

January 18, 2026 • Last Sunday's Attendance: 245

Today at Grace: January 18

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.

The current feature is our large coffee table books. More information will be shared in the next Grace Notes, but you can check out the books now in the Atrium case. 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.

Hat, Mittens, and Scarf Collection

Social Ministry Committee's collection of mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves for children has been extended through the end of January. Please help keep little ones warm this winter. Items can be placed in the black bin in the Atrium. Thank you!

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 and Online)

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.

What's Happening: January 19 - 25

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!

Building Closed: Monday

Knitting Group: Tuesday at 1 p.m. (Church Library)

Looking for a cozy community to share your love of yarn? Whether you're a beginner or an experienced knitter, you'll find a warm welcome here! Bring your current project and enjoy some relaxed crafting time and good conversation. We will also show you how to contribute to our prayer shawl ministry.

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

Join us for fellowship followed by a discussion about the upcoming Scripture readings. This week also includes morning prayer and lunch.

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

Parish Choir Rehearsal: Canceled, join us next week

GriefShare: Thursday at 10 a.m. (Church Library)

Session Topic: Is This Normal?

Your bereavement experience may be recent or not so recent. Whether you are grieving the loss of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandchild, other family member, or a friend, and no matter what the cause of your loved one's death, you will find encouragement, comfort, and help by being with others who understand what you are feeling. The course covers the topics below and includes video sessions, online materials, and a workbook.

To register: go to GriefShare.org, click on Find a Group, and use the River Forest zip code (60305) to locate our group; call 708-366-6900; or email gracechurch@graceriverforest.org. For further information, contact facilitator Linda Bernard at 773-259-4720 or at lmbernard5@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.

Theology on Tap: Canceled, join us in February for the next meeting

Religion in Literature: Friday at 7:30 p.m. (Off-site)

Location: Barbara Hofmaier and David Heim (210 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.

Men of Grace: Saturday at 9 a.m. (Youth Center)

Join the men of Grace for coffee and donuts, great conversation, and time for connection with each other. All are welcome!

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

Session Topic: Baptism: Newness of Life

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

Session Topic: The Disciples (Matthew 4:12-23)

Mentor Session: Sunday at 11:15 a.m. (Fellowship Hall)**Congregation Meeting: Sunday at 11:15 a.m. (Fellowship Hall)**

The annual report and other documents will be sent via email and will be available at the meeting and the front desk. A light lunch will be provided.

Upcoming Events

Scout Sunday and Pancake Breakfast: Sunday, February 1

During worship, Grace member Mike Carioscio will be presented with the Lamb Award – a national award of the National Lutheran Association on Scouting. It recognizes distinguished service of Lutheran adults in fostering the spiritual growth of youth through church and civic youth serving agency programs.

Following worship, come to Fellowship Hall to enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast hosted by the Scouts. Donations and silent auction support Troop programming and adventures. Come enjoy some food, connect with members of the Grace and scouting communities, and learn more about our Troop's rich 90 year history. Whether you're a longtime supporter, a curious newcomer, or simply hungry for some pancakes, everyone is welcome!

Chili Cook Off and Winter Carnival: Friday, February 6

Chili Cook Off 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Chili prizes: Most original, Zestiest, and Best overall

Winter Carnival 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in the Gym

Carnival games for all ages, face painting, balloon artist, music, and more!

Cost: \$10 per adult and \$5 per child and benefits GPO (Grace's Parent Organization)

This is a church and school event, so we hope you can make it! Go to Grace Links to RSVP, volunteer to help, or bring chili. We appreciate your support!

Lent Book Study: Starts February 22 at 9 a.m. (Fellowship Hall)

Join Pastor Lyle this Lent for a journey through *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life* by Mark Powell. This study will be held on five consecutive Sundays during Lent. Copies of the book are available for free. You may pick up a book at the front desk when they are available. Please sign up using Grace Links to let us know you're coming.

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 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.

We are also looking for people who would like to host or co-host a Whiskey Pull Party and anyone who would like to sponsor. Sponsorships are available at multiple levels and can include tickets and advertising opportunities. Reach out to gracefulevening@graceriverforest.org if interested.

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.

Other Information

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.



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.

Looking for Charity Recommendations

Grace will have a rummage sale on June 5 & 6. In the past, leftover items have been given to various charities. These donations have helped the homeless, veterans, the elderly, children, etc. If you know of a charity which would be a good recipient of leftover items, please contact Rebecca Dahlstrom at centurywanderer1@hotmail.com. Thank you!



Grace Links