

GRACE

for the moment

The Newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church

October 2026



October Worship

Sundays 9 am
Wednesday 6:30 pm

Sunday School
10 am



Bible Presentation

Maliah Felsheim received her Bible from Grace Lutheran Church on Sunday, September 27. Maliah is the daughter of Ryan and Erica Felsheim. Kristi Nogelmeier made the presentation and Pastor Heidi led the Blessing.



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FROM THE PASTOR

Weekly worship services – this is what churches do. When we say, “We're going to church”; we're not talking about the building, we're talking about attending worship.

Most congregations structure their buildings around providing space for worship services, because worship is primary. If a church is having budget issues, they will cut back on some of what they do as a church; but the last thing they would ever cut is regular worship.

Yet, for all the importance we place on worship, church membership and attendance across the nation has been dwindling since the 1990s (earlier in some places). This is even true in Turner County. According to the American Religion database, Turner County is 50 percent unchurched – meaning about half of the population are not members of any church.

Many church leaders thought the solution to dwindling membership and attendance was to do worship services with better music, more drama, video and screens, and better sermons (C'mon, pastor, ramp it up!). The goal was to get more people in the pews. Well, churches across the nation have tried to build better worship experiences, but it hasn't worked. Church membership and attendance have not only continued to go down, the decline has accelerated in recent years.

This doesn't mean we should give up on worship services. God's Word in the Bible calls us to worship – to sing praises, to receive baptism and holy communion, and to hear the Good News of salvation through Jesus. So... no, we shouldn't give up on worship; but we've mostly been hoping that our worship services will *attract* unchurched people to us.

The problem is we're addicted to the *attractional* model. Why? Because it has worked for generations in the United States. In the 1950s and 1960s all we had to do was build a new church and people started coming. We said to ourselves, “If we build it, they will come.”

However, the *attractional model* is not biblical. This *come-to-us* version of church is not in the Bible. Jesus, the Apostle Paul, and the early church leaders all had a *go-to-them* understanding of the mission of the Church.

Most people are not staying away from churches because pews are uncomfortable, parking is tight, sermons are too long, or the music is dull. They're staying away because we're not even on their radar.

The attractiveness of Christianity is ultimately not found in a worship service. It's found in a group of people who are living the gospel. Churches can be more than a worship service. We can be salt and light, living out the gospel in our schools, homes, and workplaces, rather than hoping people will come to us. We people who are living out the the Kingdom of God and its values in the communities in which God has put us.

Pastor Lon, interim pastor

Senior Frogs

We will meet on Wednesday, October 21 at 7 pm and on Wednesday, October 28 for Trunk or Treat.

Please join us.



Message from Tristin Plienis, Church Council President



John 3:27 ESV “John answered, “A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven”.

We thank you for your time and thought given to our stewardship Sunday. As a church we want to commit our time and talents to God and all that is to come.

We have been so grateful for Pastor Lon & Pastor Heidi these last weeks as it is a reminder we are one... and in this together.

We have SO enjoyed having the kids back during and after Rally Sunday, our board of ed is amazing and we look forward to helping your kiddos connect to Christ in their young faith.

We have selected our call committee and will be starting that process, we will be meeting with the Bishop on expectations and things needed to move forward in this process. Thank you to all who have given us their time.

Holy Playground has received a wonderful grant to keep pouring time and Messy Church events into our schedule. We would LOVE for you all to join as you can. We strive to connect the young with the old and create a safe space for all to come and worship. Fall and the season change is upon us.. We ask for your prayers and God’s guidance as we move forward into our call process. I am so grateful to have Pastor Heidi & Pastor Lon as we navigate these next months.

Thank you, church family, for being there and staying a consistent place for us all to move forward and navigate our next steps.

Enjoy the fall weather, and as seasons change, so do we. May we lean into all God has for us and walk out his plan for our future.

God’s Blessings,

Tristin



The **Call Committee** members are Gerry Schnabel, Kerri Meyer, Chris Wirt, Joel Plucker, Brad Bailiff, Lance Nogelmeier, and Dennis Johnson.

Planning Ahead

October AV Schedule

Sunday	
Oct. 4	Chela
Oct. 11	Chris
Oct. 18	Chris
Oct. 25	Kristen



Your church mailbox is often used as a regular mailbox-so please check it regularly.

Confirmation Students

Acolyte Schedule

Sunday	
October 4	Paige
October 11	Julian
October 18	Joe
October 25	Blaine

Communion Assistants

Wednesday	
October 7	Julian
October 14	Hudson
October 21	Joe
October 28	Trunk or Treat



If you are interested in serving **Coffee and Fellowship** on the second, fourth and fifth Sundays of the month.

