

JUNE 2026 • VOLUME 25, NO. 6



A few of my  
*favorite*  
things



When the roof leaks, when the power's out, when there's mulch galore ... I simply remember my favorite things. Beloved, the beautiful grounds and building where we gather are such an incredible blessing and resource that invite faithful tending. When we remembered our baptism as the rain hit the windows sideways and dripped into our Holy Week service, when the recent power line outage needing repair impacted facility use, phone access, and systems needed extra care and repair, when a few people gathered for several weekends of cleanup and mulch days, we see the need to tend to treasured spaces.

And when storms hit, things happen, appliances break, and solutions are challenging — I try to actively remember some of my favorite things: Jesus, God's call, people, life together. The joy of gathering spaces, the fullness of laughter and conversation when two or three are gathered to pray, to chat, to study, to serve. The delight of children seeing visible progress in teamwork and service efforts. The refuge of a quiet sanctuary to pause and pray and the beauty of resounding songs of praise.

As a community we have witnessed the power of word and sacrament ministry. The good news of Jesus that speaks to us in our daily living in this beloved world of God's. The sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, God's naming and claiming each of us as beloved, Jesus forgiving and nourishing us to be sustained for newness of life.

We have just heard the stories of God's faithful people as our confirmation students shared and affirmed their faith, we have rejoiced with individuals and families celebrating graduation milestones, and we continue to care and pray for all who grieve as we all cling to the promise of Jesus' resurrection.

As we give thanks for the spaces where we are able to gather for life together as a community of faith, I thank you for your generosity in giving. Your response to God's generosity tends to the important mission we share. Our giving equips our congregation to take care of this place where we can invite people to gather for learning and serving ministries that meet onsite, for continuing pinochle and new mahjong game fellowship groups, to be able to meet for prayer and mutual care and to worship God, and to proclaim God's redeeming, inclusive, amazing love and grace to all. Thank you for being church.

*Peace,*  
*Pastor Amanda*



ἐκκλησία  
(Greek (ekklesia) for "church")  
the called-out ones, the assembly, the religious congregation  
*we are the church together; welcome!*

# 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](mailto: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), Christy Goodman (sister of Jennifer Robbins), 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), Denise Hoover, Wayne Japp, Anne Johnson, Nicholas Karasch (nephew of Jamielynn Wedoff), Tiffany Kurth (niece of Sue & Al Beckman), Elminster Lovejoy, 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 Readel, Jayne Reicher (great niece of Barb & Wayne Japp), Bev Renner (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 McMahan), Brian Tobin (grandson of Enn Teetsov), Marilyn Vanskike, Cindy Walters, Mary Widmayer, Caitlin Wilcox (niece of Anne Johnson)

**Joy:** Birth of Scott Michael Klabunde, grandson of Karl & Denise Klabunde

## 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](mailto: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 Grace's website at

<https://www.gracewoodstock.us/current-openings/>.

## Attention Mahjong Players

We would like to start group play on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, starting June 9, from 6:30-8 p.m. Sign up [here](#) if you want to participate. If you have questions, please call the church office at 815-338-0554.

—Ken & Kathy Zank

## Book Club

The Sunday Book Club will finish "Under the Bayou Moon" this month and start the "Great Divorce" by CS Lewis. See the weekly email "Grace Notes" for more information, or contact Paul Lockwood or myself.

—Sally Sheahan

## Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle only meets the third Tuesday this month due to Vacation Bible School. All who want to participate in our sewing projects can meet us at the church on Tuesday, June 16, from 8:30 a.m.-noon in Grace Center.

—Tammy Hansing

**GRACE FOR TODAY**—The deadline for the **July 2026** newsletter is **June 15**. Please send articles to Kari Gippert at [kgippert@gracewoodstock.org](mailto:kgippert@gracewoodstock.org), or the church office. Questions: Call the office at **815-338-0554**.

