

MAY 2022 • VOLUME 21, NO. 5

LIKE A PARTY

In early March, before worship at noon on Ash Wednesday, I shared a brief moment in the church office with a few others to name how excited we were to see people. Then before worship that evening, the narthex felt like a party. On Ash Wednesday. People were arriving for worship on that start of the Lenten season, stepping foot in the building for the first time in years, reconnecting and greeting each other, working together to prepare for worship. There was so much energy and life on that day we remembered we are dust and to dust we shall return.

In the middle of Lent we heard the story of the man who had two sons, the one who stayed and the one who lived away from home and family. And when the one who had left returned, oh was there a party! A party to eat and celebrate for the one that was dead and had come to life, the one that was lost and had been found.

By Palm/Passion Sunday, Holy Week services, and Easter Sunday, what a time we have shared to gather, rejoice in one another's presence, and celebrate the good news of Jesus' resurrection. Alleluia! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Friends in Christ, I feel the brimming possibilities of this time and season and I hope you will share in this time. It has been such a joy to meet new people, talk with people continuing to worship online, see people newly returning to the sanctuary, and witness new and renewing ways to share God's grace.

This May, as we tend to endings and beginnings of seasons and school years, I ask you to prayerfully consider how you will share in the life of this faith community.

How will you play a part in building up the body of Christ to share the good news of God's love in Christ? The possibilities for meaningful and faithful ministry are endless AND they can only be created, renewed, and sustained through the support of volunteers participating in ministry for the sake of the mission we share.



Consider how you'll encourage one another, sign up to serve, participate in weekly worship, pray for others, and make an effort to connect with each other.

Please take a look at upcoming events noted in this newsletter, reach out to find out how you can share in one of Grace's committees, check your weekly Grace Notes emails for additional ministry opportunities, and sign up to serve in worship to be ready to welcome one another each Sunday ([Ushers](#), [Greeters](#), [Reader](#), and now, [Communion Assistants](#)).

May this season ahead be like a party where all are welcome and the joy of gathering is renewing as we hear God's word, share the Lord's supper, serve each other and neighbors in community, and celebrate life together in Jesus' name.

Peace,
Pastor Amanda

WORSHIP THIS MAY - Happy Easter, dear church! Alleluia! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia! The season of Easter continues for 50 days, until Pentecost Sunday on June 5.

This month as we gather to worship God and hear good news, we will celebrate with those receiving their first Holy Communion meal, rejoice with those celebrating high school graduation, and give thanks for the faithful preschool ministry at the conclusion of the program.

We gather for worship on Sundays at 9:00 A.M. in the sanctuary, via YouTube livestream or the posted worship videos on our website.

WEEKLY GRACE NOTES - In addition to this Grace for Today newsletter, we have additional updates and news shared through our weekly Thursday emails. Please call the office or email Carrie Fiorina cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org to add or update your email address if you do not already receive these emails.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK - If you are on Facebook, please join us at the public group “Grace Lutheran Church, Woodstock, IL” for community news, pictures, and event information.

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 Jeff Clements, 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), Mary Sue Boerner (friend of Paul Lockwood & Diane Baker-Lockwood), Nancy Brown, Myron Callihan (brother of Susan Payton), Jim Davis, Lori Dechant, Patrice Dunn, Joe Evanoff, Barbara Gehrke, Robert Giron (brother of Patty Kozlow), Stuart Given, Tom Goggin, Hal Goodman (friend of Bob & Janice Laird), Becca Guenther (niece of Gretchen & Claude Hutchens), Tamasa Gutierrez (mother of Patty Kozlow), Leonard Haulotte (brother of Laura Boal), Denise Hoover, Anne Johnson, Marcia Kalisik (daughter of Barb Murray), Nicholas Karasch (nephew of Jamielynn Wedoff), Steve Kosmen (loved one of the Koehn family), Anna Larsen (sister of Al Henniges), Amanda McNally (grandniece of Diane Baker-Lockwood), Kem Moran (friend of Barb Aavang), Linda Nogan (sister of Sheila Readell), Gloria Ogle, Alan Page (friend of Joe Evanoff), Linda Page (friend of Joe Evanoff), Georgia Petersdorf (sister-in-law of Gladys Renner), Pat Peterson, 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, Joan Russell (mother of Sheri Conover), John Rust (Aavang family friend), Colton Sciluffo (infant son of a friend of Joy Oberman), Nathaniel Shipp (family friend of Brian Meyers), Ann Sinnett (friend of Shirley Berna), Kathy Stone, Dave Sundby (brother-in-law of Deborah Evanoff), Samuel Sweeney (nephew of Melissa McMahon), Josh Tillman, Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Marilyn Vanskike (friend of Cathy Meyer), Bev Visconti, Addie Jo Wedoff, Nick Wedoff, Esther Wienke

