



GRACE NOTES

September 2023

Pastor Nancy's Notes

Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

The month of September is a time of starting new things. School has started for our children, youth, young adults, and young-at-heart students of all ages from Birth to Grade 36 and beyond! Indeed – we are called to "*Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" – 2 Peter 3:8. This verse speaks to our theme for Rally Day and for Sunday School this coming year. The theme is "Connecting with Grace." Please join us on September 10, 2023 for Rally Day activities, Backpack Sunday, a whole-church family Potluck after worship, and games for the Grace Family.

As a family of Christ at Grace UMC – we are called to continue our discernment of how we live into our ministry life together as one in Christ, one in each other and one in ministry to all the world. We must continue to discern what are our priorities, our plans and more importantly – where is God leading us to BE like Christ so that all that we may meet may fully experience the love of God and the love of neighbor. How can we challenge ourselves to rise to the expectations of our church father and founder John Wesley who called his faithful friends to do what is good, what is right, and what is just in this world.

Therefore, we ask all of you to prayerfully think about these things of the heart and mind so that our future plans may reflect our desire to be the hands and feet and voice of Jesus in our worship and ministry life together. Please review our DRAFT Strategic Plan language and participate in a Survey to guide our decision-making process. Together, we can reach out to God and trust that the Holy Spirit will advocate for us and nudge us into truly living in the way of Christ moving forward.

May God bless your comings and goings in love, hope, joy and peace!

Blessings to you,

Pastor Nancy

Worship Announcement

After prayerful consideration the Ad Council voted to have **one** worship service at 10:30 a.m. from September 10, 2023 to May 19, 2024.

Worship is our response to God. Psalm 96 declares that we come together in the splendor of holiness. "Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth! Sing to the Lord, bless His name, tell of his salvation from day to day."

We invite all of you to experience the richness of the worship service with the Children's time, Special musical offering, Bell Choir and Chancel Choir. We connect and grow with grace through worship. Everything else flows from that experience.

We have faithful members who have participated through the years in the 8:00 a.m., and 10:30 a.m., worship services. The generosity of hearts and minds are well received.

We are offering the following beginning September 10, 2023

8:30- 9:00 Prayer and Gathering (Prayer, Scripture, Devotion and Communion

first Sunday of the month. We will meet in the library)

9:00-10:00 Sunday School for all ages.

10:30-11:30 One Worship Service.

It is another season of grace in our church. Let us come together and support one another.

Blessings and peace, Pastor Romir

Pastor's Page

RALLY DAY

September 10, 2023

“CONNECTING WITH GRACE”

Join us after church at 11:30 am for a Rally Day picnic in **Grace Place**.

Hot Dogs, Buns, Drink will be provided!

Bring a Dish to share!

Fellowship with one another

Activities for the children and youth:

Yard Size Connect Game

Bubbles and Chalk Activities

Making a Prayer Necklace



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL DISCUSSION CLASS

Everyone is invited to join the Discussion Class. We meet Sunday mornings at 9am in the first classroom off Grace Place. Each week this group discusses a different topic from a Christian point of view. This year our first six weeks of discussion will be based on the Adam Hamilton video series, "When Christians Get It Wrong." This series covers what people think is wrong with the church, and then discusses the hows and whys of Christians getting it right when it comes to being Christ in the world. Please join us. Come on Rally Day to kick off the year. The first session of the series will be the following Sunday, September 17. Any questions, contact Lori or Jay Wait.

METHODIST AWARENESS CLASS

This class meets in the Crafty Critter room starting in September. We will use "Jesus' Parables About Making Choices." This six-session short-term study series from James W. Moore is organized around the general theme of "Making Choices." Everyone is welcome to join us. Barb Fisher is the leader for this class. Please contact her if you have any questions.

We will meet on Wednesday evenings
to play and sing some songs

6:15 for handbells, rehearsals won't be long.

At 7:30 the choir starts, we'll warm our voices. We'll sing at
Sunday worship, a story we've to tell.

Got questions to bring up, then answers you shall get!

Give Peggy a call or email,.

So please join us dear friends, with music to praise our Lord.

Our gifts are blessings from above,
to share is our reward.

Peggy Weems pegweems@gmail.com. 630.886.5996

FIRST REHEARSAL SEPTEMBER 6th



MISSION OF THE MONTH

Right Here, Right Now

Local Benevolences

Funds collected will be used by the pastor to help meet immediate financial needs of members of this congregation.



United Women of Faith

Will meet Saturday September 16 at 10:00
in Grace Place for our monthly meeting and
to fill 50 purses for Groundwork

ALL ARE WELCOME

GRATITUDE CORNER

Blessings and thanks to those who participated in our meaningful summer worship services.

FELLOWSHIP RESUMES

Starting September 10th we will be enjoying our fellowship hour again. From 10-10:30 am we will serve donut holes from Home Cut Donut Shop, lemonade and coffee during the hour. If you would like to help with this ministry please contact Cathy Kazak at



Dear Church Family, This is an update on our dear Grace friend **Wally Farrar**. This guy has had a rough time with what was supposed to be a 2-3 month recovery from his December, 2022 knee replacement surgery. But then, due to infections and a serious fall right onto his knee, he had to have 2 more revision surgeries. Both surgeries were unsuccessful. Wally is now awaiting two more knee surgeries at Loyola University Medical Center - scheduled in December and February. He and I thank you for all prayers for him. Please continue to pray for this sweet man. He misses all of you very much and hopes to again join you at worship service. He also said that he wishes to resume his beloved role as "Uncle Wally, the coffee and donut guy." Everyone seemed to enjoy small talking and also solving all the world's problems with him every Sunday morning. LOL!

Thank you again,

Wally's best friend, Jolene Johnson

Restaurant Club – ready for some Italian flare?! Please join us on Saturday, September 16th at 6pm at La Dolce Vita in Plainfield (16108 Rt. 59). RSVP to Diane Parro at 630-430-3808 by September 10th.



College Students Care Packages

The Education Team plans to send out care packages to our College Students to remind them that they are loved! Please send a message to Pastor Nancy <ngrimhunter@gmail.com> to confirm the school location, major, mailing address, and contact information (phone / email).

NIC Annual Conference 2023

The theme of this year's conference was "Come to the Table". Throughout our bible studies and the Bishops' message we talked about becoming better connected in Christ through holy communion and receiving God's gift of Christ's death and resurrection.

In the Bishops' message he talked about the challenges our churches have faced during our recovery from the Pandemic and the Disaffiliation of 8 churches in our conference this year. He was also quick to praise our resilience and grace and our continuing efforts in mission and discipleship.

There were a number of important pieces of legislation and resolutions to be discussed and voted upon during our time together.

Resolutions were presented and approved expressing our positions on a number of issues: condemnation of the increasing use of child labor and the overturning of Roe vs. Wade; supporting the removal of discriminatory policies and mistreatment of immigrants and refugees, transgender people and the LGBTQIA+ community. We also expressed our support for a parole pathway and the Pretrial Fairness Act Resolution.

Legislation included approval of Discontinuation and Closure of 3 churches in the conference due to diminishing membership and financial hardship, and approval of the Disaffiliation of 8 conference churches from the United Methodist Church body for reasons of conscience regarding the General Conference's controversial policies concerning the practice of homosexuality. As always base salaries and pensions for pastors and the Conference budget were hot topics, and significant adjustments were needed for these issues to be approved by the 500+ voting members present.

As always our Annual Conference was informative and inspiring and I appreciate more each year the dedication and hard work that is required by the NIC staff to not only put on an event of this size but to manage the conference operations throughout the year.

You can find more information on the Northern Illinois Conference and a complete recap of AC2023 at the Conference website umcnic.org.

Jim Morrow

OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

July 2023 Income & Expense Summary Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/20/22

	July		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
INCOME	\$19,808	\$19,902	\$163,658	\$160,932
EXPENSES				
Apportionment	\$14,886	\$13,298	\$16,219	\$13,902
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,221	\$1,344	\$109,083	\$105,578
Administration	\$933	\$735	\$8,546	\$7,886
Programming	<u>\$10,809</u>	<u>\$5,502</u>	\$6,533	\$4,566
Church Buildings	<u>\$10,063</u>	<u>\$8,880</u>	<u>\$57,359</u>	<u>\$49,671</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$30,166	\$20,879	\$197,740	\$181,603
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT):	-\$10,358	-\$977	-\$34,082	-\$20,671

Notes:

- 1) Income is tracking the budget reasonably well.
- 2) Expenses \$16k below budget but only \$9k below when adjusted for bills not yet paid.
- 3) Because the approved 2023 budget is not balanced, there are still challenges.



AUGUST WORSHIP ATTENDANCE 9:30 AM

August 6	57
August 13	76
August 20	69
August 27	73

GRACE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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<https://graceumcjoliet.org/>

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Our congregation has been meeting with focus groups and ministry teams for the last year to think about who we are as a family of Christ at Grace United Methodist Church. We now have DRAFT language for our Core Values and Strategic Priorities. Your input is needed to help identify our priority ministry activities for the coming few years.