# Worship this June

This summer, may you find a rhythm of rest and renewal centered in the grace of God and good news of Jesus. Join in worship as a faith community on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. at Grace, or wherever you claim space and time for worship through the weekly [YouTube livestream](#) or the posted worship videos on our website.

**Thank you** for being a part of Grace's worshipping community and for your role in extending hospitality to all who gather to worship God.

- Please sign up here or call the church office to serve as an [Usher](#), [Greeter](#), [Reader](#), or [Communion Assistant](#).
- If you'd like to join in sharing a children's sermon message, please contact Nyji Sirreayah.
- If interested in joining this A/V team rotation, please contact Bill Nattress.
- To learn more about participating in the altar guild to set up or clean up communion, please contact Karen Reinhard.

## Leadership Nomination

As we look ahead to our Congregational Meeting in August, you are invited to prayerfully consider submitting a nomination form for positions of leadership on Church Council, Endowment Board, and Nominating Committee. Please consider how you might be called to serve in our faith community and return a completed nomination form by June 28 to the church office (printed copies at the Information Desk or electronically through *Grace Notes* weekly email).

- **Church Council** members are elected to serve (three, three-

year terms, and one, two-year term are up for election this year.) Council members meet monthly, typically on the third Thursday evenings, and serve as a liaison to a committee and tend to the mission and leadership, finance and property matters, and general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation.

- **Endowment Board** members are elected to a five-year term (one position of five to be elected this year), to administer the Grace Mission Endowment Fund per the Endowment Fund Investment

Policy and Guidelines. The Endowment Board meets quarterly.

- **Nominating Committee** members are elected to a one-year term (all three positions to be elected annually) to prepare the slate of names for elections for the Congregation Council, Grace Mission Endowment Fund Board of Trustees, Nominating Committee, and the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly voting members. The Nominating Committee meets to prepare nominations before the Annual & Congregational Meetings.

## Thank You for Joining the Conversation

We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who participated in the Conversation with the Council on April 19. Your presence, input, and willingness to engage in open dialogue is truly appreciated.

These gatherings provide an opportunity to listen, share ideas, and grow together as a community. Your voices help guide our path forward and strengthen the spirit of our church.

We encourage everyone to continue reading the posted council meeting minutes to stay informed about updates and changes, and please feel free to speak with council members sharing your comments, questions, and concerns.

Thanks again,  
Church Council

## Pinochle

As always, Pinochle will meet on the first and third Wednesdays. This month that is June 3 & 17 at 1 p.m. in the lower level of the church in Room 101. All are welcome!

—Sally Sheahan

## Will You Be Grace's Next Treasurer?

Calling All Bean Counters: Our congregation needs a Treasurer.

Do you have a background working with numbers? Or owning/operating a business? Would you like to work with dedicated staff and volunteers? Are you willing to serve beyond the offering plate?

Knowledge of QuickBooks is useful, but training will be provided.

You don't need to be a Council member or go to the meetings but will be required to prepare periodic reports for the Council and congregation.

If you are interested in this volunteer position and would like to find out more, please contact a Council member or the office.

—Nancy Kreznor, Council President



	April 2026			4/30/26 Year-to-date		
	Actual	Budget	Difference	Actual	Budget	Difference
<i>Operating</i>						
<b>Income</b>	\$150,655.80	\$146,159.04	\$4,496.76	\$34,739.69	\$35,508.76	(\$769.07)
<b>Expense</b>	\$169,727.72	\$176,221.91	\$6,494.19	\$39,487.39	\$42,222.33	\$2,734.94
<b>Balance</b>	(\$19,071.92)	(\$30,062.87)	\$10,990.95	(\$4,747.70)	(\$6,713.57)	\$1,965.87

## Celebrate Pride Days This Month

Our community is preparing to celebrate Pride Day in both Crystal Lake (June 7) and Woodstock (June 14), and we would love your help. These events are a meaningful opportunity to share a message of welcome, compassion, and inclusion with our neighbors.

Volunteers will help at our ELCA table, greeting visitors, offering friendly conversation, and represent our church's commitment to love and acceptance for all. Whether you can give an hour or the whole day, your presence makes a difference.

Click [here](#) to sign up to help at Crystal Lake table (please sign up by June 2). Click [here](#) to sign up to help at Woodstock table (please sign up by June 10).

At Woodstock's Pride Day, not only do we need people to work the Fest ELCA table, we need walkers at the parade, too.

- **Parade, 11 a.m., June 14:** to walk in the parade, check "Grace Notes" for a final meeting time (~10:30 a.m.) and meeting spot, then join Grace Lutheran Church in walking the route from Dean Street School to & around the Square and back. Contact Mary Noe if you have questions.



## Cycling Without Age—McHenry County

Cycling Without Age (CWA) provides free Trishaw rides to seniors throughout McHenry County. We serve 29 senior living communities and also provide other community rides at parks throughout the county. All seniors are welcome to take a ride ... it's a good opportunity to ride with a family/friend as a companion, too.

Through 2025, the Trishaw for Woodstock was hosted by Hearthstone Communities but we needed a new home for 2026 and beyond. Grace Lutheran is now the host location!

CWA requested a site where it could build a shed to store the Trishaw and trailer during the ride season May through October each year. CWA has paid for the shed construction and ongoing maintenance. Six ride locations will be serviced by the Trishaw stored at Grace Lutheran (serving Woodstock and Harvard) and has enabled the group to expand service from four to six communities this year. Let's ride!

## Trishaw Rides & Grill Night Potluck at Grace

You are invited for a Cycling Without Age Trishaw ride during our Grill Night Potluck on Tuesday, June 30. Join us on the beautiful Grace grounds for dinner on Tuesday, June 30. We'll gather at 5:30 p.m. at Grace for dinner, fellowship, lawn games and Trishaw Rides. Sign up [here](#) to help us prepare for the main dish off the grill to be provided, you are invited to bring a side or dessert to share. See you soon!

## Synod Assembly

On June 12-13, voting members and guests from congregations throughout the Northern Illinois Synod will gather at Augustana College for the 37th Annual Synod Assembly of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The theme for 2026, including this year's Synod Assembly, is **Going Deeper: Naming, Claiming, and Proclaiming**. We will continue to consider hard questions of faith and to what God is calling us in today's world.

Please hold Grace's voting members: Robin Gibbs, Mike Liedtke, Paul Lockwood, Carrie Steckl, and Pastor Amanda — and all who gather for synod assembly — in your prayers this month.

## Gardeners' Meetup

Calling all gardeners: We're starting up our Gardeners' Meetup (formerly Weeders' Meetup) again every Monday morning from 9 a.m.-noon.

Bring your gloves, tools and bags, and let's get started. All are welcome to join! We share fellowship, time for silent prayer, and enjoyment of God's fresh air.

--Adele Petersen

## Thank You

Grace thanks those volunteers who arrived on Saturdays in May to help at our Spring Grounds Cleanup and our Mulching Days.

## Celebrating Our Youth



Three students finished their second year of confirmation classes by celebrating their Affirmation of Baptism on May 3. Pictured (right to left): Pastor Amanda, Evan Lanham, Tim Nellessen and Faith Metz. Congratulations!



On April 26, we welcomed to the table seven children who received their First Communion. Grace rejoices in welcoming you to Jesus' table!

## Caps Off To You In 2026

Congratulations to our high school graduates: Braedon Schwanke and Ellery Schutt.

Congratulations to our college graduate: Bob Gerloff.

## Grace Scholarship Funds

Scholarship applications for the Allen Fund are due to the Grace Lutheran Church office by July 1, 2026.

The Endowment Committee reviews all applications and votes during its quarterly meeting in July. Payments are made in August. For more information about the scholarship, visit the Grace website [here](#).

Obtain applications from the website or through the church office.

## Summer Camp

Please keep Grace's elementary and middle school youth in your prayers as they grow in faith and share camp experiences this summer! Several elementary students are attending different program weeks at Lutherdale this summer, and Grace's confirmation students will be at Lutherdale for Confirmation Camp this June.

If your elementary student continues considering summer camp, there's still time to sign up. See Sunday School materials or reach out to the church office for more information about financial support for registration fees.

## YSJ NEWS

EMPOWERING THE FUTURE, ONE VOICE AT A TIME

Serving is a powerful way to live out your faith, and YSJ is committed to putting love into action. Together, we'll learn what it means to lead, give back, and grow spiritually in real and practical ways. Come be part of something bigger than yourself.

YSJ High School Ministry is officially relaunching this summer, and we're kicking things off on June 7, in the High School Youth room downstairs. Do not miss the excitement. We hope members will

manage their own social media page and Kari Gippert will take group pictures you might want for your profile picture.

This will be more than just a gathering, it's a space where students can grow, belong, and build something meaningful together. Join us as we start a new chapter filled with purpose and connection.

We will meet Sundays from 10-11 a.m. on June 7, July 5, and Aug. 2.

If possible, please fill out the interest form [here](#). However, you can just show up. Bring your friends! All high schoolers are welcome, including all newly confirmed Confirmation students.

## On The Go With God — June 1-4

At press time, we have 30 children embarking on a Vacation Bible School (VBS) journey with God through the Bible **June 1-4, from 8:30-11:30 a.m. each day!**

Children as travelers, will explore exciting destinations with a Navigator and their pup, Scout, and find themselves "On the Go With God!"

Through engaging Bible stories, interactive games, and fun challenges, kids will discover that God is always with them. Road Trip VBS is more than just fun — it's a journey of faith, friendship, and unforgettable memories!

If you haven't registered your child yet, space for walk-in registration may be limited. The registration fee is \$20 per student (cash or check made payable to Grace Lutheran Church). Reach out to the church office for more information about financial support for registration fees.



## Presence Light Sponsors:

### June 7:

- In honor of Madden Crubel's graduation; given by Mike Phillips.

### June 14:

- To the glory of God for blessings received; given by William & Nancy Kreznor.

### June 21:

- Given to the Glory of God.

### June 28:

- Given to the Glory of God.

## Bulletin Sponsors:

### June 7:

- In honor of Mary's 81<sup>st</sup> birthday; given by John Widmayer.
- In honor of our granddaughter Elanor's birthday, given by Paul & Cindy Meyer.

### June 14:

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

### June 21:

- Given to the Glory of God; given by Don & Marylee Steinwehe.

### June 28:

- In honor of our son Ryan's birthday; given by Mark & Beth Miller.

## 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](http://gracewoodstock.org)**

### **GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL**

#### **Lead Pastor**

Rev. Amanda Bergstrom  
[abergstrom@gracewoodstock.org](mailto:abergstrom@gracewoodstock.org)

#### **Office Coordinator**

Kim Smith  
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#### **Financial Secretary**

Carrie Fiorina  
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#### **Communications Coordinator**

Kari Gippert  
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#### **Director of Youth Education**

Nyji Sirreayah  
[nsirreayah@gracewoodstock.org](mailto:nsirreayah@gracewoodstock.org)

#### **Organist**

Jan Burns

#### **Music Group Directors**

Terry Aavang, Jon Bergstrom,  
Carrie Filetti, Cindy Meyer

#### **Building Supervisor**

Ken Zank

#### **Custodians**

Chris & Kim Ethridge

#### **Council**

Carlos Acosta, Michelle Anderson,  
Brian Gerloff, Carrie Jarnecke,  
Nancy Kreznor, Michael Liedtke,  
Mary Noe, Adele Petersen,  
Jeremy Schaaf

#### **Treasurer**

Jane Gerloff