



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering in Grace, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

MAY 2025 Newsletter

Pastor's Ponderings



Easter is still fresh in my mind, and I think all of us can use a reminder that we are Easter people, year-round. So I share again some of the message you may have heard on Easter.

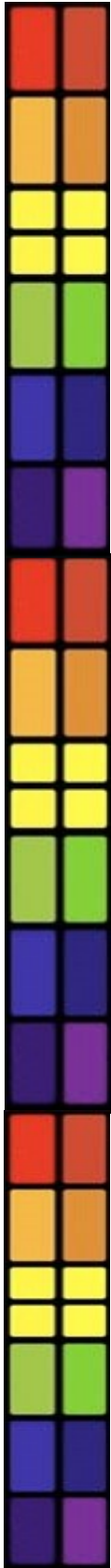
“Why do you look for the living among the dead?” That was the question the women were asked at the tomb that first Easter morning. They were then told that Jesus was alive, risen from the dead. There was no reason to linger in a place of death, because Jesus had risen to give them new life. And with that new life, the women ran off to tell the others that Jesus had risen, bringing life out of death for all.

This Easter, we talked about how easy it is for us to settle for things that don't give us life. We get tired, we get discouraged or overwhelmed, and we settle for what's easy and familiar, rather than looking for what gives us life. It's like knowing that we need healthy food to sustain us but feeling too tired and too overwhelmed to bother. So instead of eating food that fuels your body, we settle for what you can find – stale chips with cheez whiz, a squashed Twinkie you don't remember buying, or something unidentifiable that's been in the back of your fridge for a month. Will that food fill you up? Sure. Is it healthy? Will it give us life? Not so much.

Easter, reminds us that we worship a God who sent his Son to bring light into our darkness, forgiveness in a world of brokenness, life – eternal life – when it seems like death will have the last word. Easter reminds us that we don't have to settle for death, for things that have no life to give us. Easter reminds us that life is so abundant all around us if we just take a peek out of the darkness of our old tombs to see it. What gives you life? Just looking outside, venturing outside, you can't help but see life bursting into bloom this spring. New life is found in the kindness we can share with others. New life is in the Word of God, the stories of joy we share. New life is in our gratitude and thankfulness for what God has given us. New life is found every time we show love in our actions. New life is found when we create beauty – art, crafts, music, and food and share with others. New life blooms brilliantly when we live with thoughtfulness and compassion for others. New life is abundant as we connect with others in kindness and love. New life eclipses the darkness of the tomb every time.

Jesus rose from the dead to give us new life, to show us that we don't have to settle for death or darkness or “good enough.” Jesus rose to give us abundant life that never ends. Let us look for what gives us life and share it with others.

In Christ,
+ *Pastor Jennifer*





It Takes a Village

Thank you to the many, many people who helped make our Lent and Holy Week so special. Thanks to all the actors – Mary Bielefeldt, Todd Tatlock, Billy, Gracie, Maddie and Traci Becker, Steve Bielefeldt, Jenny Horgan-Geis, Chesney & Corbin Klemp, Bob Koepp, Char Luchterhand, Tim Neuenschwander, and Shawn Whitman. Thanks to all of those who brought soup and helped host our Soup Suppers. Thanks to all our amazing musicians, worship volunteers, decorators, and everybody else for making this such a meaningful season.



Confirmation Corner



Confirmation wraps up for this year with our study of the Apostles' Creed. Our Mentor/Student Potluck will be on Wednesday, May 7 starting at 6:00 p.m. Mentorship Booklets are due that evening. When students complete their Sermon Note Booklets, they can turn them in to Pastor Jennifer.

Want to worship from home? Here's how!

Grace's Sunday services continue to be broadcast on Spectrum cable channel 987 Sundays at 9am. Sunday services are also livestreamed on Grace's Facebook page. Just looking for sermons? Check out our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdWxSntOyuupFnyLgxSU8aw>



Church Office Hours

The Church Office is open from 9 am – noon, Monday through Friday. Variable additional hours are available; please contact us if you'd like to make an appointment (608)423-3135 or via email at gracelutherancambridgwi@gmail.com

New Paraments

Thanks to our very own, multi-talented Jeanine Thurow, who created beautiful new Easter paraments for us. Thank you, Jeanine!