There is sign-up sheet on the hallway bulletin board.

Thank you.

Weekly Worship Helpers:

Please use the link below to check and trade if needed:

<https://gracelutheranparker.com/weekly-worship-helpers>

For your Information:

The Church Secretary's Office is closed on Fridays.

Mailing Address for Grace Lutheran Church

Please use **Box 667** if you are having anything mailed to the church.

Thank you

Weekly Bulletins are posted on the Church's Website under What's Happening then News & Events then Quick Links

Stewardship Sunday on September 20, 2026

included a potluck meal and fellowship.



**The Junior FROGS presented “The Great Church Emergency”
during worship on Sunday, September 13, 2026.**



**BUSINESSES & INDIVIDUALS
YOU'RE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE!**

TRUNK or TREAT

Presented by

Grace Lutheran & St. Christina's Youth Groups



**CREATE A DECORATED TRUNK,
GAME, OR DISPLAY!**

Bring your creativity and help make this a fun
evening for our community!

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28TH
6:30 - 7:30 PM**

Grace Lutheran Church
490 E 1st Street, Parker, SD

TO PARTICIPATE OR FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Chrystal Schulte 605-321-1776
Michele Nolan 712-551-6592

September 30, 2026



Dear Siblings in Christ,

Greetings in the name of Jesus! We, Rev. Hannah and Rev. Dr. Henrique Fleming, have been called as missionaries with the ELCA serving in Liberia. Prior to this call, we served the South Dakota Synod as rostered leaders for over sixteen years. We have three adult children and an adorable granddaughter.

As we begin this service, we invite you to consider becoming missionary sponsors to support our work as part of ELCA Global Mission. This is one way to join us in our ministry through financial support and prayers as well as regular updates on our ministry. It is such an encouragement to us to know that you're walking with us on this journey. Allow us to tell you a bit about missionary service in the ELCA and why synod like yours plays such a vital role in the church's work of loving our global neighbors.

The ELCA's model of service is called accompaniment, and it shapes every form of service across our church. Accompaniment leads with listening to and getting to know those we serve so that we can walk alongside them as equals. This means that our work in Liberia will look a lot like your ministries in your neighborhood, even though our communities are a world apart.

As missionaries, we will accompany the people of Liberia in partnership, dignity, and shared leadership. We will be training lay leaders and prospective pastors who are called to Christian ministry at the Brian Palmer School of Theology and providing pastoral assistance to congregations in Totota, Liberia.

Support from the ELCA's churchwide organization and congregations allows us to focus on this ministry. It is also a powerful reminder that we are not alone in this work – we work on behalf of our entire church, which supports us and prays with and for us. A covenant relationship with a missionary is so much more than a financial gift – it is empowerment and encouragement as we answer God's call as well as our commitment to ensure you can hear about and experience the impact of this work. What a remarkable gift to be able to serve together!

Will you join us in this work as a covenant partner? It would be a joy to bring you stories from this work so that you will get to know our shared mission and the people who make it so special. You will get to see what life is like beyond news headlines, too, so that you can better understand the unique challenges faced by this community and how our work seeks to make a difference. We can learn about one another and pray for each other with the hope that our partnership will inspire both of our ministries in equal measures.

To find out more about missionary covenants and how to partner with us, please contact Hellen Rios-Carillo at 773.380.2448 or hellen.rios-carillo@elca.org. Our prayers are with you and your ministry, and we ask that you remember us in yours!

In Christ,

Rev. Hannah and Rev. Dr. Henrique Fleming

Continues to the following page...

From Pastors Henrique and Hannah,,,

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE! HERE'S HOW TO GIVE:

By check: Make payable to "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" with "Fleming GCS2150" in the memo line. Give through your synod office or mail your check to:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.

By credit or debit card: Visit [ELCA.org/Missionary Giving](https://www.elca.org/Missionary-Giving) or call 800-638-3522 and specify "Fleming GCS2150."

By automatic monthly bank withdrawal, or to establish a covenant of prayer, communication and support: Contact 800-638-3522, ext. 2820, or globalchurch@elca.org.



Connecting Threads

Sewing Group

meets on the second Monday
of each month at 1 pm.

No sewing skill required.

