



**GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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Grace for Today

NOVEMBER 2025 • VOLUME 24, NO. 11

Blessings on The Year Ahead



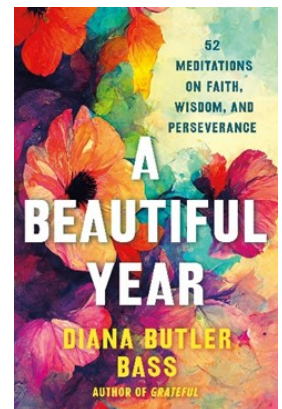
Even though there are hints and signs of Christmas preparations in sight before Halloween, Reformation, and All Saints draw near as we move from October to November, I know we are still a ways away from Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Breathe in, breathe out, we can stay present in this moment without hurrying forward too quickly. Soon enough we will gather to give thanks to God and by the end of November we'll begin lighting a candle on the Advent wreath.

While the new calendar year is still not yet here, our church year is about to turn. For the past few years we have noted this change in the liturgical year as we notice and name the seasons, the colors of the day, and on November 23, we will gather in worship at the end of one year as we enter into the next.

I invite you to worship that Sunday, and to gather afterward and begin a conversation for the year ahead. In November, there is a new book being released, written by Diana Butler Bass, [A Beautiful Year](#), which features a weekly meditation on faith, wisdom, and perseverance.

You are invited to mark the year ahead alongside this devotional and consider gathering throughout the year to share reflections on the readings, to be in conversation with others, and share prayer together.

Plan to pick up your own copy at your local bookstore, or your preferred source for hardcover, e-Book, or digital audio. We'll also have copies available to pick up at Grace.



Then make plans to gather on these dates and later throughout the year to talk about these readings and reflect on a beautiful year ahead.

Sunday, November 23, 10:15-11 a.m.

Book Beginning Gathering (Luther Hall)

Happy new church year!

-Meet to begin reading the first entry of the year

Sunday, December 14, 10:15-11 a.m.

Beautiful Year Meet Up (Luther Hall)

Advent Blessings

-Meet to share initial reflections on weekly readings

May God bless you and keep you in these changing times and seasons, may you prayerfully consider participating in this weekly reading and occasional gathering, as we draw near to God's word and one another.

*Peace,
Pastor Amanda*

Prayers

Home Communion

If you are unable to gather for worship and would like communion to be brought to you at home, please reach out to the church office. Grace has a team of home communion ministers who visit and bring communion from worship to you.

Senior Phone Calling

If you are interested in joining the senior calling team or are a senior who would be interested in learning more about this ministry of conversation and prayer, please call the church office.

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 Yehiel Curry, 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: Wayne Aavang (son of Joy Aavang and brother of Barb Aavang), Charlie Bell (friend of Jamielynn Wedoff), Butch Borchardt (friend of Barb Aavang), Marlene Botts, Barb Carmichael, Jim Davis, Patrice Dunn, Marshall and Paige (Behrens) Fink (great granddaughter of Joy Aavang and great niece of Barb Aavang), Connie Fischer, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Tom Goggin, Marie Grob (family member of

Kevin & Carrie Jarnecke), Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Cindy Hertrampf (sister of Tammy Hansing), Dan Hess, Gloria Holy, Denise Hoover, Wayne Japp, Anne Johnson, Nicholas Karasch (nephew of Jamielynn Wedoff), Tiffany Kurth (niece of Sue & Al Beckman), Elminster Lovejoy, Hudson May (great grandson of Karen Klabunde), Amanda McNally (grandniece of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Ben Miller (nephew of Mary Johnson), Natalie Miller (sister to Mary Johnson), Kem Moran (friend of Barb Aavang), Jenny Perrone (friend of Cindy Walters), Joe Pienschke, Dorothy Potoczky, Ila Randolph, 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), Diane Rouse (cousin of Lisa Washkowiak), Orest Rychtytzkyj, Ryan Rychtytzkyj, Nathaniel Shipp (family friend of Brian Meyers), Ann Sinnett (friend of Shirley Berna), Kathy Stone, Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahon), Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Marilyn Vanskike, Mary Widmayer, Caitlin Wilcox (niece of Anne Johnson)

Sorrow: Elaine Burcham

Joy: Fletcher Perry Klay, Kali Quinn Klay, Remington Louise Klay, Jaden Robert Skradski, Nicholas Skradski

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)**.

Pinochle

Pinochle gets together on the first and third Wednesdays, Nov. 5 & 19 at 1 p.m. in Room 101. Enter the lower level of the church for all events. Contact Sally Sheahan for more information.

