



Facing Our Challenges with Faith and Hope

Dear Church Family,

As we approach the end of the year, I want to take a moment to share some important news about our church's financial situation. While our ministries continue to impact lives and further God's work, we are currently facing a significant budget deficit of nearly \$30,000. This is not news any of us were hoping for, but it is a reality we must address together, prayerfully and with transparency.

I know conversations around finances can be uncomfortable, especially in a community of faith where we seek to focus on spiritual matters. But stewardship is a vital part of our discipleship, and how we manage our resources reflects our collective commitment to God's mission through this church.

There are a few factors that have contributed to this deficit. Some are external, like rising costs and unforeseen expenses. Others are internal, including a dip in giving. While this may feel like a setback, it is also an opportunity for us to reflect on the blessings we have received and to realign ourselves with the vision God has given us for this community.

I ask each of you to prayerfully consider how you can help us close this gap. Whether it's through a one-time gift, a pledge of support, or volunteering to help us strategize for the future, every contribution makes a difference. More than ever, we need to come together as a church family to ensure that our ministries continue to thrive and grow.

I am reminded of the Apostle Paul's words to the Philippians: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Philippians 4:6) This is a time for us to trust in God's provision, knowing that through our faithful action and prayer, God will guide us through this season.

Let us keep our focus on what matters most—the mission of Christ and the community we are building together. God has brought us this far, and I firmly believe that with faith, hope, and a willingness to step forward, we will overcome this challenge.

Thank you for your generosity, your prayers, and your unwavering commitment to our church.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Laura

STEWARDSHIP



COMING SOON TO YOUR HOME

Grace friends, please be watching your mailbox for a letter announcing blessings in abundance. This year's stewardship ministry takes a look at individual blessings, blessings of others, and the generosity of sharing blessings.

Our commitments will be consecrated in worship on November 24.

Prairie Central District UMM Special Event

"Redeeming the Soul of America" with Rev. Jesse Jackson, Jr.

An in-person program on linking the religious intents of America's founding fathers with religion today and what an influential political and civil rights leader believes should be the path forward.

9:00 a.m. gathering

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. program

Saturday, November 9, 2024

Grace United Methodist Church

[1718 Avalon Avenue Joliet, Illinois](#)

Participants will have the opportunity to meet Rev. Jackson. All are welcome (men, women, and teen youth). This program is free, though an offering will be taken to cover the expenses of hosting the event.

OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

September

Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/10/23 and revised 6/25/24
Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/10/23 and revised 6/25/24

	September		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
INCOME 	\$19,708	\$15,793	\$210,626	\$205,258
EXPENSES				
Apportionment	\$2,137	\$0	\$19,233	\$12,822
Salaries & Benefits	\$13,588	\$12,758	\$135,048	\$128,594
Administration	\$1,129	\$806	\$10,162	\$11,199
Programming	\$792	\$580	\$7,125	\$3,620
Church Buildings	<u>\$7,890</u>	<u>\$10,993</u>	<u>\$71,010</u>	<u>\$77,786</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$25,536	\$25,137	\$242,578	\$234,021
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT):	-\$5,828	-\$9,344	-\$31,952	-\$28,763

NOTES:

- 1) Budget receipts fell behind by about \$4k in September.
- 2) Budget expenses generally as expected. Below expectation by \$8k YTD.
- 3) Still significant challenges to manage budget during the remainder of 2024.

The annual **Stewardship** effort to support Grace UMC ministry in the year 2025 will begin November 3, 2024. You can expect to receive a letter with your Commitment Card/envelope in early November.



FAITH AND WELLNESS

We certainly hope that you enjoyed our ‘Walking with Jesus’ outings. As someone who is relatively newly back in Joliet, it was great to get to see some of the glorious greenspaces that Joliet has, plus the opportunity to walk our church neighborhood. Many thanks to Pat Kwasniewski and Pastor Laura for scouting the areas for us—well done!