Monday Night Adult Study



Last summer, at the ELCA Youth Gathering, participants explored the theme "Created to Be." Each day was a different characteristic, Created to Be Authentic, Brave, Free, Disruptive, and Disciples. The daily themes helped us explore our faith and think about who we are as Lutheran Christians living here and now, and they can be equally valuable to adults as well. In May, our Bible study will explore some of these themes, hearing some of the speakers from last year's Gathering. Join us each Monday evening at 7 pm as we think more deeply about how we can live into who God created us to be.

Sheets and Fabric Needed!

Grace Quilters are in great need of clean, stain-free, cotton sheets. Please consider donating sheets by bringing them to the church office.

Any sewers who have unused fabric around, please consider donating to Grace. Monetary donations are also always welcome. Donations can be dropped off at the church office.



Don't Forget Your Piggly Wiggly Receipts

Did you know that if you bring your Cambridge Piggly Wiggly receipts to church, Grace gets back 1% of what you spent? It's an easy and wonderful way to help support a local business AND your congregation. Receipts can be left in the drawer of the table in the front vestibule.

MAY VOLUNTEERS



- May 4** - Ushers: Gary & Sharon Haberkorn Assisting Minister: Erik Olsen
Reader: April Mickelson
Communion Servers: April Mickelson & Rachel Drotzer
Communion Set Up: Ruth Circle
Acolytes: George & Henry Albrecht
Coffee Hour Hosts: Albrecht & Martin
- May 11** - Ushers: Donna Simdon & Jeanine Thurow Assisting Minister: Jeff Gafner
Reader: Jim Leser
Communion Servers: Bill & Betty Reay
Communion Set Up: Ruth Circle
Acolytes: Jack Johnson & William Gottschalk
Coffee Hour: Fronek & Schultz
- May 18**- Ushers: Richard & Jean Scott Assisting Minister: Kelly Witte
Reader: Amanda Kress
Communion Servers: Kenny Zickert & Pat Hall
Communion Set Up: Ruth Circle
Acolytes: Crew Cunningham & Kinsley Stenjem
Coffee Hour Hosts: Mittlestedt & Tammy Northey
- May 25** - Ushers: Marcia Sivesind & Wendy Lehr Assisting Minister: Rich Fronek
Reader: Tim Neuenschwander
Communion Servers: Tom & Chris Watson
Communion Set Up: Geis Family
Acolytes: Annabel Fleck & William Gottschalk
Coffee Hour Hosts: Thurow & Wolfgram



Altar Guild - Andrya Coutts, Wendy Lehr & Betty Reay

MAY AT GRACE

Sunday	Monday	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<p>27</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:15 am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6 pm Piano Recital</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:10 am Sunday School</p> <p>10:15am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p> <p>7pm Adult Study</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9 am Ruth Circle</p> <p>11am Outreach Committee</p> <p>6:30 pm Confirmation</p>	<p>8</p> <p>2 pm Staff Mtg</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11 MOTHER'S DAY</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:10 am Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p> <p>7pm Adult Study</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7pm Council Meeting</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9 am Lydia Circle</p> <p>6:30 pm Confirmation</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Newsletter content due</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18 KID'S TAKEOVER</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:30 am Quilters</p> <p>7pm Adult Study</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25</p> <p>9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook</p> <p>10:15 am Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>26</p> <p>MEMORIAL DAY</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>

GROWING FAITH-FILLED KIDS



What We're Learning in Sunday School

People love camping, and for good reason! You can take in nature, practice special skills, or just take time to relax in a new environment. And when it comes to camping, no one loved it as much as John the Baptist. In our next 4-week series, Camp Believe It, kids will hear about John the Baptist's special role in preparing the way for Jesus and his ministry. John's story will help kids to say their camp motto, "I believe God gives me purpose. I believe God can speak to me. I believe God is powerful. I believe God's words are true.

KIDS TAKEOVER!



We're excited to announce that our annual Kids Takeover Worship Service is happening on Sunday, May 18th—and this year, we're taking you along to the great outdoors to Camp Believe It! Get ready for a worship experience filled with campfire vibes, nature-inspired fun, and of course, the incredible leadership of our kids. They'll be taking over key roles in the service—greeting, ushering, reading scripture, leading music, and more. Come support our young campers as they guide us through a joyful, faith-filled Sunday you won't want to miss!

