

May 2024

Grace Notes



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH • 7300 W DIVISION RIVER FOREST IL 60305 • 708-366-6900 • WWW.GRACERIVERFOREST.ORG

Pentecost Promise

By Pastor Dave Lyle



Pictured: Ascension Window at Grace.

It's a common occurrence in our home. One of our kids will happen upon us as we are deep in conversation. As soon as we notice the presence of the child, Erika and I immediately stop talking. "Oh," they'll say. "You're talking about parent things again." Exactly right. There are things that we, as adults, talk about that children should not hear. The time will come when they become part of these conversations, but that time is not now.

On May 19, at the culmination of the Easter season, we will once again celebrate Pentecost.

Each year, we hear Peter's bold sermon to the crowd in Jerusalem, inspired by the rush of wind and dancing tongues of flame. This year, the text from Acts is paired with a portion of Jesus' Farewell Discourse from the Gospel of John. Here, on the night before his death, Jesus speaks of why he and the Father will send the Holy Spirit: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:12-13).

Continued on page 2

In the death and resurrection of Christ, we know all we need to know for our salvation. But within that salvation, Jesus has more to teach us. The Holy Spirit is poured out upon us for this purpose, that the Word of God can continue to teach us and lead us into God's truth. To be clear, this does not mean that God is adding to the gospel. In Christ is the fullness of God pleased to dwell. It does mean that we still have much to learn about following Jesus. This is not a deficiency; it's how discipleship works.

Where might the Holy Spirit be leading Grace in this season of our life together? The Spirit is always casting a vision for us to follow. The leadership of Grace is beginning the process of looking anew at our mission and vision. What is God calling us to do and to be in this time and place? In a post-pandemic world in which fewer people identify as religious, what is our Christ-centered calling?

I'm excited to see where such conversations lead. I think that one key element is embedded in our current Mission Statement: Bring in, build up, send out disciples for Jesus Christ.

"Where might the Holy Spirit be leading Grace in this season of our life together? The Spirit is always casting a vision for us to follow."

That word is "disciples." We have been saved by grace through faith, and we are called now to follow. Discipleship leads to transformation. Transformation isn't always easy, but it is always worth it if it's the work of God.

The Spirit is also working to remind us that God's vision is always bigger than ours. How can we follow Christ in more wide-open ways, better proclaiming to the world around us what we already believe: God's grace is for everyone, and all are welcome here? Jesus Christ is the truth, after all, and it is our work as his disciples to speak grace and extend welcome to all such that all would come to know this truth.

God is preparing us to hear new things that spring from the old truth of the gospel. Who knows what visions and dreams we will see? In the promise of Pentecost, we hear again that Jesus, the Word of God, continues to speak to us. Come, Holy Spirit!

Worship in May

Sunday, May 5

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Service of Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Acts 10:44-48, Psalm 98, 1 John 5:1-6, John 15:9-17

Wednesday, May 8

Ascension Eve

Service of Holy Communion at 7:00 p.m.

Acts 1:1-11, Psalm 47, Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 24:44-53

Sunday, May 12

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Service of Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Acts 1:15-17 & 21-26, Psalm 1, 1 John 5:9-13, John 17:6-19

Sunday, May 19

Day of Pentecost

Service of Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Acts 2:1-21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 104:24-34 & 35, Romans 8:22-27, John 15:26-27 & 16:4-15

Sunday, May 26

The Holy Trinity

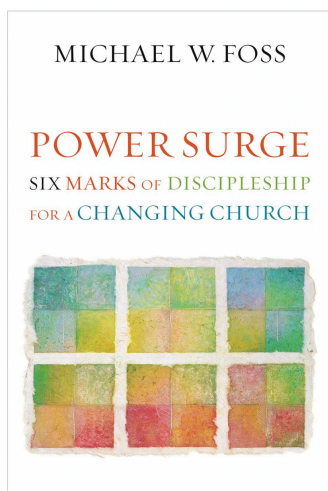
Service of Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Isaiah 7:1-8, Psalm 29, Romans 8:12-17, John 3:1-17

Are we Members or Disciples?