-Sally Sheahan

Sewing Circle

Sewing circle meets Nov. 4 and 18 from 8:30-noon at Grace Center. We are will be shipping items to local places in November. We welcome replenishment of materials that we

use including fabric, sheets, quilt batting, pillow stuffing, embroidery thread, sewing thread and yarn.

We also welcome new friends to join in the fun and fulfillment of this



Pie Fest will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 25 after the Thanksgiving Eve service. Drop off your homemade or store-bought pies downstairs in the kitchen beginning at 6 p.m. and up until the service starts.

Please mark if a pie contains nuts, and label your pie plate if you need it returned to you.

ministry. Any questions please contact Tammy Hansing at hansings1981@gmail.com.

-Tammy Hansing

GRACE FOR TODAY—The deadline for the **December 2025** 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



Let us give thanks this November, and always. As we gather on All Saints Sunday, November 2, we give thanks for the newly baptized, and we remember in thanksgiving all the saints who have died. Join in prayer, lighting of candles, and in giving thanks to God as we gather in worship.

We give thanks at the turn of the church year, as we gather for worship on Reign of Christ (Christ the King) Sunday, November 23, before entering into a new year and season of Advent on November 30. Join in giving thanks for God's steadfast presence in all seasons of life.

And on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving we gather for a festive Thanksgiving Eve Worship service at 7 p.m. on Nov. 25, and tasty Pie Fest to follow.

See you soon, for worship together on Sundays **9:00 A.M.** in the sanctuary, or worship wherever you are via [YouTube livestream](#) or the posted worship videos on our website.

Upcoming Worship Save the Dates

Holden Evening Prayer- Sunday, December 7, 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve- Wednesday, December 24, 4:00 & 7:30 p.m.

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.
- If you'd like to join in sharing a children's sermon message, please contact Nyji.
- There are currently four people who facilitate worship by 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 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.
- If you are interested in more information about trying or joining a choir or music group (youth to adult choirs, adult handbell choir, and band), contact Jan Burns for more information.

See page 4 for more details about Grace Christmas Flower orders.

Amount: _____

CHOOSE ONE PER COUPON: (Please print)

In Memory Of:

In Honor Of:

To the Glory of God:

GIVEN BY :



Estimates of Giving



On Reformation & Commitment Sunday at the end of October, we give thanks for our response to God's generosity in the communication of giving commitments for 2026. We look forward to the ways our offerings will continue to equip the people of Grace Lutheran Church to love our neighbors, to teach our children about Christ, to support those in need, and to build a stronger, more vibrant community of faith.

If you have not yet returned an Estimate of Giving Card for 2026, we invite you to return your card to the church office, offering plate during worship, or complete [online](#).

Thank you for sharing in the life and ministries of Grace Lutheran Church.



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 \$17 gift to Grace Lutheran Church, 1300 Kishwaukee Valley Rd., Woodstock, IL 60098.

Please **print clearly** on the coupon on page 3 as you want your gift to appear in the bulletin.

Payments due in the office by **December 12, 2025**.

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 Dec. 1. Please leave your donations in the entryway on the upper level from Sunday, Nov. 16 through Sunday, Nov. 23. If you have any questions, please contact Judy Reilly.

-Judy Reilly

World of the Bible: Travel Seminar

If you are interested in a travel opportunity in 2026, you are invited to join faculty and students from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in a pilgrimage to biblical cities of Greece and Turkey. Visit ancient sites of the Apostle Paul's missionary journeys and the churches of Revelation and experience the Mediterranean world's amazing landscapes! Professors Barbara Rossing and Esther Menn will lead a group of students, lay people, alumni and friends in an experience of seminary life on the road, to explore two of the most fascinating countries of the world. For more information, visit: <https://lstc.edu/event/world-of-the-bible-travel-seminar/>

Share the Warmth
COAT DRIVE
Coats for Men, Women & Children

If you are in need of a winter coat or outerware, please visit us at:
First United Methodist Church
201 W. South Street, Woodstock, IL

Friday	Saturday
November 14	November 15
2:00-7:00 p.m.	9:00 a.m.-Noon

wacmgroupp.org

Fall Cleanup

Fall Cleanup of the church grounds will be Saturday, Nov. 1, from 8 a.m.-noon. The rain date will be scheduled on Saturday, Nov. 8, from 8 a.m.-noon. See you there!

Special Congregational Meeting November 16

Your Grace Lutheran Church Council was very appreciative of the thoughtful questions, comments, and concerns voiced at our September 28 -30 Land Forum Conversations or relayed to our council members.

After further discussion at our October council meeting, we moved to call a special congregational meeting on Sunday, Nov. 16 at 10:15 a.m. in the sanctuary. The main agenda will be for members to vote

on the proposal to list our designated 10 acres for sale (comprised of the 3- and 7-acre parcels). Zoom information will be coming. We hope everyone plans to attend.