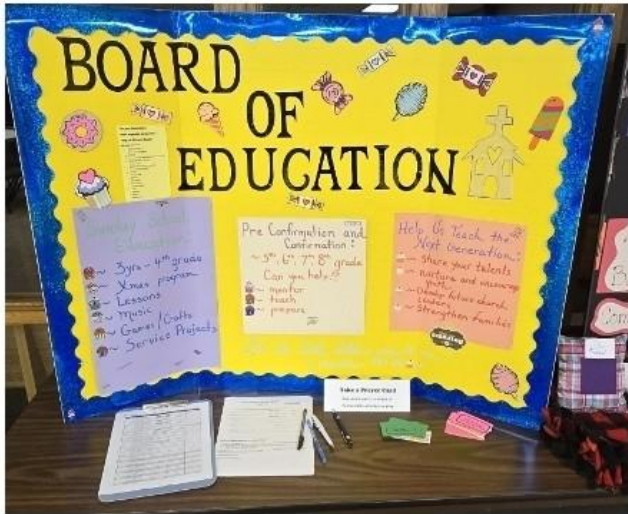
Please join us on

Monday, October 12.

All are welcome!



Board of Education:



What a wonderful start to our Sunday school year! We kicked off our first day with Rally Sunday, complete with a bounce house, delicious ice cream, and incredible energy. The turnout was so fantastic that we had to pull in extra tables and chairs just to fit everyone! A huge thank you to all the hands-on volunteers who jumped in to make the day run smoothly—we couldn't have done it without you.

As our program grows, we are still looking for additional teachers and helpers to join our team. If you feel called to serve our youth, the sign-up sheet remains available online. Additionally, if you have extra craft supplies lying



QR code for
teacher sign-up
spreadsheet

around at home, we would love to restock our craft closet with new creative options for the kids!

The October fishbowl offering will support The New Dawn Learning Center, the school founded by Pastor Henrique and Pastor Hannah in Liberia. Your generous donations help provide education and essential resources to children in need overseas.

Upcoming Dates to Remember:

October 18: Special Music during Sunday Service

October 25: Sunday School Service Project

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for our young learners and educators!



Pig belly bounce house for Rally Sunday with jumpers inside

Connecting Generations: Updates from the Holy Playground Committee!

The Holy Playground Committee at Grace is thrilled to announce that we have been awarded a grant from the SD Synod, Holy Playground Cohort! This grant directly supports our mission to “cultivate authentic relationships across all generations.” We have exciting plans in store, including new events, updated tools, and refreshed resources to help our children feel deeply connected to worship, our congregation, and our church family. Keep an eye out for new items appearing at Grace!



One project we are especially excited to launch is our new Bible Study Station. This area will be stocked with highlighters, bookmarks, Post-it notes, and helpful resources to encourage everyone—young and old—to bring their personal Bibles and engage in active study during worship and church activities.

If you would like to be a part of the Holy Playground committee, we would love to have you join us! Please reach out to Chela or Tristin for more information.

Highlights from September's Messy Church

Our committee is hosting Messy Church every other month as a space for fellowship, creativity, and praising God together. We had an incredible turnout in September with around 40 people joining the fun!

Together at Messy Church, we:

- Created a hilarious Mad-Lib story based on our “Wilderness” theme.
- Enjoyed a delicious meal of walking tacos and desserts.
- Crafted edible birdhouses, custom trail mix, prayer beads, and painted rocks and birdhouses—all as tangible reminders that God provides for us and is always with us.

We also enjoyed a special skit performed by the FROGS children, reminding us that God is the greatest because He gives us all of our unique gifts and talents. Emrick and Vaun even helped Brad wash the stones that had our burdens written on them, and placed them at the foot of the cross. This was a beautiful visual for the way that the blood of Christ washes away our sins and we give our burdens to God by placing them at the foot of the cross.

Get Involved & Save the Date!

We would love your help with future gatherings! If you are interested in volunteering, sign-up sheets are available in the Fellowship Hall and on the bulletin board.

Mark your calendars for our next Messy Church on November 18th. Our theme will be “Our Father Gives Good Gifts,” and we will be working together on making Christmas presents. We hope to see you and your family there!



October Update New Dawn Learning Center

Grace Lutheran and Spirit of Joy mission partner: Liberia Mission-New Dawn Learning Center,
New Dawn Learning Center Advisory Committee, Larry Schoeszler, chair.

Some highlights from the New Dawn Learning Center includes:

The academic year ended with thirty two students, three graduating from kindergarten and three graduating from 6th grade. To keep the children engaged with learning, a vacation school was offered with twenty-two students. These students and teachers know how to celebrate.



