NOVEMBER GRACE NOTES

Volume 14 Issue 11 November 2026

Psalm 126:3 — “The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.”

As I sit down to write this report, I am looking at a Sunday school project made by one of our Grace children. It is a hand cutout, with each finger holding a colorful leaf listing one of five things for which the child is thankful. When the five fingers are put together, they form a beautiful fall tree.
I thought I would create my own five-finger tree of gratitude:

1. I am thankful for our dedicated leaders who give generously of their time and talents to help our ministries operate smoothly, while also bringing passion, creativity, and new ideas to life.
2. I am thankful for ministries that reach beyond the walls of our church to care for our community and beyond. These ministries remind us that our calling is not simply to gather as the church, but to be the church in the world.
3. I am thankful for the volunteers who stepped up to form a new Christian Education Team when we were unable to establish a successful paid Christian Education Director position. Their willingness to serve has helped ensure that Christian education and faith formation remain an important part of our ministry at Grace.
4. I am thankful for the new individuals and families who have become involved at Grace UMC, including those who have joined our church over this past year. Their presence, gifts, and participation enrich our congregation and give us reason to look toward the future with hope.
5. I am thankful for the laughter and fun we have experienced together this past year through fun sermon series such as “Summer of Love” and our second Annual End of Summer Bash. These moments have been a wonderful reminder that ministry can—and should—be fun. Joy, laughter, and fellowship are gifts that strengthen our life together as a church.

I am grateful to be walking through my third year of ministry with Grace United Methodist Church. The world around us, the challenges of an aging congregation, and the need to stretch our resources to meet both demands and desires provide plenty of challenges. Yet, even in the midst of those challenges, I remain hopeful.

I trust that, through God’s grace and the willing hands and hearts of the people of Grace UMC, we will continue to discern where God is leading us and faithfully respond to the call God has placed upon our collective lives.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside the people of Grace and look forward to seeing what God will continue to do in and through this congregation.

Pastor Laura Barkley

STEWARDSHIP

Be watching weekly for 2027 Stewardship news regarding

TRANSFORMED BY GRACE

Could it be God's grace, or Grace UMC, or both?

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Sunday, October 25th during Sunday School hour, we had a very informative lesson on falling victim to SCAMMERS.

Here are some bulletin points to reread and remember.

USE THE 10/2 RULE *PAUSE AND IDENTIFY* **WHEN DEALING WITH SCAMMERS**

Take 10 minutes to step completely away from the situation, clear your head, and let the initial panic subside.

Talk to 2 people you know and trust (such as family, friends, or a professional advisor) to get an objective outside perspective on what just happened.

WHY THE 10/2 WORKS

1. **Breaks the scammers spells**: They intentionally try to keep you on the phone or engage in a fast-paced chat so you don't have time to notice red flags. Hanging up or stopping the conversation entirely breaks their control.
2. **Allows for independent verification**: During those 10 minutes, you can look up the organization's official, published phone number to call them back.
3. **Overcome the Phony "Line Open" trick**: On landlines scammers sometimes don't hang up their end, so when you pick up the phone to call your bank, you are still connected to the criminal. Waiting 10 minutes ensures the phone line has completely cleared.
4. **Introducing Grounding Logic**: When you explain the situation out loud to 2 different people, they are not emotionally invested in the artificial emergency, they can easily spot logic gaps or common scam tropes (such as demands for gift cards, crypto, or immediate wire transfers).

IF YOU FALL VICTIM

1. Stop communication immediately
2. Contact your financial institution
3. Change passwords and monitor accounts
4. Talk to someone you trust.

PERSONS TO NOTIFY

5. Local police, Will County Sheriff dept.
6. Federal Trade Commission: ReportFraud.ftc.gov
7. Internet Crime Complaint Center (www.IC3.gov.)
8. Nat'l Consumers League Fraud Information Center. 202 835- 3323 www.fraud.org
9. Federal Consumer Information Center www.publications.usa.gov
10. Office of the Illinois Attorney General (Kwame Raoul) illinoisattorneygeneral.gov
11. Consumer Fraud Helplines:
    1 800 386-5438 (Chicago)
    1 800 243-0618 (Springfield)

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

Urgency or threats

Requests for gift cards or create crypto accounts

Unknown caller, email sender, or mail

Too-good-to-be-true offers

Pressure to act immediately

Asking for personal information

Poor grammar of spelling in text/email

Suspicious links or attachments

Asking to remain on phone while you conduct activity

Refusal to provide information when asked

Genesis 2:15 (NIV)

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

It will soon be Christmas shopping season. For some, it may be now. Don't forget, later this month it will be time for the **4th Quarter Smithsonian Bird Friendly Certified Coffee sale** that benefits Grace United Methodist Church. A gift of freshly roasted premium coffee that is grown in an environmentally friendly way makes a great holiday gift for a variety of reasons.

Thank you to the regulars who support this worthy environmental cause year around by purchasing their favorite Dean's Beans coffees at Grace's quarterly sales. They are not only supporting preservation of habitat for hundreds of songbird species that nest in North America and winter in the coffee growing regions of Central and South America, but they are also helping fund Grace's missions AND enjoying premium shade grown coffee. But, not all shade grown coffee is the same. Ask Greg DuBois about that.

Here is the next fundraiser schedule:

- Sale Kick Off 11/15/26
- Last Day to Order 11/29/26
- Pick up at Grace 12/6/26

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ASP WREATHS

Thank you for supporting the ASP Youth Mission Team by purchasing wreaths. Wreaths will be available for pickup on Sunday, November 29th in the Narthex.

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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 the form in the narthex or back of the sanctuary and return it with a check made out to Grace Church by December 8th. Poinsettias are $9 each.

