. No one stepped up. In April, we pruned our vines to prepare for this year's potential harvest. Now for the last time, we will attempt to recruit a vineyard supervisor. Spraying will need to be done every 10-14 days starting in early May. Please spread the word and contact any people who might be interested. We are very grateful to Ken Hansing who has been our supervisor for the past years. He can be reached at 815-529-7042 or hansings1981@gmail.com. He is available for questions and will train and assist but can no longer do the required maintenance himself. Ken needs to hear from people by May 10. Our church council needs to make final vineyard decisions at our May 16 meeting.



Bulletin & Presence Light Sponsors

The Grace 2024 Bulletin & Presence Light sponsor sheets are available in the white binder at the Information Center. A month prior to your sponsorship, a form will be sent to you, requesting information plus a \$20 donation for the Bulletins or a \$10 donation for the Presence Light.

2024 'Bread for the Day' Devotional

You can seize the moment as plenty of days remain in the 2024 calendar year. "Bread for the Day" is a daily-use devotional resource filled with rich treasures, such as a brief scripture reading, a prayer and hymn for each day and more.

While the devotions began Jan. 1, 2024, as mentioned earlier, plenty of days remain for all to enjoy.

Copies are available for purchase at the Information Center for \$10.

YSJ News

Youth Standing with Jesus!" FUN OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY PUTTING YOUR FAITH IN ACTION!

Wednesday Drop-In Nights YSJ meets **EVERY 2 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. **Spring Drop-in Dates:** May 1, 15.

Summer Events will be sent by email on May 1 ... watch your inbox!

ELCA Youth Gathering

G-Learn Nights: May 1, 29 & June 26

Parent Meeting: Sunday, June 23 at 10 a.m.

*Meet downstairs after church for important Gathering trip details.

The YOUTH GATHERING "Direct Ask" Fundraiser is underway! We have eight high schoolers to send to New Orleans in July... PLEASE VISIT our YOUTH GATHERING DONATION BOARD in the narthex. TAKE AN ENVELOPE with a designated amount of your choice, and GIVE a GIFT of a life-changing experience to our youth as they GROW in their 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.

Youth RSVP's or Questions: contact Kirsten Green at 815-236-6904 or stylin1020@gmail.com.

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



Sunday School & Confirmation

Sunday School closes the year after worship on May 5 with a lesson on the Holy Spirit.

A Sunday School celebration picnic will take place on May 19 after worship, an event the entire congregation is invited to attend.

We ask that you join us at worship on May 5 to witness and celebrate the spiritual growth of our confirmands. Five students will affirm their baptism, deepening their faith. Let's strengthen the bonds by reinforcing the values of fellowship and support within Grace.



Registration has now begun for our 2024 Vacation Bible School. Parents/grandparents/guardians, register your children, and/or grandchildren (ages 3 through current sixth graders) at <https://forms.gle/V99MCGMRhtr6ftHi8>. The deadline to register is May 30.

Kids will celebrate God's creation by attending "ReNew," an environmentally green curriculum designed to help grow our children's faith while educating them about recycling and the needs of the environment.

VBS will take place June 25 - 27 from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

VBS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Grace needs both adult and youth (grades 7 through 12) shepherds and adult activity site assistants. If you are interested, see the role descriptions and sign up at this site:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050544A5AB29A0F94-48768818-vbsvolunteer#/>.

Summer Camp Scholarship

There's still time to register elementary students for a week of summer camp! Sunday School families have received information about financial support for registration fees, and how to learn more about two local ELCA camps. Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (<https://lomc.org/>) in Oregon, Ill and Lutherdale (<https://www.lutherdale.org/>) in Elkhorn, Wis. If you have questions about summer camp, or about this camp scholarship opportunity, please contact Pastor Amanda or Tyler Palak.

Graduation Celebration?

Are you or someone in your family celebrating a graduation this spring? If so, we'd love to include you in our prayers. Please contact the church office (email dklabunde@gracewoodstock.org or call 815-338-0554) by May 13 to share your name and upcoming graduation.

YSJ Pancake Breakfast

When this May newsletter publishes, the YSJ Pancake breakfast will fast approach. Join YSJ for a Pancake Breakfast after worship on Sunday, April 28. The menu will be expanded from Shrove Tuesday's Pancake Dinner. Options will include pancakes with toppings, egg, cheese and hashbrown casserole (gluten free), sausage, juice, and coffee. Tickets can be purchased at the door.

Presence Light Sponsors:

May 5:

- In memory of my very dear friend Priscilla and her daughter, given by Marlene Botts

May 12:

- In honor of our mothers, Fay & Betty, given by Bill & Nancy Kreznor

May 19:

- In honor of our grandson's high school graduation, given by Dan & Janette Hess

May 26:

- In loving memory of Sheri's dad, Stanley Russell, given by the Conover family

Bulletin Sponsors:

May 5:

- In memory of my very dear friend Priscilla and her daughter, given by Marlene Botts

May 12:

- To the glory of God, given by Borghild E. Stenoien

May 19:

- In honor of our grandson's high school graduation, given by Dan & Janette Hess

May 26:

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

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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Chris & Kim Ethridge

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Michelle Anderson, Diana Frisbie,
Carrie Jarnecke, Kevin Kleinjan,
Nancy Kreznor, Matt Meiners,
Mark Miller, Mary Noe,
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