

January 11, 2026 • Last Sunday's Attendance: 181

Today at Grace: January 11

Grace's Library is Open

Did you know that the church library is open on Sundays? Stop by after worship to see what books are available. And if your child needs a break during worship, there are books just for them.

If you are looking for books on Christmas, you can find them in the library too! The book list for December can be found on Grace Links. To check out any book, please write your name on the card in the back of the book and leave it in the card holder on the table. Books are available for a four-week checkout.

Be the First to Know: Choose what emails you want to receive from Grace!

Hello! In addition to our weekly emails (Sunday is Coming and Today at Grace), we will be starting to send out specific emails that are tailored to your interests. Please scan the QR code, visit Grace Links, or click the link in Sunday is Coming to sign up for the emails that you are interested in receiving.



Epiphany Brunch Today, January 11, at 11:15 a.m. Fellowship Hall

This annual tradition is a wonderful way to enter the new year together as a family of faith. Come start the new year, with worship and fellowship centered in our Lord, Jesus Christ. If you didn't RSVP, you can still join us for brunch. We hope to see you there as we celebrate the new year together.



What's Happening: January 12 - 18

Ready to build deeper friendships and connections at Grace? Now is the perfect time to jump in! We have several groups meeting this week, and you're invited to stop by even if you've never attended before. All are welcome and no RSVP required. Come connect with your church family!

Faith Forum: Tuesday at 10 a.m. (Church Library and Zoom)

How the Supreme Court Has Expanded Religious Freedom

The Supreme Court has recently reshaped several areas of law, including the scope of religious freedom. Jeff Wood, a retired lawyer who has taught courses on the Supreme Court at the Chautauqua Institution, will describe these decisions and the legal philosophies shaping the court.

If you would like to join virtually, the Zoom meeting ID is 825-6775-6438 and the passcode is 407970.

Cornerstones: Wednesday at 10 a.m. (Church Library)

Join us for fellowship followed by a discussion about the upcoming Scripture readings.

Handbell Choir Rehearsal: Wednesday at 6:15 p.m. (Bell Room)

Parish Choir Rehearsal: Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. (Music Room)

Moms of Littles: Thursday at 6:30 p.m. (Youth Center)

We are group for moms of children ages infant - 8th grade. Our intention is to build and maintain a faith-based community that supports each other as we navigate the journey of parenthood. All moms are welcome in this group regardless of church or school affiliation. If you are in need of child care, please let Elyssa know by the Monday before each meeting (elyssa.salinas@gmail.com).

Yoga Class: Thursday at 6:30 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)

Bring a yoga mat, a yoga block if you have one, and a large towel or a blanket. Fee for the class is a free will offering which goes to the church. If you have questions about class or yoga in general, please call Ackli at 708-516-2701.

Operation Deluge: Sunday from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. (Atrium)

Confirmation: Sunday at 9 a.m. (Youth Center)

Session Topic: Baptism: One Lord, Faith, Baptism

Sunday School Resumes: Sunday at 9 a.m. (Nursery and 3rd Floor Commons)

Session Topic: The Lamb of God (John 1:29-42)

Adult Education: Sunday at 9 a.m. (Seminar Room)

How to read like C.S. Lewis: Lessons from the Lewis Library

Dr. Jim Beitler, Professor of English at Wheaton College, will showcase several remarkable items from C.S. Lewis's personal library and discuss what they can teach us about how to read well.

Health Committee Presentation: Sunday at 11:15 a.m. (Fellowship Hall)

Living Faithfully, Dying Faithfully: Estate Planning as a Part of End-of-Life Planning

Speaker: Melissa De Vries

Do you wonder what estate planning entails and whether it applies to you? (It applies to everyone!) Do you have a plan but are wondering what may have changed since you last did your plan? Come learn what estate planning is about, what you should do if you don't already have a plan, and what happens if you don't. Advanced directives, including Power of Attorney, will also be discussed.