STRATEGIC PLAN SURVEY:

Digital Version: <https://forms.gle/YqAqsb8wZiYSQsZw5>

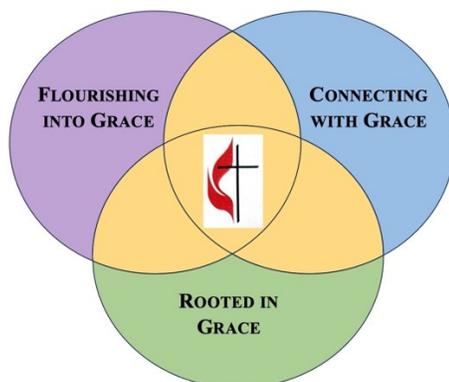
CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFT LANGUAGE

MISSION STATEMENT:

To make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by proclaiming the good news of God's grace.

CENTERING SCRIPTURE:

"In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace." – Colossians 1:3-6



ORGANIZATIONAL THEMES:

CORE VALUES:

- (1) **WORSHIP** – Expressing our thankful hearts in Love for God through our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.
- (2) **DISCIPLESHIP** - Growing in maturity in Spirit and Truth, welcoming all and offering Christ.
- (3) **MISSION** – Sharing our love and kindness for God and others by offering Christ to all through sharing the Word of God, our gifts through service, our love and compassion, and our commitment to justice for all.

PAGE 2 OF 2 STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

(A) **DIGITAL DISCIPLESHIP** - *"Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."* – 2 Peter 3:8

(B) **MISSIONAL PRESENCE** – *"Love one another as I have loved you."* - John 15:12

(C) **GENEROUS HEARTS** - *"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."* – 2 Corinthians 9:7

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE YOUR GIFTS AND TALENTS

Digital Ministry: AV Team, Social Media Coordination

Missional Presence: Prayer Team; Mission Project Givers, Helpers and Leaders

Generous Hearts: Musicians, Liturgists, Communion Stewards, Ushers, Greeters, Teachers, Sunday School Helpers, Kitchen Team, Trustees

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OLD CAMPGROUND FLEA MARKET AT NEW LENOX UMC

The United Methodist Church of New Lenox invites you to their 44th annual Old Campground Antiques, Collectibles, Flea Market, & Crafts from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. on Saturday, September 16. Those participating will occupy a 15 ft. x 20 ft. space and must furnish their own tables for display. There are no electrical outlets and food and used clothing may not be sold. A \$40.00 fee will be charged for each space. **Not for profit groups, \$15.00.**

Anyone wishing to register for the flea market or obtain further information, call 815-485-8271, Ext. 53, or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & FLEA MARKET, United Methodist Church of New Lenox, P.O. Box 1289, New Lenox, IL 60451. Online registration: umcnl.com. Rain date will be on Sunday, September 17 from 1:00 to 5:00 P.M.

9/1 Jamie Citarelli

9/2 Peggy Weems

9/3—Rick Pearson, Matthew Runnels, Susan Sabella

9/4—John Moore

9/6—Chloe Black, Theresa Whitney

9/7—Joyce Hecht

9/8—Brian Sabella

9/9—Barbara Fisher, Fred Jursinic

9/10—Jack Bitterman

9/12—Cyrus Angel, Diane Loucks

9/18—Christina Bessette

9/19—Cathy Kazak, Brian Fahnstrom

9/20—Melody Fahnstrom

9/22—Stephen Fowler

9/24—Steve Schoenrock

9/28—Jeffery Page

Birthdays

GRACE CHILD CARE

Grace Childcare children have had a lot of fun playing outside this summer! When it has been too hot or inclement weather they enjoy playing in Grace Place!

Tina is working with FCA to replace the flooring in her office and the daycare entry way. She is also looking into replacing the office desks in the daycare office. The dishwasher in the kitchen will also need to be replaced.

The Daycare received the Strength & Grow Grant for May - September 2023 and the daycare is eligible to get a new grant called the Smart Start Transition Grant that runs from October 2023 - September 2024. These grants are extremely helpful for the daycare to pay for teachers' bonuses and expenses for the daycare.

The summer has flown by quickly!



Steve & Linda Meister

September 23, 1977

Our love and prayers are with the Bell- Meinhart family. Melissa's (Missy) husband Lloyd passed away August 17th. We bless this family as they start their journey without him.



Heartfelt thanks for your prayers and cards following the loss of my beloved sister, Susan.

Grace UMC is a blessing to me!

Kevin McOlgan

Thank you everyone for the many cards and phone calls wishing me well. I really appreciate them and I hope to be back in church soon.

Love and Blessings to all, Nancy Murphy

2023 Lakota Mission Trip



Mission: Tree of Life

Author: Christopher M. Valentino

I spent many years having been separated from church. One Sunday, after spending five plus years getting an understanding of the Bible and faith, I returned to Grace. I have been eager to get involved in a mission ever since completing my cover to cover Bible read. Through serving people and searching for insightful people. I've found myself questing, hopping from church to church. Only having been returned to Grace a few Sundays, I was ecstatic to have been invited by Steve Meister to go on this mission in South Dakota. Steve gave me a date and time and-so I took the sacrifice from work. I anticipated every day until I parked my car at the church the night before we left.