2025 Lenten Challenge Exceeded!

Our Lenten Challenge this spring focused on refugees here in the US who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, violence, and/or persecution. Thanks to your generosity, we raised over \$3500 for the Lutheran Social Services Refugee Resettlement program, which assists refugees in achieving job placement and attain self-sufficiency.

Thank you to our Grace Community for taking up the challenge and generously supporting our brothers and sisters in need!

We Are One LSS
Called to Serve,
Empowered to Act.
Inspired to Lead.

“Risen” Easter Event

4.20.25



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2025

(Minutes below not approved until next Council meeting)

Call to Order. President Kelly Witte called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Attendance. Present: Sandi Aston Hall, Steve Bielefeldt, Pr. Jennifer Jelinek, John Jensen, Marcia Klemp, Connie Kreuser, Charlene Luchterhand, April Mickelson, Peggy Punsel, Kristin Rue, Richard Scott, Amy Simdon, Kelly Witte. **Absent:** None

Devotions. Connie shared her faith journey, and Sandi led us in prayer.

Approval of Minutes. Peggy moved to approve the March minutes. Kristin seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by those who attended the March meeting.

Approval of Agenda. John moved to approve the agenda. Marcia seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Correspondence. Pastor read a summary of the annual meeting from Skaalen Retirement Services—a continuum of care community—prepared by Chris Watson, our liaison to this community. Skaalen is nationally recognized for their services and has lengthy waiting lists.

Treasurer's Report. (Amy) We had a net gain of \$4,299 in March, giving us a total gain of \$1,031 for the year. Our General Giving through March was \$20,840 less than 2024 and \$9,682 less than the 2025 budget. The Special Giving through March was \$1,490 less than last year and \$931 less than budget. Our expenses through March were \$9,558.41 less than last year although most of the difference was due to the sabbatical expenses last year. We were \$11,634 under budget. The checking balance was \$4,296 more than at the end of February with the general fund balance approximately \$2,031 more. Sandi moved to approve this treasurer's report and send it to audit. John seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Pastor's Report. Wednesday night Lenten services and soup suppers have gone smoothly. Everything is set for decorating on the Saturday prior to Easter. Holy week schedule: Palm Sunday-9:00 AM, Maundy Thursday-7:00 PM, Good Friday community service at Veterans Park-noon (one location only this year); Good Friday at our church-7:00 PM, Easter-7:00 AM & 9:00 AM. Special music for the 9:00 AM Easter service will include members of all ages and ability levels who play an instrument joining in on the hymn, *Jesus Christ Has Risen Today*. We will enjoy Holy Humor Sunday the week after Easter. Kelly Witte and Tami Collin will represent our church at Synod Assembly on May 16-17. Erik Jelinek update: doing OK and still in the research study. He can now travel to Detroit alternate weeks rather than weekly.

Committee Reports. (Provided in writing and/or discussed in the meeting as needed.)

- **Education.** (Kristen). Sunday School will have its Easter celebration, RISEN, this Sunday from 10:15 AM--noon.
- **Hospitality. (Peggy)** Cake will be provided on Sunday in honor of a special birthday.

- **Outreach & Social Justice.** (April) Working on making the Lenten Challenge more visible. Chris and Tom Watson were contacted about the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) refugee program they are involved with. Pastor invited them to share during a Sunday worship service how they have been involved and to speak about the needs and/or benefits of donating to LSS. We hope this will encourage our congregation to help meet our Lenten Challenge of \$2000 for LSS.
- **Stewardship.** (Connie) See "New Business."

Old Business.

Church Preservation Projects/Bids. The office will be carpeted the Monday and Tuesday after Easter. Cost will be about \$1475. An estimate to carpet the large room in the basement is \$1500. Right now there are more urgent property priorities, e.g., fixing outdoor lighting, which is a safety issue. A bid for a new thermostat for the sanctuary is \$800. Jim Jermain is investigating a lower cost option.

Personal Safety Task Force. Will meet after Easter.

