

February 8, 2026 • Last Sunday's Attendance: 224

Today at Grace: February 8

Harmony Food Drive

This month Grace's Social Ministry Committee will be collecting soup for The Harmony Community Cares Food Pantry in North Lawndale. Please place unopened and unexpired cans of soup in the bin in the Atrium. Thank you for your generosity!

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.

In the Community

Second Sunday Concert: Today, February 8, at 3 p.m.

Location: United Lutheran Church (409 Greenfield Street, Oak Park)

Julia Siciliano, pianist, will be performing this free concert.

FEAST 2026

FEAST (Faith, Education, and Spirit Together) is an opportunity to gather in small groups each month to share fellowship and food, centered in scripture and prayer. It is a great way to grow your relationships with fellow Grace members and deepen your relationship with God. Groups will meet regularly, and you can gather in someone's home or perhaps a local restaurant. Meals can be elaborate or simple! There is no pressure to perform, just to be together. If you would like to participate, the sign up is on Grace Links or [click here](#). Sign up will close on February 13, so there is time to organize the groups before the kickoff event on February 27.

What's Happening: February 9 - 15

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)

Managing Technology in Our Lives: Learning from Kierkegaard

Speaker: Pastor Ole Schenk

Technology affects many dimensions of our lives, and not always for the better. Social media activity can lead to a sense of futility about democratic politics and public discourse. The increased use of artificial intelligence may raise fears about the loss of employment in some fields. And these are just two examples. Drawing on the reflections of the Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard, Pastor Schenk will explore how we might become better and more faithful at managing technology in our lives.

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)

GriefShare: Thursday at 10 a.m. (Conference Room)

Session Topic: Self-Care

For more information, including upcoming sessions, go to Grace Links.

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.

Finding Hope: Friday at 10 a.m. (Church Library)

You are invited to an informal monthly gathering of support and encouragement for those who experience a chronic health concern.

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

Stop by to enjoy a treat, sign a card, and send a word of prayer or encouragement to a Grace member.

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

Finding Value in Forgotten Landscapes: The Case of the Calumet National Heritage Area

Speaker: Mark Bouman

In December, Sen. Todd Young (R-IN) and Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL) introduced bi-state, bicameral, and bipartisan legislation to create a Calumet National Heritage Area. The legislation recognizes the region's unusual ecological assets, its industrial strength, its cultural heritage, and perhaps most importantly, its national leadership in identifying and restoring often neglected sites and landscapes in this complex area at the continental crossroads neighboring the southern end of Lake Michigan. Geographer Mark Bouman has been a leader in this effort for over three decades and will review this exercise in placemaking at the regional scale.

Other Information

Grace Links



Sign Up for ELCA Action Alerts

Looking for easy ways to advocate for justice and peace in the world? The Justice and Peace Committee encourages you to sign up to receive action alerts via email from the ELCA Advocacy office. These alerts will arrive in your inbox with the tools you need to reach out to elected officials regarding timely pieces of legislation so that you can add your voice to those calling for compassion, justice, and mercy in the legislative process as beloved children of God. Go to Grace Links for the link to sign up.

Religion in Literature Books

The Book Loft, an independent bookstore in Oak Park at 1047 Lake Street, has offered to give Grace members a 15% discount if they purchase the books for Religion in Literature from them. David Heim sent them a list of the books on the list for the rest of the spring, and they have them in stock or, in the case of Strindberg, can order it. All you have to do to receive the discount is say you are part of the Grace Lutheran reading group.

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 in Action

If you are interested in getting more involved this year, check out the updated Grace in Action document for information on the many ways to "plug into" life at Grace. Afterwards, fill out our interest form. We will then forward your information to the chair of the group(s) you are interested in joining. You can also reach out to Julie Modrich, Ministry Engagement Manager, at jmodrich@graceriverforest.org. Copies are available at the front desk and on Grace Links, and the link to the form can be found on Grace Links too.

Lent Devotionals

This year Lent devotional is *Love Outpouring*. Copies are currently available at the front desk, by the Division Street door, and in the magazine racks in the Narthex.

Threads of Hope

Grace's Quilting Group is looking for donations of supplies, equipment, or funds to support their effort. A "Master List of Welcome Supplies" can be found on Grace Links. Donated Supplies can be placed in the Quilt Project Bin in the Coat Closet off the Atrium. Contact Christa Krout, 708.557.9574 or christakrout@comcast.net with any questions.

Upcoming Events

Confirmation: Resumes Feb. 22 (Youth Center)

Sunday School: Resumes Feb. 22 (Nursery and 3rd Floor Commons)

Building Closed: Monday, February 16 (President's Day)

Compline Prayer: Thursdays, February 26 - March 26, at 9 p.m. (Zoom)

This short liturgy (15-20 minutes) gives us words and space to entrust our waking and our sleeping into God's good care so we might rest well and be renewed for the days ahead. We will meet on Zoom, and the meeting ID is 833 7569 7350 and the passcode is 279091. If you have questions, let Pastor Troy know (tmedlin@graceriverforest.org).

Lent Book Study: Sundays, February 22 - March 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. Please RSVP using Grace Links so we know how many people to expect. There are a couple copies of the book available at the front desk and more will be coming soon.

St. Patrick's Day Parade: Saturday, March 7, at 1 p.m.

Location: Madison and Van Buren, Forest Park

Grace Lutheran Church is invited to join the school in the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. If you are interested in participating, please let Amanda Smith (asmith@graceriverforest.org) know.

Know Your Rights Training: Tuesday, March 10, at 7 p.m. (Seminar Room)

Oak Park River Forest Rapid Response is offering Know Your Rights trainings throughout the area at local congregations in preparation for increased ICE/CBP presence this spring. The goal of these trainings is to give community members an overview of their rights as it pertains to interactions with immigration agents. There will also be a discussion on personal risk evaluation, as well as both formal and informal ways to get involved in supporting the community and protecting our neighbors and ourselves. This training is free and open to the community. A sign up link will be shared soon.

Graceful Evening: Saturday, March 14, at 5:30 p.m. (Oak Park Country Club)

Church and school families are invited to participate in this year's Graceful Evening. Our annual gala is filled with fun, fellowship, cocktails, a sit-down dinner and our famous Dessert Dash. This largest fundraiser of our year will feature live music from the Bluewater Kings Band, a silent auction, raffles, wine & whiskey pulls, and a paddle raise – all to raise money to support Grace Lutheran School's classrooms, faculty, and students. Afterwards, join us for the after-party from 9:30-11:30 p.m. with drinks, dancing, and late night snacks. Tickets are on sale now at graceful2026.givesmart.com. The link can also be found on Grace Links. If you have any questions, email gracefulevening@graceriverforest.org.

For more information on how you can support this event, visit Grace Links or check out the February issue of Grace Notes, which can be found under the "What's Happening" menu tab.