(With Matthew 6:1-4 in mind)

I felt like the first day of school; ready to meet new people. Steve collected the four of us like a bus driver. Andrew Looney was with him when they picked me up at Grace. After introductions, we picked up Chris Bluhm. We acquainted ourselves as we headed to our first relay point, a Methodist church in Sioux Falls. Unfortunately we abruptly lost Andrew. He, having a family emergency, left the mission the following morning. Our journey continued with us taking a brief stop at The Corn Palace, an agricultural display of art, before continuing on the Mission. Arriving at our destination, we were pleasantly greeted with blessing from Linda, our spiritually gracious host and operations manager. Together, her son Sam, her brother Mike, and daughter with family, fulfill all the charities of the Tree of Life.

Linda was grateful to receive our hands to serve The Mission. She tasked us with collecting excess donations that had been sitting outside for some time. Taking the weathered excess to a local dumping site, we met some locals. Those locals later gave us an opportunity to feed them one day after having a feast for the big, Tree of Life giveaway. Most evenings consisted of conversations over a game of UNO. Steve, Chris, and I talked about many things; Spiritual perspective, each other's characters, and we also bonded with listing aloud band names. Every morning I'd take a walk to pray and read the Bible. On my return, I'd find Steve flipping pancakes and talking about the daily plans.

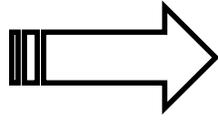
On the day after the giveaway feast, Chris Bluhm was excited to be blessed with a day off. Stepping away from God's work, we explored His wonderful land. I drove us to the Badlands. On the way, we stopped at Wall Drug, where we discovered a traveler's chapel. This gave me the opportunity to read from an aged Bible! Its spine broken, the book laid open centrally displaying Psalms. I read aloud, Psalms 102. After Wall Drug, we continued to the Badlands and filled our eyes with its desolate, but alive landscape. Then, we drove to the Black hills and walked a lush mountain trail filled with birds and flowers above a crystal clear lake atop the mountains peaks. Lastly, we had one more day of hard work tidying up all the things God graced us to manage. After saying our goodbyes and receiving Linda's grateful blessings from God, we drove back into the night.

Pastor Romir (yes, another Pastor Romir), Steve Meister and Chris Bluhm.



The start of the Grand Opening. Started slow and built to hundreds of people coming to check out the Tree of Life campus. Lots of food; pulled pork, baked beans, mac & cheese, and fried bread. Also had cotton candy, popcorn, and water.





The building on the left is the Thrift Shop. The building in the middle is the warehouse where donations are stored. There is a walkway between the two buildings (that Grace help build in 2019). This area is used to sort the donations before moving into then Thrift Shop. Building on the right is future Soup Kitchen (Warm Welcome - Come on Down) Bob Barker spend most of his childhood on the Rosebud Reservation in Mission, SD.



The Thrift Shop loaded with lots of great items.



A load of dairy products that need to be given out quickly.

The beautiful and rugged Badlands.



Once they know a donation of food is due to arrive at Tree of Life, they get the word out to the community to come and get it. Sometimes the items are perishable and the lack of suitable storage means things need to be distributed quickly.



Getting setup for the Thrift Shop Grand Opening.

Sunday School Registration 2022-2023

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone # _____ E-Mail _____

Birthdate _____ Baptized? Yes/No Date _____

Parents' Name _____

Grade in School _____

Medical Information

Emergency Contact/phone _____

Allergies _____

Medications _____

Medical Condition(s) _____

Please let us know if your child has been diagnosed with any special needs that their Sunday School teacher needs to be aware of. The teachers want to do all they can to make sure your child's Sunday School experience is a positive one.

Photograph Consent

I hereby give consent to Grace UMC to photograph my child for display in the classrooms, hallways and in the common areas of the church. And I understand that the photographs may be used in the Grace Church newsletter and/or on the Grace Church website.

Signature _____



September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			BELLS AND CHOIR PRACTICE BEGINS		1	2
3 Last 9:30 Worship	4 Labor Day 	5 6:30 SPRC	6 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	7 7:30 am Men's Breakfast	8	9
10 8:30am Prayer & Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30 Worship Rally Day	11	12 10am Worship 6:30 Trustees	13 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	14 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 	15	16 10am UMC Purse Ministry
17 8:30am Prayer & Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30 Worship Purse Blessing 11:40am Worship Committee mtg	18	19 6:30 Daycare Board	20 11:30am Pantry 6 pm Bible Study 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	21 7:30 am Men's Breakfast	22	23
24 8:30am Prayer & Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30 Worship	25	26 6:30 Finance/ Church Council	27 11:30am Pantry 6 pm Bible Study 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	28 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 	29 11am Memorial Service for Lloyd Meinhart	30