Pictorial Directory. Breah Klemp finished the draft and obtained a quote of \$300-\$400 for 100 copies. We may want to purchase 200 copies. Other options may be investigated.

New Business.

- **"Save the Bees.** (Stewardship Committee) We previewed a lovely power point presentation prepared by Mary Bielefeldt and Breah Klemp geared for Sunday School children. The vision is to involve the children and their parents in the pollinator garden project. These families will also be invited to participate in a fundraiser to "save the bees" through the organization Earthjustice because bees are so critical in pollinating many types of plants and have been dying off in record numbers. Earthjustice's work has stellar reviews that the committee would like to support.

Adjournment. April moved to adjourn the meeting. Amy seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM. We ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 13 at 7:00 PM. April is scheduled to present devotions.

Submitted by Charlene Luchterhand, Council Secretary



God's work. Our hands.

From the Treasurer

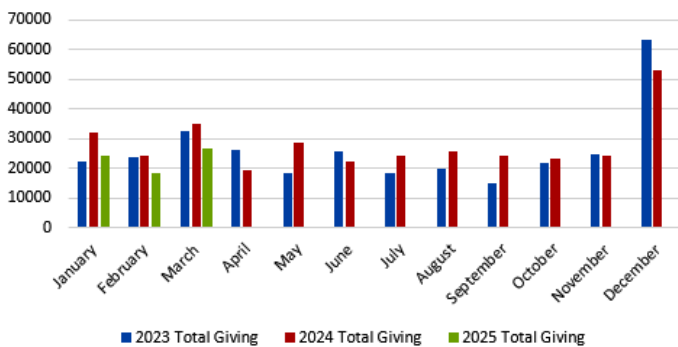
March 2025 Financial Snapshot

Income	Year-to-date March 2025 Actual	Year-to-date 2025 Monthly Budget	Over/(under) budget
General Giving	62,193	71,875	(9,682)
Special Giving	6,569	7,500	(931)
Misc Income	793	879	(86)
Total Income	69,555	80,254	(10,698)
Expenses			
Administrative	25,621	28,215	(2,593)
Mission	7,794	13,000	(5,206)
Pastoral	33,439	36,288	(2,849)
Program	1,670	2,655	(985)
Other	-	-	-
Total Expenses	68,524	80,158	(11,634)
Total Net Income (Loss)	1,031 96		935

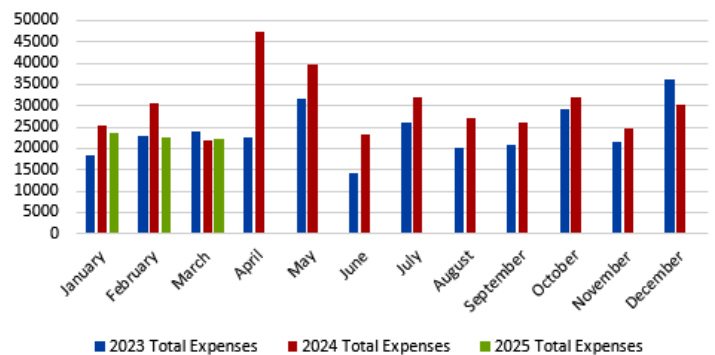
Thank you to everyone for your generosity and stewardship. Please remember that in addition to the Sunday service, you can give online through Vanco (<https://www.vancopayments.com/login>) or through Venmo, using the QR code.



Comparison of Total Giving - 2023/2024/2025



Comparison of Total Expenses - 2023/2024/2025





Staff and Council



STAFF

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Volunteer Coordinator Cindy Hartman cindyh1029@msn.com

Financial Secretary Diane Russo Cell: (847) 826-0131 gracelutheranfinance@gmail.com

Organist Kenneth Hoversten kenneth.hoversten@gmail.com

Handbell Choir Director Ann Engelstad gaengelstad@charter.net

COUNCIL

President Kelly Witte

Vice President Steve Bielefeldt

Secretary Char Luchterhand

Treasurer Amy Simdon

Outreach April Mickelson

Education Kristin Rue

Stewardship Connie Kreuser

Hospitality Peggy Punsel

Evangelism Marcia Klemp

Worship Sandi Aston Hall

Property John Jensen

Property Richard Scott



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