By the Church Library Committee

Many voices here at Grace have been talking about discipleship — maybe even evangelism — in a fresh new way. It turns out that this is not just the job of the pastors. We all know this. We are “ALL disciples indeed.” But how can it actually work?



The book *Power Surge* by Michael W. Foss (available in the Church Library, of course) walks through the process of re-imagining how we think about our congregation. In the 1950s, membership implied obligation on the part of the members. In today's culture membership is seen as exclusive. So, in the church setting, the clergy work to meet the needs of the members – and many of them do it very well. But by focusing on the needs of the members, the church, over time, has lost its vision for the mission of the church.

According to Foss, it is time to move away from the membership model and step into a discipleship model. Like all good how-to books, there are characteristics, trends and lists of behaviors to emulate. But on a spiritual journey, the six marks of a disciple found in this book are a good starting point. Daily prayer, weekly worship, Bible reading, service in and beyond the church, spiritual friendships, giving (time, talents and resources). Assessing our strengths or weaknesses in these areas can be revealing.

This author's writing style is comfortable and non-threatening as he proposes a return to a discipleship model. This is, after all, how the church began.

Grace Lutheran Church RUMMAGE

SALE DATES

FRIDAY, JUNE 7
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
SATURDAY, JUNE 8
9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.



DONATION DROPOFF DATES

Please bring your donations to the gym by Wednesday, June 5. Find donation guidelines at graceriverforest.org>gracelinks>rummage sale donations

Fri, May 31: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Sat, June 1: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Sun, June 2: 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. &
11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers to help receive, unpack, sort, price and display donations! Sign up with the QR code below.



RUMMAGE SALE LEFTOVERS

Not only is the upcoming rummage sale a great way to recycle, shop and help the many missions of Grace, but the leftover items are donated to a variety of charities. If you have a suggestion for a charity that could use the type of items sold at the rummage sale, please contact Rebecca Dahlstrom at centurywanderer1@hotmail.com

LEFTOVER DROPOFF: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Also, if anyone has a truck or van and would be interested in dropping off items to the Midwest Veterans Closet up on Green Bay road, please also let Rebecca know or ask for further information. Some current or past members of the military go there to get items they cannot afford on their own.

Grace Vocations Scholarships

By Kate Hogenson

For some the call to ministry is loud and clear with immediate support from family and their broader circle. There are others who may hear the call but find it difficult to act on the call for lack of support. For them, the path can be lonely indeed. The Community of Grace wants to be a source of both encouragement and financial support to enable more members of the community to answer the call to serve.

Vocations Scholarships are Grace's way of supporting the messengers so that the word of Christ can be heard. Scholarships are available for members of Grace who are full-time students in a graduate program or their last two years of undergraduate work. The first paragraph of the application clearly states the mission and purpose of this support:

"Recognizing the blessings of strong leadership, Grace Lutheran Church is committed to an intentional focus of raising up a new generation of leaders for the mission and ministry of the church. Through the Church Vocations Initiative, Grace will provide support, encouragement, and financial assistance to members who wish to pursue a vocational ministry, either within the church or in the secular world."

Applications for Grace Vocations Scholarships for the next academic year are being accepted through July 15, 2024 – please consider applying or inviting those you may know to apply for support either in directly pursuing the ministry or in ministering to others in need as Christ's example showed.

Here are the eloquent words of recent recipients of Grace Vocations Scholarships:

From Anna Beyerdorf, who is on the path to becoming an ordained pastor through her studies at Wartburg Theological Seminary:

"People helped me during my rough times...I can use my gifts for other people during rough times. I would like to become a pastor to witness to others about Jesus Christ. The witnessing can be in the form of hospital chaplaincy and/or being part of a church. During this time I would like to pray, witness, and administer the sacraments."

And from Lucia Niermann, who is pursuing a secular version of ministry through a Masters of Public Health from Ohio State University before continuing on to a full medical degree:

"I was taught that all are welcome in God's kingdom; I want there to be the same judgment-free, affordable, and accessible place for all people in healthcare facilities. I just finished my capstone project, which was on support programs for low-income, perinatal women. I wrote about how organizations make the most impact when their programs work to address and lessen each patient's burden to receiving care. This is not always easy, but necessary to ensure equitable healthcare for all."