Columbarium Survey Update

Thank you to the families that have already replied to our columbarium survey. To give the Columbarium Task Force direction, it is especially important to hear back from any families who are seriously thinking about having urns placed in a potential Grace Lutheran Church located

columbarium. Surveys are available online at <https://forms.gle/54cvLtaPd6LVgAgB6> or via paper copies found by the columbarium display board in the narthex. We are collecting surveys through Dec. 1. Questions, please call Mary Noe at 815-3347-5988.

Welcome Grace Director of Youth Education

We are blessed to welcome Nyji as our new Director of Youth Education. With a heart for mentorship and service, Nyji brings more than 20 years of experience in community outreach and planning, works part-time as an insurance broker, and is a proud member of the Cary Rotary Club. We're excited for the passion, leadership, and love Nyji brings to our youth ministry.



Nyji Sirreayah

Sunday School

Sunday School families gathered in mid-October for service learning as they talked about daily bread, hunger, and faith in action before shopping at Aldi to restock the Blessing Box, as well as for class at the end of the month.

Sunday School meets again on November 9 & 23 for class following worship. If your children are interested in joining Sunday School



Youth restocking the Blessing Box.

classes, we look forward to seeing you soon!



Sunday School children talked about daily bread, hunger, and faith in action before shopping at Aldi to restock the Blessing Box.



Families shopping at Aldi.

Confirmation

Grace's 7th & 8th grade confirmation students continue to gather around stories from the Old Testament this semester, as we welcome guest teachers in sharing and learning together. Thank you for sharing in worship, service, and prayers for our students and families.

Christmas Family Sharing

Christmas Family Sharing, Grace's Christmas time donations program, which supports local and global ministries, is coming soon. Watch for more information in upcoming Grace Notes.

--Mary Beth Bellavia

Youth Standing With Jesus

This is Grace's High School Youth Group. Kirsten Green has served with other volunteers as adult leaders for Grace's high school youth group and is looking for 1-2 new adults to join the coordinating team. YSJ has gathered for service opportunities, Wednesday night drop-ins, and summer trips such as the ELCA Youth Gathering. *Please let Kirsten Green or Pastor Amanda know if you'd be willing to learn more about supporting high school youth group at Grace.*

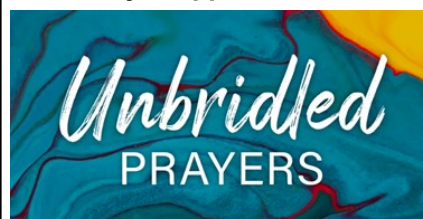
Sunday Book Club

On Sunday, Nov. 2, after church, Sunday Book Club will begin a new book, "Saving Grayson," by a familiar author, Chris Fabry.

This will be our fifth Fabry Christian novel Sunday Book Club has read together. This time, best-selling author Chris Fabry takes us into a world of love and loss, dementia and startling clarity, hope and despair. The blurb on the back of the book says that the reader will root for Grayson and those who love him to find answers before words become a distant memory. Please join us as we read and discuss this "Focus on the Family" book about the long journey over the next 12 weeks. For more information, contact me or Paul Lockwood.

-Sally Sheahan

Prayer App for Parents



Unbridled Prayers is a new prayer app you can add to your phone or tablet for daily prayers for parents of children in three age groups: Early Childhood, Elementary, and Preteen. Visit <https://unbridledprayers.app/help> for instructions on how to add to your phone or tablet.



Presence Light Sponsors:

November 2:

- In memory of Marlene L. Teuber and in honor of Robert W. Teuber; given by Robert B. Teuber.

November 9:

- In honor of our daughter Abigail's recent marriage to Nathan Luftman; given by Bill & Nancy Kreznor.

November 16:

- In memory of my mom; given by Karen Reinhard.

November 23:

- In memory of my parents, Don & Carol Phillips; given by Mike Phillips.

November 30:

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

Bulletin Sponsors:

November 2:

- In loving memory of Reed G. Larson; given by Dallas, Ellen, Kirk, & Evan.

November 9:

- Given to the glory of God

November 16:

- In memory of Marlene L. Teuber and in honor of Robert W. Teuber; given by Robert B. Teuber.

November 23:

- To the glory of God for his guidance and many blessings; given by Robin Gibbs.

November 25:

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

November 30:

- In memory of my dear husband, Charles; given by Sharon Sinkoske.

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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Building Supervisor

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Brian Gerloff, Carrie Jarnecke,
Nancy Kreznor, Luigi Licastro,
Michael Liedtke, Mary Noe,
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