Joy: Baptism of Jackson Matthew Kleven (son of Dakota Kleven)

Sorrows: LaVerne Foerster, Carol Rank

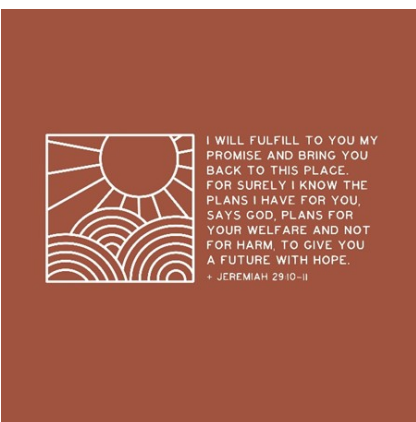
If you wish to add a prayer request for the newsletter, please call the church office at 815-338-0554. Your prayer concern will run for one week and may be renewed. Submissions to the *Friends in Prayer* e-mail and phone teams may also be submitted by telephone to the church office or by e-mail to Gracewoodstock.org. 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 office.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER—The deadline for the **June** newsletter is **May 15th**. Please send articles to Tammy Baier at tbaier@gracewoodstock.org, or the church office. Questions: Call the office at 815-338-0554.

DIRECTOR OF SENIOR MINISTRIES –*From Shirley Busse*- I am sad to announce that I will be stepping down from my position at Grace at the end of May. I have enjoyed each and every day I have worked for you! I have always loved what I do!! I am only doing this because I am moving out of the area. My oldest daughter and I have purchased a home with an attached apartment, for me, in Lake Forest to be closer to my other daughter.

This is a happy – sad time for me. Leaving the church that I love and the people and friends that I love is really hard. Then on the happy side, I am looking forward to being able to spend more time with my children and grandchildren. I will have less housework, so I will have more time to explore more hobbies and settle in to making new friends.

I have managed to find wonderful people to continue with the senior ministries that are currently being offered. Sally Sheahan will be coordinating the Calling Ministry; Paul Lockwood & Howard Hoyt will carry on with the Sunday Book Club; Sally Sheahan, Chris Schildt & Judi Mason will keep the pinochle club going. Please give them your prayers and support.



QUARTERLY STATEMENTS - Thank you for your support for mission and ministry through your gifts of tithes and offerings. Quarterly giving statements were mailed in early April, if you have questions about your statement, please contact the church office.

Through your giving, Grace Lutheran Church continues to share God's grace. This year our congregation approved a deficit budget and your continuing and renewed giving in support of our shared mission continues to make a difference within and beyond our faith community.

Thank you for your generosity, thank you for your prayers, and thank you for participating in God's work through Grace Lutheran Church.

CELEBRATE GRACE PRESCHOOL - On Sunday, **May 22** at the 9 am service, we will gather for worship and during the service celebrate the 17 years of Grace Preschool. While we are sad at the closing of this ministry, we are also so thankful for all the ways it has touched members of our congregation and the Woodstock community. If you were a student or family of a student, staff member, Board member, if you supported the fundraisers, attended programs, or prayed for the Preschool, please come join us! If you know families in the community who have ties to the Preschool, please invite them for this celebration and recognition of Grace Lutheran Preschool.