The roofing is complete on buildings one and two, thanks to the generosity of Simple Supper for Kids (SSKids) Greeley, Colorado, Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, and Grace Lutheran Church in Parker.



As the new school year begins, the most pressing needs are for teacher salaries, \$12,000 for the year, tuition scholarships for students whose families cannot afford to pay \$200 per year, and the ongoing feeding ministry about \$4,000 for the year.

The following Meeting Minutes were approved at the 9/9/2026 council meeting.

Grace Lutheran Church Council

Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

Members Present: Jim Johnson, Tristin Plenis, Shelly Paynter, Marci Leberman, Bill Leberman, Lori Jones, Kaylyn Andersen, Chela Bolte, Pastor Henrique

Call to Order

- The Grace Lutheran Church Council meeting was called to order by Tristin.

Devotion

- Chela Bolte led the council in devotion.

Approval of Agenda

- Jim made a motion to approve the agenda. Bill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Reports

Secretary's Report

- The Secretary's Report was presented.
- Bill made a motion to approve the report. Tristin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Deacon's Report

- Music selections have been chosen through September.

Board of Education Report

- An email has been sent regarding Sunday School registration.
- A bouncy house has been rented for Rally Sunday.

Trustees' Report

- The ongoing pavement project was discussed.
- Tree branches hanging over the sidewalk need to be trimmed prior to the fair.
- The church cleaning schedule will be adjusted to accommodate Ron Nelson's funeral and upcoming fair activities.

Treasurer's Report

- The Treasurer's Report was presented and discussed.

Minutes continued...

Pastor's Report

- The possibility of sponsoring Global Ministries was discussed.
- There will be individuals who need to have scheduled visits with the fill-in pastor.

Congregational Input

- The door lock schedule for fair week was discussed.

Ongoing Business

Fall Kickoff / Stewardship Sunday

- Plans are being developed to build excitement and participation leading up to Stewardship Sunday.
- Congregational members will be invited to share what Grace Lutheran Church means to them.

Rally Sunday Logistics

- The bouncy house has been rented and will be pumped up and placed by the rental company.

Pavement Project

- The pavement project will not begin until September.
- The project will begin with the curb and gutter work.
- The congregation will continue to be kept informed as the project progresses.

Call Committee Leads

- The council will continue to collect names and nominations for the Call Committee until the next council board meeting.

Fans

- The need for fans remains ongoing and will continue to be addressed.

New Business

Budget / Income

- Pastor Lon's interim agreement was presented.
- Ongoing discussions will continue.

Holy Playground Grant

- Grace Lutheran Church has been awarded \$500 and \$1,000 grants.
- The church will be applying for the \$5,000 Holy Playground Grant.

Minutes continued...

- Lori made a motion to open a checking account for the Holy Playground Committee and add Chela and Tristin as signers for the Holy Playground checking account. Marci seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Fair Stand Account

- Shelly made a motion to add Ryan Penning and Shari Jensen to the Fair Stand Committee account. Jim seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Adjournment

- Kaylyn made a motion to adjourn. Lori seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The following Treasurer's Report was accepted at the 9/9/2026 council meeting.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT 8/1/2026-8/31/2026

INCOME:	<u>Current</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>
101 General Offering	\$5,776.88	\$68,855.14
102 Envelope Offering	\$2,775.00	\$21,890.00
103 Quarterly Offering	\$955.00	\$22,735.00
104 Lenten Offering		\$2,625.00
109 Camper Savings		
202 Use of Building		
203 Misc. Income		\$650.52
205 Thrivent	\$134.00	\$985.00
208 Amazon Smile		
219 Transfer from Building Fund		\$3,500.00
220 Transfer to Building Fund	(\$3,500.00)	(\$3,500.00)
TOTAL INCOME:	\$9,640.88	\$117,740.66

SUMMARY GENERAL CHECKING:

Beginning Balance 1/1/2026	\$4,329.47
Total Income	\$117,740.66
Total Expenses	\$110,502.80
Ending Balance	\$11,567.33

MONTHLY SUMMARY:

	<u>Offering Total</u>	<u>Misc Income</u>	<u>Monthly Expenses</u>
January	\$13,931.25	\$378.41	\$16,164.76
February	\$16,139.06	\$237.00	\$10,150.89
March	\$11,881.89	\$476.00	\$17,520.58
April	\$11,115.30	\$46.00	\$14,743.44
May	\$20,606.78	\$3,793.11	\$17,093.55
June	\$12,729.60	\$71.00	\$14,477.58
July	\$20,194.38	\$0.00	\$15,362.59
August	\$6,140.88	\$0.00	\$4,989.41
September			
October			
November			
December			
Total Monthly Offering	\$112,739.14	\$5,001.52	\$110,502.80