Appalachian Service Project Meeting: Sunday at 11:15 a.m. (Youth Center)

High school youth are invited to join Pastor Troy to start planning the 2026 ASP trip. It is time to start planning our mission trip for next summer. Once we have a group of interested people, we will choose a week that works for the most people. If you can't make it to the meeting but are interested in joining, please email Pastor Troy to let him know (tmedlin@graceriverforest.org)

Bach Cantata Vespers: Sun., Jan. 18, at 3:45 p.m. (Sanctuary)

Alles nur nach Gottes Willen, BWV 72 (Everything according to God's will alone)

This cantata for the Third Sunday after Epiphany was first performed on January 27, 1726. Drawing its themes from the biblical account of Jesus healing a leper, the cantata describes how the believer finds comfort in trusting that all things ultimately come to fulfillment in God's gracious will. The cantata concludes with the chorale Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh allzeit (What my God wills, that always occurs), a hymn of faith and contentment well known to Bach's Leipzig congregation. The prelude to the service at 3:45 p.m. will be performed by Grace's string quartet-in-residence, the Kontras Quartet.

Upcoming Events

Religion in Literature: Rescheduled to Friday, January 23, at 7:30 p.m. (Off-site)

Location: Barbara Hofmaier and David Heim (220 S. Elmwood, Oak Park)

We will meet to discuss Andrew Krivak's book, *The Signal Flame*. Jeff Wood will lead the discussion of the novel that begins after Easter and ends on Christmas Eve 1972 as a family awaits the return of their youngest son from the Vietnam war. **Please note, the location and date has changed.**

Other Information

Rummage Sale: Start saving donations!

As you are putting the holiday decorations away, think about things you no longer need for the Grace Rummage Sale on June 5 and 6! Watch for more details in the weeks to come.

Thank You

Many thanks to all who baked and contributed cookies to the Harmony Food Pantry. Because of your generosity and the generosity of others, we received over 5,000 cookies and were able to bless 300 families with a sweet holiday gift. We appreciate Grace's continued support of the ministry of Harmony Community Cares. - Connie Zyer

Graceful Evening: Tickets are Available Now

Join us for Graceful Evening 2026: Rooted in Legacy on March 14, 2026. This special event kicks off at 5:30 PM at the Oak Park Country Club. Start the night with a cocktail hour featuring a live band, all while you browse an array of exciting silent auction items or try your luck in the 50/50 raffle or the Wine & Whiskey Pull. The celebration continues with a delicious plated dinner and our fan-favorite Dessert Dash! We'll keep the momentum going late into the night with an after-party and a live DJ. It's more than just an event; it's a celebration of our legacy. Tickets are now available! Visit Graceful2026.givesmart.com or Grace Links to purchase tickets, view auction items, or make a donation to our largest fundraiser of the year. We can't wait to see you there! Any questions can be directed to Sabrina or Renata at gracefulevening@graceriverforest.org

Upcoming Youth and Family Events

Bible Exploration Part II: Friday, January 30, at 6 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)

Fifth and sixth graders are invited to participate with a parent. We will continue our Bible exploration in the New Testament this year. Join Pastor Troy and Julie Modrich for a night of games, trivia, and Bible exploration. Together, we will discover fun facts about the Bible and what its message has to do with our lives. Dinner will be provided. Please RSVP by contacting Julie Modrich (jmodrich@graceriverforest.org) or going to Grace Links.

Communion Instruction Retreat: Friday, February 20, at 5:30 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)

Fourth graders from Grace Lutheran Church and School are invited to participate with a parent. Children who already receive communion are encouraged to attend the retreat along with their peers. Please RSVP by contacting Julie Modrich (jmodrich@graceriverforest.org) or going to Grace Links.

In the Community

Reimagining Public Safety Town Hall: Tuesday, January 13, at 7 p.m.

Location: Oak Park Public Library (834 Lake St., Oak Park)

Hear from community leaders and elected officials about efforts locally and statewide to reduce violence. Topics include The RIFL Act (HB3320/SB2279), Community Violence Intervention/Street Outreach, Community Policing and others. Presentations and discussion will be followed by a Q&A session and networking opportunities. This is your chance to connect with fellow members of the community, share ideas, and voice your opinions. Let's come together to make a difference and shape the future of our state. RSVP is optional, but if you can, the link can be found on Grace Links. It helps them plan set up and how many people to expect.

Grace Links