Spiritual care plays an important role in overall well-being. Through combining my faith and educational background, I can help others in the church create connections between the two aspects."

Both of these fields of study and career goals qualify as pursuit of a ministry that can be supported by a Grace Vocations Scholarship.

Applications are available at graceriverforest.org>gracelinks.org>vocation scholarships or at the front desk.

If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to Kate Hogenson at Kate@LoyaltyLandscape.com or text at (312) 375-1364.

And please remember that the applications are due by July 15!

Diaconal Journey Update

By Julie Hinz

My deepest thanks to this community for your continued love and support as I work toward becoming a Deaconess through the Lutheran Diaconal Association. It has been about six months since my last update, and much has transpired in that time.

In January I completed my fieldwork hours at Harmony Food Pantry. What a blessing! We hear a lot about Harmony, and many wonder “Why is this a big deal?” My answer? Go. Visit. Spend some time with the people, help with the work, and you will know. Harmony Food Pantry is an embodiment of faithful, Godly people serving the world and working to make the Lawndale neighborhood a hospitable place. I was honored to be a small part of it for a short time.

In December I was accepted into the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program at Loyola University Medical Center to complete my required 400 hours of CPE (100 educational hours and 300 clinical). This was the location I truly wanted as it has a Level 1 Trauma Center, meaning those most seriously injured or ill are sent to this Emergency Department. I began the 100 hours of education on March 22 and will continue with that until May 26. These 100 educational hours are geared toward meeting the required outcomes of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE).

These outcomes range from personal, cultural, and spiritual identity, awareness of others and self, the effect of multicultural aspects on care, relational dynamics, boundaries, group dynamics, spiritual assessment, care, and resources, ethics, and giving and receiving feedback. As I become more familiar with these outcomes, I am seeing how Grace has already formed some of these in me and how I can benefit Grace more through this learning.

The 300 Clinical hours will be accomplished as I can fit them in over the next six to eight months. These hours will be spent on patient visits, shadowing other chaplains, and working with my preceptor (the chaplain with whom I share responsibility for a medical unit and who will be my direct teacher in clinical matters). My CPE will hopefully be complete by mid-October, at the latest.

I will attend my second seminar at Valparaiso University during the first week in August, where another period of intense learning will happen. I anticipate my internship will begin on January 1, 2025, here at Grace. I look forward to exploring how this new knowledge and understanding might be useful in innovation and exploring who we are at Grace might be as we move into the future.



Photo of one of
LDA's buildings,
sourced from
www.thelda.org

From Grace School

Grace School will soon be bidding farewell to an amazing first grade teacher, Mrs. Pederson. God is leading her, her husband Andy Pederson, and their children to Houston, Texas. Mrs. Pederson loved Grace from the start, so we asked her to share with us a little more about her experience in the past four years. We hope you will take the time to congratulate her the next time you see her as she embarks on this new and exciting journey. She will be missed!

From Mrs. Pederson:

Andy and I first looked at Grace as a new school home for our three children who at the time were in fifth, third, and first grade. We had heard great things about the school and knew of two other families who made the same transition we were considering. Our tour showed us all the amazing learning environments Grace is blessed with and how many "specials" our children would have included in their education at Grace. As educators, we know every teacher cannot be an expert in every area. God has given us different gifts. A school that hires specialized educators makes for a well-rounded education for all students. It also allows teachers to be their best selves, by giving them prep time to differentiate and plan more creative lessons. We were also struck by how warm and welcoming the whole school was as we toured.

I was super blessed to be hired for the same incoming year that my children were set to begin at Grace. I found the staff to be so helpful and kind, which was not easy as we switched schools during Covid. It was a time when most people felt very isolated. However, I found a strong community amongst the staff even while being apart on Zoom calls for Wednesday meetings and when in person, spaced out 6 feet apart in masks. Grace is filled with very caring and intelligent teachers on the staff, who have the students and Christ at the center of their hearts and minds guiding all their choices.