PEACE AND QUIET - Please join Deacon Judy Rooney for a time to reflect on what we all need more of, Peace and Quiet. We will be using our 5 senses to enhance our understanding of how to attain more peace and quiet in the midst of all the chaos in the world. These thoughts and ideas are based on the writings of Mother Teresa. We will gather in Grace Center after church on Sunday **May 1**.

SPRING CLEAN UP - We have set the date of **May 7** for our next Spring Clean Up. Please join us to pull weeds, rake, and do other sprucing up projects. We will meet at 8:00 a.m. and go until about noon. For further information contact
Tammy Baier,
tbaier@gracewoodstock.org.



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).

SUNDAY SCHOOL -

May 1- First Communion for 1st graders

May 8- Sunday School meet- Story of Creation Sunday

Sunday School Teachers- please join us at the 9 am service to be recognized for all of your efforts in supporting and growing Grace's young members. Those who are interested and have ideas for next years Sunday School program please meet in Luther Hall after the 9 am service to discuss and share ideas.

May 22- Our last action day and final meeting for the year- Please come dressed to get your hands dirty as we will be working in the flower beds to spruce up Grace's grounds.

If you have any questions, please send Jamielynn an email at jamielynn@wedoffphotography.com

YSJ "YOUTH STANDING WITH JESUS!"

Mobile Food Pantry- YSJ is committed to helping distribute food to over 500 community members in need on the first Monday of each month 3-5:30pm. Future pantry dates are **May 2, and June 13**. Please join in whenever you can! RSVP's are preferred by the Thursday prior to our service date!

SUMMER CAMP at LOMC July 24–29th— Does hiking, canoeing, team building, a service project and worship around a campfire sound GREAT to you? Please contact Carrie Fiorina in the church office for registration information if you were unable to attend the parent meeting in January. YSJ has room for a few more campers! :)

SUNDAY BOOK CLUB – We are finishing up our current book “June Bug” this month. The first two weeks in June we will be discussing the book “I’ll Push You” by Patrick Gray & Justine Skeesuck. We will be using the discussion questions in the back of the book, so please start to read the book now. Sally Sheahan will be leading the discussion. You can contact her at 314-910-0541. Since masks are no longer required we have treats! New members are always welcome, just stop in the Parlor after services or Call Shirley Busse at 815-338-9063 for the link to join in via zoom.

FAITH CIRCLE -

Faith Circle is a group for women that meets the third Monday of the month, August to May, at 6:30 p.m. in the Church Parlor. New members are welcome. Our next meetings will be on **May 16**.

We enjoy fellowship and then participate in an informal Bible study using the GATHER magazine, an E.L.C.A. publication. A subscription is optional but recommended at \$19.95 for one year.

Faith Circle also is called upon for special services at church, and we donate to Christmas Family Sharing and other fundraisers.

Contact person is Marylee Steinwehe, mnsteinwehe@gmail.com.

UKRAINE CRISIS - Please pray for those in Ukraine, Russia and neighboring countries that have been affected by the crisis in Ukraine. May God's healing presence give them peace and hope in their time of need. If you would like to give support, here are a few partners in ministry actively responding:

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) - www.elca.org

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) - www.lwr.org

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) - www.lirs.org/ukraine-crisis

If you would like to give support through Grace, please write a note in the memo to indicate where you'd like your gift to go: for example: "Ukraine- LDR" or "Ukraine- LWR".

ART AND MEDITATION - Adult Education

Sunday, June 12

The word “spirit” derives from the word “breath,” (spiritus in Latin). To breathe is the first thing we do and the last thing in our journey of life. Connecting with our breath is a common way of practicing meditation or mindfulness. Connecting to our breath can help us slow down and be more present, more aware, more conscious of God working in our lives, of God’s love for us.

Art has been called the language of the soul. Creativity of all forms brings forth something new. Like the Great Creator, in whose image we are made, we find joy, satisfaction and pleasure in creative pursuits of all kinds, from baking and gardening, to painting, photography, to wood carving, music, writing.... the list is endless.

