

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



Grace
Lutheran Church

**JULY 2026
GRACE VINE
NEWSLETTER**

**Come
To Me**

Matthew 11:25-30

Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Letter from the Pastors

Two Thousand and two hundred and fifty...

America is a wonderful place to live. It grants us so many opportunities. It offers us a place for life and freedom to become one, in a way. We are free to speak our minds (to a certain extent), we are free to gather as a congregation regularly, we are free to believe or not believe, and we are free to pursue our own passions and vocations to the extent that they do not interfere with the lives of others.

But I wonder if that has made us complacent as a church. Because we are not persecuted, because we are not threatened with exile or worse for worshipping as we do, and speaking of Jesus as we do, I wonder if we are less for it. Persecution is never something we should seek. In fact, Jesus tells us, in Matthew 10, that when they persecute us in one place we are to flee to the next. We are not supposed to ask for hardship or pain, knowing that it will come.

But is there a possibility that the churches in Iran, China, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, even Russia, are stronger, more faithful, more robust than us? I believe so, because when we are threatened to lose that which we hold to be true we are more apt to do what we need to hold onto it. To hide and confess. Or even to confess publicly and accept the ramifications.

Freedom is a phenomenal thing. I love that I can talk with people about being a pastor and I won't go to prison, but I truly am curious how my vocation would be different without the comforts the United States affords me.

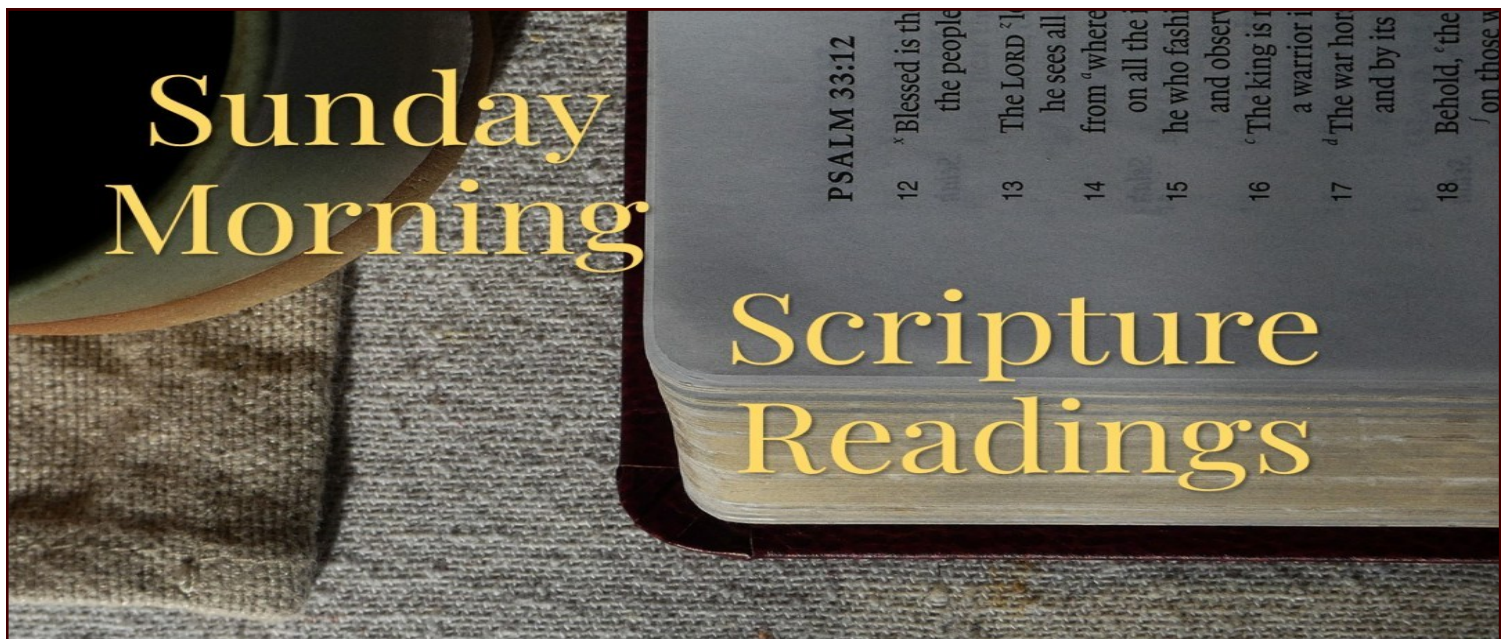
As we celebrate our 250th anniversary as a country, could we benefit from an even greater emphasis on 2000 years ago? Could we benefit from thinking that these last 250 years has been an amazing grace of God poured out upon us, but if it were to come to end and tomorrow we were invaded and conquered by a country that hates freedom, hates Jesus, hates us, nothing would change the reality of Christ and what he has done? That grace, mercy and forgiveness that is Jesus would still be ours. That the cross still is the pinnacle of history. That 250 years is fantastic, a blessing above all other, but 2000 years ago on a hill outside of Jerusalem we were given true freedom in the death and resurrection of Christ who will come again, and no freedom, or lack thereof, will change that.