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

1. 1st Sunday BP checks. We are in the library the first Sunday of every month 30 minutes prior to the start of the worship service—come see us for a free blood pressure check.
2. Sunday, November 17th from 9-9:50 am for an enlightening presentation by Hadi Finerty from the Alzheimer’s Association. She will be speaking in our sanctuary about the warning signs of Alzheimer’s Disease plus the newest advancements in treatment and what we can do to foster brain health. It’s a disease that touches the lives of so many of us! Come and share and learn! (And NO! it’s not “Old-Timers’ Disease!)
3. Lunch Bunch—17 of us gathered at Rosemary Café for good food and great conversation on October 22nd. Next up is November 19th 12:30pm at Dragon Light Restaurant. 1809 N. Larkin Avenue, Cresthill. It’s a fun opportunity to share food and stories! Come, join us! Please RSVP to either Pat Meyers (815-557-4864) or Barb Fisher (815-325-1624).
4. Looking to December: we will be offering a Blue Christmas Holiday service. It is all too easy to feel lost in the holiday shuffle and even to lose sight of the reason we celebrate. This quiet, gentle service will acknowledge that we may feel blue, lonely, isolated or tired and that is part of Christmas too. More details on this service will be in the December Grace Notes newsletter.

Debi Shippy



11/6—Donna Redmon
11/15—Heather Linko
11/19—Tessa Gray,
Nancy Kramer
11/22—Dorothy Atkins,
Joe McCormack
11/28—Ed Young
11/29—Sebastian Butler



Mike & Amber Kolodziej November 15, 2014
Jay & Cindy Caswell November 16, 1968
Donald & Diane Lutz November 27, 1982



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS

Turn your clocks back 1 hour before going to bed on Saturday, November 2nd, or you'll be very early for church on November 3rd.

DAYBREAK SHELTER

The food sign-up sheets for Daybreak (Nov. 18) and Daybreak Breakfast (Nov. 19) are on the bulletin board in the narthex. Drop off item before noon on the Sunday before Daybreak date.

November Community Office Hours:

NOTE THE CHANGE OF TIME

12:00 to 1:00 pm on Thursdays

(There will be no Community office hours on Thursday November 28th. Enjoy Thanksgiving with your loved ones!)

The Big Grill and Chil

FREE! Bolingbrook High School Holiday Concert

If you are interested in some outstanding music to get into the Christmas spirit, come on over to the Daytime performance of the Bolingbrook High School Holiday Concert on Tuesday, December 10th. This performance is actually their final dress rehearsal, but don't let that fool you! Every year the final dress rehearsal is just as good as the 'real' performance on Thursday night (12/12). For their final dress rehearsals they invite some middle school and elementary school students for their audience, and I've been able to get seniors to also attend. You need to be at BHS by 9:15am; the concert begins at 9:45am and is all done by 11am. (We want to arrive before the busses bringing the students, so we will get inside and seated prior to them arriving!) I need to know who is going so that they can reserve parking spots and seats for us that morning. Carpooling is strongly suggested. You must **RSVP by TEXT** to Diane Parro @ 630-430-3808 before December 2nd. Handicap seating will be available.

ASP WREATHS

Thank you for supporting the ASP Youth Mission Team by purchasing wreaths. Wreaths will be available for pick up on Sunday, November 24th in the Narthex.

CANDY DONATIONS NEEDED FOR MEALS ON WHEELS

During the coming weeks our Confirmation class will be collecting candy donations to make holiday gifts for senior citizens and shut-ins being served by the Meals on Wheels program. More people are in need of assistance this year than ever before. These gifts with their meals are a real treat for them and a simple way for us to show them that Grace UMC cares.

About 300 pounds of individually wrapped regular and sugar-free candies are needed for this project. Your left-over Halloween candy is an ideal donation. Monetary donations are most welcome, too; let us buy for you!

Candy donations can be dropped off outside the church office in our decorative collection box; monetary donations can be mailed to the church or left in the mailbox. For more information contact Jim Morrow at 815-482-2550. Thank you in advance for your help.

POINSETTIAS

Grace Church will decorate the chancel area with Poinsettias on Christmas Eve. The flowers can be in honor or celebration of a special event, in memory of a loved one, or to the "Glory of God." If you wish to order, please fill out a form and return it with a check made out to Grace Church by November 17th. Poinsettias are \$9.00 each.



Time to start thinking about the children in need of Christmas items. Nov. 29th, the Angel Tree will be decorated with ornaments and Angel tags supporting the needed families and children from the Salvation Army. Watch for the glowing tree in the Narthex starting Sunday Dec. 3, 2024. We need members to participate in this program and help a child have a "Blessed Christmas". More information will be placed in the Sunday Bulletin as time gets closer.