Using creativity, to connect art and our breath, is to make Spirit visible. In this short workshop, we will combine art materials and meditation to draw or paint our breath and explore a new way to pray. Prayer can be defined as any practice that brings us closer to God. If you are looking for a new way to pray, connect with your creative Spirit, or just curious, sign up to learn more. You can sign up in the activity folder at the welcome desk or you can call the office, 815-338-0554 All materials will be provided. Please register in advance so we can have appropriate supplies. No art experience is necessary. Suggested for adults and teens over 16.

Rachelle Barmann will be facilitating this artful meditation, she is a Registered Art therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor working at Turning Point.



**June 4-5
at Grace**

SUMMER KICKOFF -

We hope you're ready to gather on the beautiful Grace grounds **Saturday-Sunday, June 4-5** for a summer kickoff. Sign up soon through weekly Grace Notes emails or by calling the church office. We'll gather for games, s'mores, & song around a fire and enjoy gathering together as a community. You are welcome to camp out overnight at Grace (or return to the comfort of your own home for the evening). We hope to see you there!

SENIOR PINOCHLE CLUB -

Join us on **May 11 & 25** in room 102 from 1:00 – 4:00. Since masks are no longer required, we have treats! There is always laughter and a lot of fun had by all. Beginners are welcome! For more information call Shirley Busse 815-338-9063.



GRACE SEWING CIRCLE UPDATE - We continue to remain busily sewing at home, but we are also meeting from **9-noon** on the **1st & 3rd Tuesdays** of the month in Grace Center. **Please join us as we would love to have you!** Sewing knowledge is not a requirement as we have non-sewing projects, but we could also use those of you who sew. We have kits made up for home sewing if you prefer to help in that manner. We can always use **sheets, fabric, batting, pillow stuffing, yarn** or **Thrivent Action Team** funds. **Many thanks to those of you who have donated items and money to our group! You are awesome!** Questions? Please contact Tammy Hansing (815) 338-5387 or Faith Watkins (815) 451-2592.

Presence Light Sponsors:

May 1st:

- In memory of Laine Berlin & Carrie Vought, given by Jack & Jane Berlin.

May 8th:

- In memory of Sheri's Dad, Stanley Russell, 4 years after his passing, given by the Conover family.

May 15th:

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

May 22nd:

- To the glory of God, given by Andy and Mary Beth.

Bulletin Sponsors:

May 1st:

- To the glory of God for our family, given by Bob and Joyce Shook.
- In honor of Eleanor Winfield receiving her First Holy Communion, given by Mom & Dad.

May 8th:

- In memory of Sheri's Dad, Stanley Russell, 4 years after his passing, given by the Conover family.

May 15th:

- In memory of Mary Figard, given by Terry Figard and family.
- In memory of Bill Lagerhausen, given by Peg Lagerhausen

May 22nd:

- In honor of all our 2022 graduates: Well done!; given by Nancy & Bill Kreznor.

eGIVING OPTIONS- In addition to weekly offering envelopes, Grace has additional electronic giving options available. 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: gracewoodstock.org

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

- Enter the 10-digit number (877-698-3604) and the amount you wish 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 4 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

Office Assistant/Bookkeeper/ Confirmation Coordinator

Carrie Fiorina
cfiorina@gracewoodstock.org

Director of Senior Ministries

Shirley Busse

Interim Director of Communications

Tammy Baier
tbaier@gracewoodstock.org

Parish Musicians

Terry Aavang, Jan Burns, Dale Carlson,
Tammy Baier, Carrie Filetti

Director of Preschool Ministry

Casey Dezwijger
cdezwiiger@gracewoodstock.org

Sunday School Coordinator

Jamielynn Wedoff

Building Supervisor

Ken Zank

Custodians

Chris & Kim Ethridge

Officers & Council

Andy Bellavia, Lisa Gerloff-Banker,
Diana Frisbie, Gayle Hoch, Kevin Kleinjan,
Paul Lockwood, Mike Liedtke, Matt Meiners,
Mary Noe, Robert Teuber
council@gracewoodstock.org