As a parent, we have found so many friends in the cheering stands of all Grace sports events. We have loved how every sport becomes like a family with the players and parents. Everyone cheers on everybody else. Parents are a huge part of what

makes Grace unique. Everyone is striving to make the school the best it can be.

Our kids have great respect and love for Grace. Within three weeks of our start in 2020, all three of our kids came to me individually to share how they were so thankful we made this choice to switch schools for them. (We had not included them in that process.) They were so impressed with the academic rigor from day one and knew they were getting a better education. This has stayed true all four of our years. Our kids have flourished at Grace and made some amazing friends, who make moving out of state a bit harder. They have a deep love and

respect for their teachers and enjoy walking through those school doors every morning. They will tell you they love the math advancement program, history, library, and how their teachers cared for and helped them through some tough times.

I plan on taking many things with me from Grace. I am taking my knowledge gained over my four years here, with the phonemic awareness programs, sound-based letter drills, "Who's going to have a

great day?" chant, character counts focused traits and the list goes on. I am also taking friendships with me. Friendships with teachers, parents, teachers who are also Grace parents, principals, pastors, staff, and my previous amazing 1st grade students and families. Most of all I am taking all my memories from Grace walk-a-thons, Lutheran Schools Week bouncy houses, seventh grade basketball games, chapel buddy helpers, the Christmas Eve cross and songs, Dr. Seuss week fun, end-of-the-year fun days with beach, bubble, and camping days and Friday dance parties. Don't worry, I will take all my stuff too, or at least most of it!



It has been a wonderful four years here at Grace that have truly been my best teaching years thus far in my 21-year career. However, God has opened new job opportunities for my husband and me in Houston, Texas. (Yes, Texas!?!) My husband thought it might be time to change his journey. Immediately, God tossed this amazing position right in the middle of his path where he can use his God-given talents and experience in education and theater to become the new Director of Education and Theatre for Family Audiences at A.D. Players, the largest Christian theater in the world. Then, while our boys were finishing the admission process at St. Mark Lutheran School, the executive director talked to me about interviewing for an opening they were going to have for this coming year in one of their two first grade classrooms. (first grade! It is my favorite grade to teach.) I am thrilled to have signed paperwork to teach first grade at the same school our boys will be attending. God has shown us in these and many other ways that western Houston is to be our new home in July, but we will be taking Grace in our hearts with us as we start this new adventure as Texans!

GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL

7300 Division Street in River Forest 708-366-6900



FAITH ❖ ACADEMICS ❖ CHARACTER

Early Childhood, ages 3 to 5

- Full-day kindergarten
- Half-day and full-day options for ages 3 to 4

Elementary & Junior High, Grades 1 to 8

- Strong academic curriculum
- Individualized attention
- Music, art, and sports teams
- Before and after-school care available

Serving Beyond our Walls

Youth from Grace, United Lutheran, and Good Shepherd Lutheran got to serve together at Feed My Starving Children in April.

This was a great opportunity for these young folks to spend some time with peers from other congregations while engaging in service. We are grateful for all who could attend and hope for many more opportunities to gather!



First Communion on Palm Sunday

On Palm Sunday we celebrated the First Communion of seven fourth graders. Please welcome them as they join us at the Lord's table. We are also grateful to Marilyn Heimburger, who has been sewing and preparing the white garments used in Communion for many years.



Pastor Troy leads the class as they explain key terms associated with Holy Communion.



Our fourth graders who attended the Communion retreat in March pose with their handpainted chalices.

Grace Notes is published monthly by Grace Lutheran Church and School, 7300 Division St., River Forest, Ill. It is mailed to Grace members, parents of students at Grace School, and friends of the congregation. This issue was mailed via U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail on Friday, April 25, with the hope that it will arrive in your mailbox no later than May 1. Copies are also available at Grace.