In Him,

Pastor Smee

Scripture Readings for July

Date	Gospel Reading	Additional Readings
July 5	Matthew 11:25-30	First Reading: Zechariah 9:9-12 Psalm Reading: 145:1-14 Second Reading: Romans 7:14-25a
July 12	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13 Psalm Reading: 65:(1-8) 9-13 Second Reading: Romans 8:12-17
July 19	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8 Psalm Reading: 119:57-64 Second Reading: Romans 8:18-27
July 26	Matthew 13:44-52	First Reading: Deuteronomy 7:6-9 Psalm Reading: 125 Second Reading: Romans 8:28-39



Announcements



Church Council meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm in room 8. If a regularly scheduled council meeting needs to be rescheduled, the will be notified through the weekly MailChimp mass emailer as well as the bulletin.

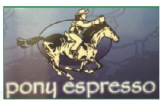
Open Hearth YG Baseball Trip 2026

Wednesday, July 22nd, 9am-9pm

Cost: \$40

Join Pastor Smee as we head on down to Angel's Stadium for a baseball game. We will meet at the church at 8am to head on down. Pr. Smee will cover lunch. Bring money for any souvenirs or snacks in the park, plus dinner on the way home.

Please support our
Family Fun Night Sponsors!



Forefront Chiropractic



Naomi's Friends
Is a widow's
Support Group.

They meet the 2nd & 4th
Wednesday of each month
At Lugo's Grill @ 12pm.

Summer Sunday education hour Book Study
Room 7, 915 to 1015: June 7, 14, 28 & July 12
and 19

We Shall Live in Heaven

Harri Haamer's testimony of faith,
recounting his experiences in a Soviet slave
labor camp

Craig and Sandy Stevens will represent Grace Lutheran in an Estonia Adult Bible Camp this August. They will lead this book study to help Grace acquire a broader picture of the importance of this mission trip and to inform prayer support for the camp and churches in Estonia. We will select 5 short chapters for discussion. We would love to have you join us.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH INVITES YOU TO

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

BACK-2-SCHOOL BREAKFAST & BINGO

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2nd AT 6PM-8PM

PANCAKES, BINGO AND PRIZES

INVITE FRIENDS AND FAMILY - ENJOY FELLOWSHIP AND FUN



502 N. NORMA ST. + RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA
FREE WILL DONATIONS ACCEPTED

Open Hearth Mt. Whitney Portals Hike

Wednesday, July 8th, 8am-6pm

Cost: Free

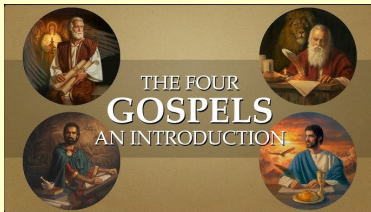
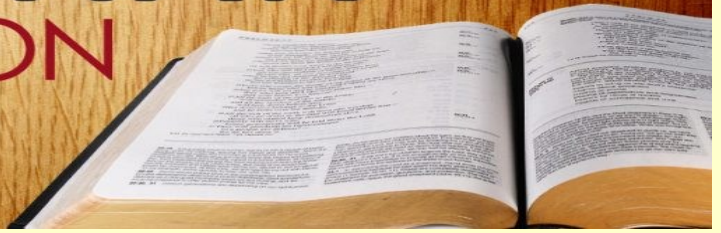
To escape the heat of Ridgcrest, join Pastor Smee on a trip to the Whitney Portals and hike to Lone Pine Lake. We will grab food, post-hike, at the Whitney Portal Store - Pastor's treat.



(Older Wiser Lutherans)

Meets for games, fun, and entertainment in
the Fellowship Hall the 2nd and 4th
Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm. All are
welcome to attend.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Peace Bible Study meets the third Wednesday of the month at 9 am in the CR. The study is called *Introduction to the Four Gospels*. All are welcome.

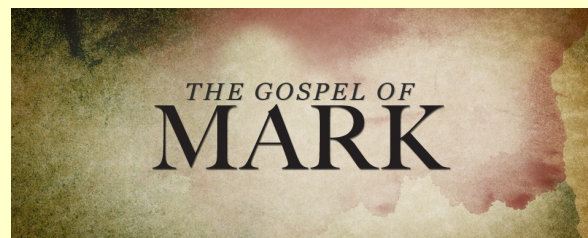


Limbo Young Adult Life group meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at the Smee's home.

Summer Sunday education hour Book Study
Room 7, 915 to 1015: June 7, 14, 28 & July 12
and 19
We Shall Live in Heaven



Join "A Bible and a Pencil" Bible study via Zoom on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm. The study is on the book of Exodus. Please contact Mark Brynestad via email at marknsue78@gmail.com for further information regarding this class.



An in-depth Bible study of Mark via Zoom on Tuesday nights, 7:00, under the instruction of Mark Brynestad. Please contact Mark Brynestad via email at marknsue78@gmail.com for further information regarding this class.