Clarice Boswell, Steve & Linda Meister.

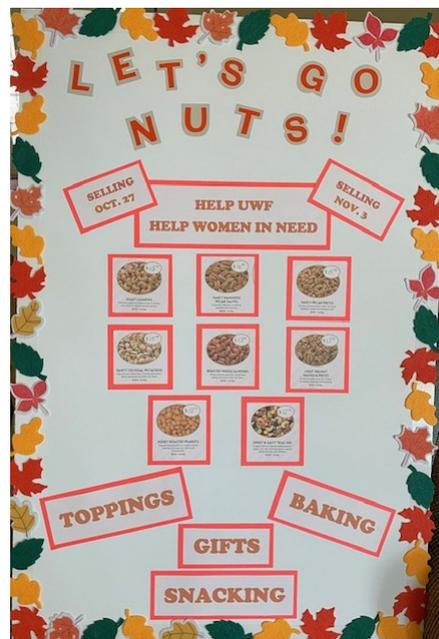
HANGING OF THE GREENS

Sunday, December 1st

As we all prepare our homes for the upcoming Advent and Christmas season, we will decorate our church home on Sunday, December 1st with the Hanging of the Greens. The service will be a little different this year compared to previous years and may have a few surprises. We will also have cookies and punch in the Narthex following the service, because who doesn't eat Christmas cookies while decorating their home for Christmas?! Please mark your calendars for Sunday, December 1st so that you don't miss this special service at your church home.

LET'S GO NUTS

The United Women in Faith have been selling one-pound bags of eight varieties of nuts on October 27 and November 3 in the narthex. Delivery of orders will be around Thanksgiving. Stock up for baking, gift giving, snacking, etc. This fundraiser will help Grace women help women in need locally and around the world.



Thank you, Grace UMC for sponsoring our Crop Walk Team on Sunday, September 29. We raised \$851.00. For local and global food missions.

Thank you, Grace UMC



MISSION OF THE MONTH

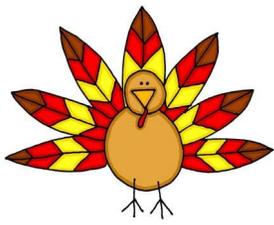
Will Grundy Medical Clinic

November

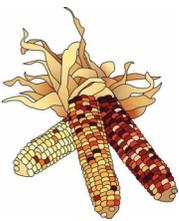
Funds collected will be sent to the Will Grundy Medical Clinic to support their mission of providing medical care for those in the community who cannot afford it.

Thanks to all who care for the beauty of our worship space with cleaning, flowers, seasonal decor, and more.

OCT ATTEN	WORSHIP 8:30AM 10:30AM	CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL	ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
OCT 6	71	22	16
OCT 13	67	18	11
OCT 20	73	28	16
OCT 27	68	27	17
Conference	22	Thank you to all who attended.	



November

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<p>1 Friday's are Pastor Laura's day off. Let's respect her downtime and family time.</p>	<p>2</p> 
<p>3 ALL SAINTS DAY</p> <p>8:30am Prayer and Gathering 9am Christian Ed 10am Blood Pressure screening 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6:30 pm SPRC</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir</p> 	<p>7</p> <p>7:00 am Men's Breakfast</p> 	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00 am UMM conference meeting in Grace Place</p>
<p>10</p> <p>8:30am Prayer and Gathering 9am Christian Ed 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>11 Veterans Day</p>	<p>12</p> <p>1 pm UWF 6:30pm Trustees</p>	<p>13</p> <p>6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:00 am Men's Breakfast</p> 	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p> <p>8:30am Prayer and Gathering 9am Christian Ed 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>18</p>  <p>5pm Daybreak</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7am Daybreak Breakfast 12:30 p Lunch Bunch Dragon Light</p>	<p>20</p> <p>11:30am Pantry 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>7:00 am Men's Breakfast</p> <p>December Grace Notes <u>Deadline</u></p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24</p> <p>8:30am Prayer and Gathering 9am Christian Ed 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6:30 pm Finance</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir</p>	<p>28</p> <p>hAPPY thANKS gIVING</p>	<p>29</p> 	<p>30</p>

Grace United Methodist Church

1718 Avalon Avenue

Joliet, Illinois 60435-5799



November



Christmas Cantata

Sunday December 15, 2024 10:30am