Deadlines and submissions. The June issue of Grace Notes will be mailed on May 26. The deadline for copy is Wednesday, May 15. Send news to bklaus@graceriverforest.org. Please limit submissions to news relating to Grace Lutheran Church and School, its mission, ministries, and the benevolences the congregation supports. Articles should be no longer than 500 words. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and relevance.

53rd Year
2023-2024



BACH

Cantata Vespers

May 19
Wer da gläubet und getauft wird, BWV 37
Whoever believes and is baptized

3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture
 Mark Peters, Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights

3:45 p.m. Organ Prelude
 Stephen Buzard, St. James Cathedral, Chicago

4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers
 Amy Gillespie, St. James Lutheran Church, Lake Forest, Illinois, homilist

J.S. Bach: Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf, BWV 226
 (Sung by singers of Chicago Choral Artists)

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra
 Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello conducting
 Susan Nelson, soprano
 Amanda Koopman, mezzo soprano
 Ryan Townsend Strand, tenor
 David Govertsen, bass

ALTAR FLOWERS

You can donate flowers to decorate the altar in memory of a loved one, or to celebrate a special occasion. Contact Esther Armstrong (eamstrong@graceriverforest.org) to donate flowers for the altar.

PRAYERS

This month we celebrate **Nina, Lucas** and **Elsie Helgeson**, who were baptized on March 30 during the Easter Vigil service.

Prayer list: the weekly prayer list can be found in the worship bulletin on Sundays. Contact Esther Armstrong (eamstrong@graceriverforest.org) to be included on the published prayer list.

Confidential prayer chain: please contact Kathy Lucht (kathy.lucht@gmail.com) to be added to the confidential prayer chain if you have private concerns.

Evangelism Conference

By Linda and Scott Street

Earlier this spring, Scott and Linda Street, Julie Hinz, and Dave Lyle traveled to Florida to attend the 2024 Exponential Conference. This year's conference was sponsored by The Great Commission Research Network and was titled "One-Eighty: The Return to Disciple-Making".

As with any conference, there were keynote speakers, breakout sessions, working groups, vendors, booths, food trucks, and hotel dinners where we discussed the day's topics. This gathering, however, was unique in the theme – *Disciple Making: From Doubter to Disciple*. Grace's Evangelism team has been discussing discipleship for many months. This seemed the perfect opportunity to explore this topic more deeply.

One key component was repeated all week; disciple-making is relational. So – when we think about relationships, we can see how many of our relationships are with family or other Christians. This Christian fellowship is wonderful and necessary for our faith. But what about those outside our faith? We don't quite know how to position ourselves with unchurched (or those we assume are unsaved) people. But building relationships with those populations is what is required for true discipleship. Both fellowship and discipleship are relational and critical components of Christian life, but they are not the same. Training and practice are necessary for discipleship. One thing we can do right away is overtly model our Christian beliefs. Praying over restaurant meals, helping those we see who are in need, and being ready with a smile and a kind word, are all ways you model your faith in the world.

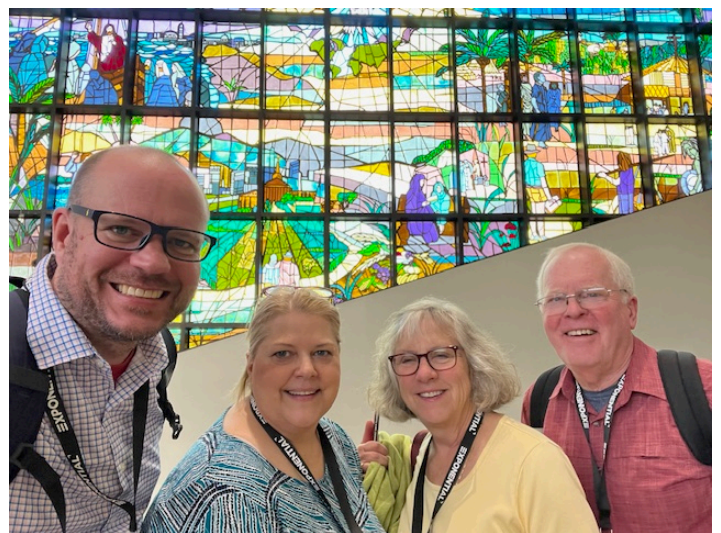
Most conference presenters were pastors or church planters. One statement by one of them spoke volumes – "Solo ministry stinks." Reflecting on this we realized that even Jesus sent his disciples in pairs to do their work. Pastors should never have to minister alone but need our support, prayer, and the participation of all of us to do God's work effectively.