*Spotlighting
the Family of Grace*
Nancy Schultz



Nancy Schultz and her husband, Will moved to Ridgecrest in 2002 after being recruited to work on the base while attending college in Wyoming. Her career has spanned a variety of areas. She appreciates she has been able to find such variety from working with both north and south range areas, to working on weapon systems. She is currently involved in a new propellant study for naval weapons.

Having been raised by an atheist and an agnostic, Nancy's faith journey did not begin until she was in college, although her mother did expose her to some Quaker faith services for a brief period -- for those unfamiliar with Quaker worship services, the members come together and quietly sit together for an hour, speaking only if and when the Holy Spirit moves someone to speak. In college, Nancy met Will, who had grown up attending a Lutheran church, so Nancy joined Will's family for church attendance. A schism with that church arose and Will has since opted to avoid congregational worship for the time being, but Nancy started attending Grace in 2024. She also attended new members classes that year, but was unsure about joining at that time. After attending new members classes again in 2025, Nancy decided to join Grace. She appreciates the intergenerational focus here, because she has found the younger people she works with to be floundering for the lack of the moral compass faith provides. Conversations with her younger co-workers has influenced her: she has a desire to become involved with reaching local people who have not heard the gospel.

Nancy and Will have been preparing for the day of their retirement by purchasing farms in Kansas. They purchase family farms and spend their vacations visiting them and surrounding areas where the farms are located in Kansas -- an area that sounds like it makes Inyokern look like a big city. Farming in such a rural area is a calling Nancy and Will look forward to, but that will wait a few years until Nancy is ready to leave the base with a supportive retirement income.

Christian Home **COOK BOOK**



"SHE LOOKETH WELL TO THE WAYS OF HER HOUSEHOLD,
AND EATETH NOT THE BREAD OF IDLENESS."
—PROVERBS 31:27

**Nancy
says:**

It's more
common to
use cool whip
in place of
meringue.

It makes a
great
refrigerator
pie.

This recipe is
from people in
the town
where the last
of Will's
previous
generation
live.

Peanut Butter Pie

2 cups milk, scalded
2 tbsp. peanut butter
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. salt
2 egg yolks

1 tsp. vanilla
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
2 tbsp. flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cream

Mix egg yolks with cream. Add sugar, flour, salt, peanut butter, and vanilla. Stir into hot milk until thickened. Pour into baked pie shell. Spread with meringue.

Mrs. Fred Koehn, Montezuma, Kans.

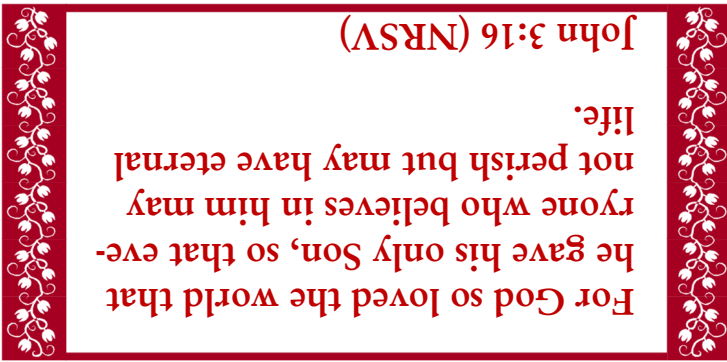
JULY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 5pm Praise Band Practice	3	4 HAPPY 4TH OF JULY! 10:30 am Music Together
5 Worship 9:30am	6 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm High Desert Pipers 7 pm Boy Scouts	7	8 10 am Music Together 12 pm Naomi's Friend's 6 pm Girl Scouts Ceremony	9 2:30pm Parkinson's Group 5 pm Praise Band Practice 7 pm Choir Practice	10	11 10:30 am Music Together
12 Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Summer Book Study	13 6:30pm Limbo 6:30 pm High Desert Pipers 7 pm Boy Scouts	14 1:30 pm OWLS	15 9 am Peace Bible Study	16 5 pm Praise Band Practice	17	18 8am IMTT Renewal 11 am Ladies Event
19 Worship 8:00 & 10:30am 9:15 am Summer Book Study	20 6:30 pm Limbo 6:30 pm High Desert Pipers 7 pm Boy Scouts	21 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	22 12 pm Naomi's Friend's	23 5 pm Praise Band Practice	24	25
26 Worship 8:00 & 10:30am	27 6:30 pm Limbo 6:30 pm High Desert Pipers 7 pm Boy Scouts	28 1:30 pm OWLS	29	30	31	



502 N. Norma
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



www.gracelutheran.org
www.facebook.com/gracelutheran.org

We're on the Web at:

Rev. Kris Madsen, *Senior Pastor*
Rev. Carleton Smece, *Associate Pastor*
Christine McClain, *Office Manager*
Jane Kuhlman, *Music*
Paul Jauregui, *Custodian*
Michell Koenig, *Gracevine Editor*



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Worship Services Sundays at 8 & 10:30 am
Christian Education Hour Sundays 9:15 am