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CROPWALK RESULTS

Sunday October 11th was a wonderful day to go for a walk to raise money to feed the hungry here at home and around the world. 17 walkers from Grace got together and we raised $520 for Church World Service/Crop Hunger Walk.

Thanks to all who contributed to this important mission.

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. 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 200 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.

Meals on Wheels will be December 12th. We will pack candy baggies in Grace Place from 9-11:30am.

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Thank you very much for all the love you have shown me during Pastor Appreciation Month. The gift cards, the letters of encouragement, prayers, hugs, flowers, meals, a special song…I have felt wrapped up in the love of Grace United Methodist Church. It has been a trying last few weeks for my family and the extra compassion, encouragement and love has meant more to us than you will ever know. I am blessed to be part of this wonderful congregation. To God be the glory!

In gratitude, Pastor Laura

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Growing in Faith Together

OCTOBER ATTENDANCE	WORSHIP 8:30 AM 10:30AM	CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL	ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
October 4	6/73	27	14
October 11	5/71	25	15
October 18	5/74	19	16
October 25	6/76	23	40

October 18th our worship service was led by our

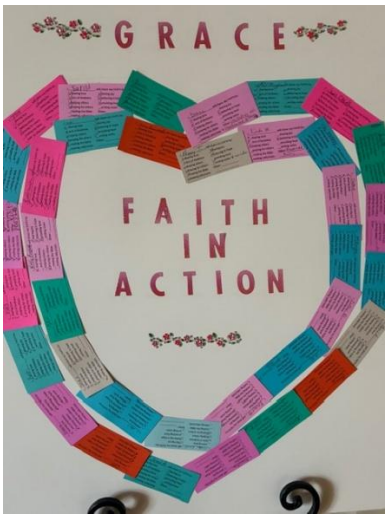
United Women in Faith.

The theme was "*Inspired by The Gospel".* It was a beautiful heartfelt worship service.

Along with the UWF we also had 'New Members Sunday'.
RECEIVED as **NEW MEMBERS** were

~ Remigio and Betty Panlaqui ~ Lyn Reed ~
Eduardo and Rachel Martinez

And the **BAPTISM** of **Helena and Lucy Martinez**









Through the 2026 Bishop's Appeal: Education for the Central Conferences, the Northern Illinois Conference helped expand educational opportunities for students and strengthen theological education across the global United Methodist connection.

> **The appeal raised $32,247.40, supporting two initiatives that invest in education at different stages of life and ministry: the construction of a high school in Tanzania and theological education in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.**

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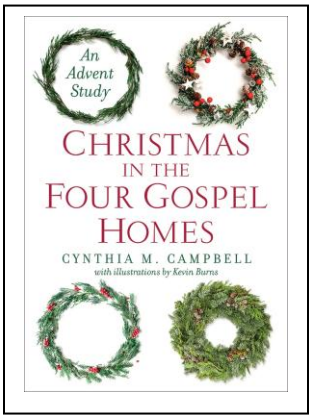
Did you know …

Residents with a documented medical disability or physical frailty (including qualifying seniors) can receive free side yard service (also commonly referred to as trash valet or hardship service). Under this program (as mandated by the Americans With Disabilities Act) waste collection drivers will retrieve your garbage and recycling toters directly from your side yard or garage area, empty them, and return them without requiring you to roll them to the curb. Call your waste management to set up this program.

Looking forward to December …

December 2nd

Advent Study



Our Advent Study will follow our Advent Sermon series: Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes. Advent Study by Cynthia M. Campbell who reflects on the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus or the incarnation offered by each Gospel.

Pastor Tim Rhodes will be leading the class on Wednesday nights from 6:00-7:15 pm starting December 2nd through the 23rd. There is a signup sheet for the class in the narthex. You are welcome to purchase the book on your own (or check it out from a library). If you need a book, the cost will be $10.

December 5th **UWF ANGEL CARE CHRISTMAS TEA**



Saturday December 5, at 10:00am in Grace Place.
A breakfast tea will be provided
A speaker from Groundwork will be attending
To explain how they serve the community.
A list of items they need for their little ones will be coming.
(HELP US CARE FOR THE LITTLE ANGELS IN OUR COMMUNITY)

December 6th	2nd Sunday of Advent
December 12th	9-11:30am Meals on Wheels Candy packing
December 13th	3rd Sunday of Advent 10:30 am Worship ~ Christmas Cantata
December 20th	4th Sunday of Advent
December 24th	7:00pm CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE
December 27th	1st Sunday after Christmas – Pajama Sunday and Blessing of the Toys
December 31st	Thursday, New Years Eve ~ WELCOME 2027!

NOVEMBER 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1 **All Saints** 8:30am Prayer & Gather 9am Sunday School 10am Fellowship & BP checks 10:30 am Worship	2	3	4 7:30p Choir	5	6	7 1pm Memorial Service Brian Sullivan
8 8:30am Prayer & Gather 9am Sunday School 10am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship	9	10 1:00pm UWF	11 **Veterans Day** 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	12	13	14
15 8:30am Prayer & Gather 9am Sunday School 10am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship	16 5p Daybreak	17 7am Daybreak 12:30pm Lunch Bunch 6:30p Finance via ZOOM	18 11:30a Food Pantry 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	19 6:30p Church Council	20	21 FMSC 5-6:30p
22 **Commitment Sunday** 8:30am Prayer & Gather 9am Sunday School 10am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship	23	24	25 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	26 **Thanksgiving Day**	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28
29 **1st Sunday of Advent HOG - Hanging of the Greens** 8:30am Prayer & Gather 9am Sunday School 10am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship	30					
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY