

JULY 2026 • VOLUME 25, NO. 7

*Above all else,
put on LOVE.* 

Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Colossians 3:12-14

On the opening night of confirmation camp at Lutherdale this summer, gathered around the campfire on a crisp and cool evening, camp counselors began their first week of camp with a skit. In an all too familiar scene, with clothes and shoes strewn across a bench, we heard a despairing, "I have nothing to wear! What should I wear to camp?!?" As a couple of counselors weighed the pros and cons of each item, how the outfit looks, the fashion sense and practicality of it all, they find a way forward with an outfit plan for the first day. And then, what was missing, the one thing that would tie it all together? Love. Above all else, put on love.

At camp we gathered around Bible study and songs, activities and adventure, and wondered together what it is to put on kindness, humbleness, steadfastness, forgiveness, and love.

Beloved, as you go forth into your daily lives this July, might you also consider these same practices? What does it look like for you to choose kindness? What does humility look like in your life? In what ways are you challenged by steadfastness? Where might you extend or receive forgiveness?

And above all else, how will you put on the love of God? These practices and values need tending; they shape who we are and how we live out our faith.

I pray that this month ahead brings you moments of reflection and intention. May you receive and feel the love of God that surrounds you wherever you go. May you know God's love for you so completely, that you are equipped to respond to God's call to go and love and serve your neighbors. Blessings on your commitments to faithful living, to kindness, humbleness, steadfastness, forgiveness, and love.

*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), John Bleile (family of Kristy Nellesen), 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), Janette Hess, 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)

Sorrow: Jane Berlin

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 Grace's website at

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

Attention Mahjong Players

We started group play on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 6:30-8 p.m. This month, we play on the 14th & 28th. Sign up [here](#) if you want to participate. If you have questions, please call the church office at 815-338-0554.

—Ken & Kathy Zank



Grace Sewing Circle continues to meet on the first and third Tuesdays at church from 8:30-noon. This month, the dates are July 7 & 21. Sewers and non-sewers alike are welcome.

Thank you to all who have donated supplies we use for our projects — like fabric, batting, pillow stuffing and sheets — we continually create lovely items with these supplies, so please keep them coming. If you have access to Thrivent Action Team Cards, they are beneficial for us as well.

Sewing Circle

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GRACE FOR TODAY—The deadline for the **August 2026** newsletter is **July 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 July

May God's grace be with you as we gather for worship this July. We gather in thanksgiving to worship God, hear parables that describe the kingdom of heaven, sing songs of praise, receive the sacrament of Holy Communion, and are sent back into the world to love and serve God and neighbor.

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](#), [Communion Assistant](#), or to join in sharing a children's sermon message.
- 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.

God's work. Our hands.



God's work. Our hands.



September 13, 2026

Mark your calendars for one of the best days of the year, September 13, 2026, our annual day devoted to love of our neighbors and church.

Do you have a community partner or service project idea? Would you be interested in being a team leader for one of our sites?

Reach out to Pastor Amanda to be a part of the planning for the upcoming 14th annual service day of connection and care in our community.

Northern Illinois Synod Assembly



Paul Lockwood, Carrie Steckl, Pastor Amanda, Michael Liedtke, and Robin Gibbs traveled to Augustana College to participate in the Northern Illinois Synod's Synod Assembly in June. Learn more about this gathering at the upcoming Congregational Meeting, reach out to our voting members, and/or visit nisynod.org to read about this year's event.

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



Save Sunday, Aug. 30, on your calendars for our Congregational Meeting. It will take place at 10:15 a.m. following our worship and will meet in person or via livestream.



Operating	May 2026			5/31/26 Year-to-date		
	Actual	Budget	Difference	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$42,497.58	\$34,778.76	\$7,718.82	\$193,153.38	\$180,937.80	\$12,215.58
Expense	\$40,281.33	\$41,350.82	\$1,069.49	\$210,009.05	\$217,572.73	\$7,563.68
Balance	\$2,216.25	(\$6,572.06)	\$8,788.31	(\$16,855.67)	(\$36,634.93)	\$19,779.26

Quarterly giving statements will be mailed mid-July. Please contact the church office with any questions (815-338-0554). Thank you for your financial offerings

in support of mission and ministry through Grace Lutheran Church.

WOODSTOCK PRIDE FEST



Last month, Grace had representation at a Lutheran church booth for inclusion & justice (pictured at left) during Woodstock PrideFest & Crystal Lake Pride. We also walked in the Woodstock Pride Parade (above). Those who walked with Grace are pictured below.



Sunday Book Club

The Sunday Book Club will not meet on Sunday, July 5. When it resumes on July 12, the group will begin reading "The Great Divorce," by C.S. Lewis. This allegory of Heaven and Hell explores good and evil; grace and judgment. As the book cover notes, "The Great Divorce" invites readers to reflect on their lives and the eternal spiritual significance of everyday choices.

There's a seat waiting for you at the table at Book Club, and we welcome you to join us on Sunday mornings after church service in the parlor. Contact Paul Lockwood or me for more information.

—Sally Sheahan

Sewing Circle

(continued from page two)

If Tuesday mornings do not work for you, we can also provide you with kits of fabric squares for sewing at home at your leisure. Return the item once completed. Please consider joining this fun and rewarding ministry. Any questions, contact Tammy Hansing.

—Tammy Hansing

Youth & Adult Education Teaching Teams & Hosts

In baptism, the gathered assembly responds to this invitation of commitment: "People of God, do you promise to support the newly baptized and pray for them in their new life in Christ?" with a bold "We do."

One of the ways we live out this promise is to teach the faith and support one another in learning, asking questions, and opening up scripture.

Last school year over 24 people served as Sunday School teachers and substitutes, Confirmation guest teachers, and adult Sunday book club facilitators. Thank you for supporting and praying for each other in our lives of faith!

As we prepare for a new school year ahead, we'd love for you to consider serving in support of faith formation. Please contact Pastor Amanda if you are interested in upcoming education plans. Thanks for making a difference in people's lives as we follow Jesus and share the good news.

Pinochle

We meet the first and third Wednesdays of the month. In July, the dates are July 1st and 15th. Contact Sally Sheahan for more information.

—Sally Sheahan

Adventure Calls, Kids Answer With Laughter, Fun at Vacation Bible School



Thank you people of Grace for hosting a road trip with God this summer.

Together we learned how God is with us on our journey, when we're lonely, when we go off course, wherever we are, near and far, God is with you.

Around 30 people shared creative tasks of designing, assembling, decorating and taking

down so the spaces where we gathered were transformed into road trip destinations.

In addition to staff support for VBS, 31 people volunteered the week of VBS to lead and guide 39 travelers on their way.

Thank you for supporting this summer learning and fellowship opportunity as a community.



Grace Attends Confirmation Camp Last Month at Lutherdale

Grace's confirmation students shared a week at Lutherdale in June with 60 confirmation campers from nine congregations.

Presence Light Sponsors:

July 5:

- In honor of the blessings received and in celebration of Bob Laird's birthday (July 8); given by Janice Laird.

July 12:

- In honor of our birthdays & anniversary month; given by Chris & Kim Ethridge.

July 19:

- Given to the Glory of God.

July 26:

- In honor of our daughters Kim & Tracie's birthdays; given by Ken & Kathy Zank.

Bulletin Sponsors:

July 5:

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

July 12:

- In memory of Eleanor & Robert Gerloff; given by the Gerloffs.

July 19:

- In honor of Andy's birthday; given by Mary Beth.

July 26:

- In honor of our daughters Kim & Tracie's birthdays; given by Ken & Kathy Zank.
- In honor of Mark's birthday; given by 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

GRACE STAFF & COUNCIL

Lead Pastor

Rev. Amanda Bergstrom
abergstrom@gracewoodstock.org

Office Coordinator

Kim Smith
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Financial Secretary

Carrie Fiorina
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Communications Coordinator

Kari Gippert

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