God's mission was not addressed to any singular pastor but to all believers.

We discussed the feasibility of DBS: Discovery Bible Study. DBS is geared toward creating studies and environments where everyone can read and find meaning in scripture. These studies stemmed from the reality that a person should not need a divinity degree to understand Bible study, and that creating complexity in Bible study is counterproductive to disciple-making.

Other aspects of our learning revolved around awareness, being more observant of our context, and watching for spiritual pathways that God opens for us as individuals and as a congregation. Disciples are intentional in their outreach and ministry. Being open to exploring new and innovative ways to meet the needs of people both within and without our walls is beneficial to all of us.

When we returned to Grace and Grace Gathers, we continued studying the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus met her at her well. He spoke to her in words that resonated with her experience. He offered her something better – "living water." The challenge for us now is changing what were sound bites into meaningful ways of disciple-making at Grace.



Dave Lyle, Julie Hinz, Linda and Scott Street at 2024 Exponential Conference. Florida, March, 2024.

Discipleship: A Life of Service

By Julie Hinz

Over the last months, we've explored the idea of discipleship and what it is all about. What we begin to see is that discipleship is a process. It is an intentional journey that requires, first and foremost, a relationship with God which enables us to discern what God needs us to be and do in the world. This knowledge comes through worshipping with others, daily prayer, and regular biblical study. The next key aspect is building spiritually grounded friendships and being in fellowship with other believers. Communal life in Christ builds our faith and our resilience.

With an understanding of who God is, who we are, and what God needs from us, and being surrounded by people of faith to encourage and support us, we now move into a life of service. It is the first steps that make the service of God's faithful people different from the service of the unbeliever; our understanding of God's work in our lives, our Christian vocation, and our desire to share that with the world, gives our service an added layer. We are more than altruistic. We are missionaries, sent out into the world to provide for the needs of those we encounter so that they may see Jesus through us and come to know Jesus as we do.

As you consider how, where, or in what capacity you might serve, consider this; what do you love? What gift has God given you that you enjoy making use of? Maybe you have a love for numbers. Many places look for tutors to help underserved students. You might be a perfect fit. Do you love teenagers? There are all sorts of groups that serve kids; from coaching and boys & girls clubs to science/robotics or ASL clubs,

Philanthropy groups, and the like. Our Social Ministry committee also has many ways you can support their work outside of Grace. You can find food drives, clothing drives, etc., noted in the Sunday Announcements

Grace also has opportunities for you to share those gifts. From assisting with Sunday morning Worship to helping with the rummage sale (coming up soon!) Serving on boards and committees; writing Grace Notes articles, or doing repair work around the building are areas we love having you serve. Consider event planning or organization. There are always ways to serve at Grace as we serve the world.

I encourage you to look at one other place for your service: at home. We don't often think of the things we do for our families as service, but I would encourage you to do so. Making meals, doing laundry, cleaning our rooms, raking leaves...all those chores we want to avoid, these are ways we serve those we love. These are ways we make life easier for those whose lives directly intersect our own. These acts of love remind us that there is someone beside us for whom we care and who cares for us. We are reminded that, as we want to help, others want to help us. We are surrounded by many who are willing to be the hands and feet of Jesus for us. And when we serve each other, we serve and glorify God.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord!



FELLOWSHIP

Yoga at Grace

Yoga with Ackli meets on Thursday evenings, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome. Bring a yoga mat, a towel, and a yoga block if you have one. Classes are free with a goodwill offering to Grace. The last class before the summer break is May 9.

Grace Notes mailing crew

This newsletter crew will be at work again on Thursday, May 23, at 9:30 a.m. in the church library. Contact Marlene Hallman (708-562-5476) or just come!