OTHER ACCOUNT BALANCES:

First Savings Campers Savings	\$4,775.43
First Savings Building Fund Savings	\$53,514.88
First Savings Bank Money Market	\$4,317.56
River's Edge Bank CD	\$42,849.95

Kristi Nogelmeier, Treasurer

EXPENSES: SALARIES/BENEFITS	Current	Year-to-Date	2026 Budget
301 Pastor Salary/Benefits/Pension	\$0.00	\$34,645.49	\$54,000.00
302 Pastor Housing Allowance	\$834.69	\$11,799.69	\$18,900.00
303 Employer Paid Pension/Retirement	\$0.00	\$5,231.84	\$7,500.00
304 Pastor SECA Allowance	\$248.96	\$3,513.67	\$5,600.00
305 Pastor Car Allowance	\$0.00	\$1,106.79	\$2,000.00
307 Employer Paid Pastor Insurance - Health & Benefits	\$0.00	\$12,613.38	\$22,000.00
308 Pastor Continuing Education	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
320 Custodian/320A Contract Cleaning Co	\$300.00	\$2,111.94	\$7,000.00
321 Organist	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,560.00
322 Secretary	\$832.08	\$7,743.79	\$12,000.00
323 Groundskeeper	\$151.51	\$444.11	\$3,000.00
325 Sub Pastor	\$500.00	\$823.10	\$2,000.00
326 FICA Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,036.02	\$2,500.00
TOTAL EXPENSES-SALARIES/BENEFITS:	\$2,867.24	\$81,569.82	\$139,060.00

EXPENSES: BUILDING/GROUNDS	Current	Year-to-Date	2026 Budget
401 Snow Removal	\$0.00	\$801.00	\$2,500.00
402B Natural Gas	\$12.74	\$1,755.60	\$3,000.00
405 Electricity and Water	\$543.41	\$3,583.95	\$4,750.00
407 Insurance	\$0.00	\$6,541.73	\$12,500.00
408 Misc. Bldg. & Grnd. Exp.	\$213.21	\$1,464.28	\$5,000.00
409 Piano Tuning	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$175.00
409A Organ Maintenance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
413 Workmans Compensation	\$0.00	\$405.00	\$850.00
415 Audio Visual Expenses	\$0.00	\$266.00	\$1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES-BUILDING & GROUNDS:	\$769.36	\$14,817.56	\$29,975.00

EXPENSES: CHURCH PROGRAMS	Current	Year-to-Date	2026 Budget
502 Bible Camp Sponsorships	\$0.00	\$540.00	\$3,000.00
503 Offering Envelopes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
504 Confirmation Expense	\$0.00	\$365.04	\$1,500.00
506 Synod Assembly	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00
507 Books and Materials	\$84.95	\$84.95	\$100.00
508 Misc. Program Expense	\$327.27	\$1,405.03	\$2,500.00
512 Bank Service Charges	\$0.00	\$107.70	\$250.00
513 Bank Reconcile Adjustment	\$0.00	\$0.20	\$0.00
517 Bibles for 3rd Graders	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
519 Postage	\$0.00	\$219.40	\$400.00
524 Lenton Meals	\$0.00	\$783.73	\$600.00
526 High School Graduate Gifts	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
TOTAL EXPENSES-CHURCH PROGRAMS:	\$412.22	\$3,506.05	\$10,000.00

EXPENSES: MISSIONS/BENEVOLENCES	Current	Year-to-Date	2026 Budget
602 Augustana PACT	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
603 ELCA Benevolence	\$500.00	\$4,000.00	\$6,000.00
604 Shetek Bible Camp	\$0.00	\$650.00	\$650.00
605 Crossroads Conference Dues	\$0.00	\$28.40	\$50.00
615 The Banquet	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES-MISSIONS:	\$500.00	\$5,678.40	\$8,700.00

EXPENSES: OFFICE	Current	Year-to-Date	2026 Budget
701 Copier Lease	\$174.83	\$1,281.23	\$2,600.00
702 Bulletins and Inserts	\$190.71	\$1,609.54	\$2,000.00
703 Church Office Phone/Internet	\$74.85	\$1,640.57	\$2,000.00
704 Office Supplies	\$0.00	\$399.43	\$750.00
TOTAL EXPENSES - OFFICE:	\$440.39	\$4,930.77	\$7,350.00

GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$4,989.21	\$110,502.60	\$195,085.00
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