Cornerstones

Bible study for seniors on Wednesdays. Join us in the church library for fellowship at 10:00 a.m. and Bible Study at 10:30 a.m. Contact Esther Armstrong at earmstrong@graceriverforest.org for more information.

Moms of Littles

Mothers with children of any and all ages, infants through teens, meet at 6:30 p.m. at Grace on the first and third Thursdays of the month for community and support. Contact Sabrina Maggio (sabrina.maggio713@gmail.com) for updates.

Theology on Tap

Community and monthly conversations about faith and life offsite on the last Friday of each month. The next meeting is May 24, at 7:00 p.m. at One Lake Brewing in Oak Park. Contact Pastor Troy for more information or to be added to the email list. (tmedlin@graceriverforest.org)

Men of Grace

The Men of Grace group meets on the fourth Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m., in the youth center. The next meeting is May 25. Email Pastor Troy for more information (tmedlin@graceriverforest.org).

Dads of Grace

The Dads of Grace gather offsite for evenings of fellowship on the fourth Monday of every month. Due to Memorial Day, the details for the May meeting are pending. Email Pastor Lyle (dlyle@graceriverforest.org) for updates.

Retired Leaders

The Retired Leaders group will meet on Tuesday, May 14, at 10:00 a.m. in the church library. Dean Lueking, Pastor Emeritus at Grace, and Troy Medlin, Associate Pastor are speaking on "Ministry Then and Now." Join in person or on Zoom. Email Gwen Gotsch at gwengotsch@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Finding Hope

This group for people with chronic illness meets on the second Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is May 14, in the church library. Contact Judie McDonnell for more information (judie.mcdonnell@att.net).

Moms of Teens and Young Adults

The Moms of High School Teens and Young Adults group fosters community among women whose children are growing up into adulthood. Contact Beth Reynolds (708-751-2196) to be added to the group's email list.

Knitting Group

This month, the knitting (and crocheting) group meets on May 18, 1:00–2:30 p.m. in the church library. Beginners are welcome! Contact Karen Eckstein (ecksteinkaren2@gmail.com) with questions.

Religion in Literature

The Religion in Literature group will meet on Friday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m. in the home of Barbara Hofmaier and David Heim, 210 S. Elmwood, Oak Park. **Please note the change in the reading for that evening.** Roger Ferlo will lead a discussion of the second half of Dante's *Inferno*, picking up from his fascinating talk on the first half during the March meeting. He will concentrate on the following sections: Cantos XII, XV, XXVI, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXIV.

To be added to the email list please contact jill.baumgaertner@wheaton.edu. All are welcome!

BUILDING HOURS

Building Hours:

- **Monday through Friday:** 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **Sunday:** 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Weekends and evenings: open for scheduled activities.

PASTOR'S EMERGENCY PHONE

Call 708-689-3032 for emergency pastoral care on weekends, or when the Grace building is closed.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Grace Lutheran Church General Fund
July 1, 2023 through April 12, 2024 (41 Sundays)

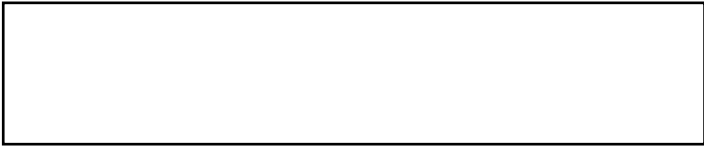
Church budgeted contributions
\$1,533,000 (\$37,400 per week)

Church actual contributions
\$1,317,000 (\$1,257,000 last year at this time)

Church giving as of April 12, 2024: \$216,000
(14% behind budget, and \$60,000 (5%) ahead of last year.
The current deficit is \$61,000 (\$2,000 deficit last year through April 30.)

GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
& SCHOOL
7300 Division St.
River Forest, IL 60305

Non-profit org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Oak Park, IL
Permit No 28



VBS 2024

Register your children for VBS!

June 17 - 21

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Registration is available on Grace Links.
graceliverforest.org>grace links