



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering in Grace, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

NOVEMBER 2024 Newsletter

Pastors' Ponderings



When I was growing up, I had a friend named Jessie whose parents were big gardeners. They grew all sorts of things – tomatoes, corn, zucchini, peas, beans, unfamiliar vegetables like kohlrabi and leeks, strawberries, squash, and beets (my least favorite). When I visited, I loved walking through the rows of plants, marveling at the growing crops. One year, Jessie's parents told her that she could have her own garden in the back yard. She could plant anything she wanted. But it would be her responsibility to take care of the garden – to water it, weed it, and to harvest it when it was time. I remember thinking that was the coolest thing – to have your very own garden, like a real grown-up. I was so excited to watch Jessie's garden grow from seed to harvest.

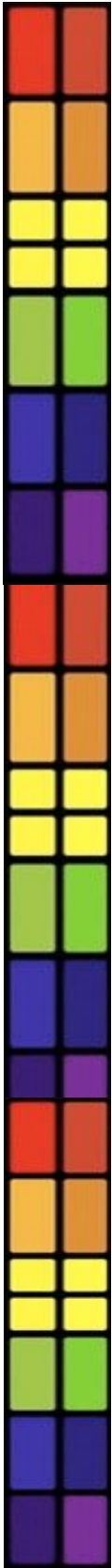
But I had no idea how much time and energy it would take to take care of Jessie's little garden. Jessie was a very responsible gardener. I'd get impatient sometimes, wanting to play, but she'd say, "I can't play until I take care of my garden. My parents gave it to me, the plants are my responsibility, and I want to do a good job." By the end of the summer, Jessie had a beautiful garden, filled with gorgeous sweet corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, and pumpkins. It was amazing to see what began as tiny seeds turn into wheelbarrows full of crops, because of my friend's hard work in partnership with God's creation.

This fall, we've been talking about Tending God's Garden. God created this amazing planet and gives us the opportunity to live here, to embrace God's blessings, to take care of the earth, and to take care of one another. God gives us tools – the many talents and abilities which we can use in so many ways. Planting seeds (whether actual seeds or metaphorical seeds), is an action of faith. It involves doing something new, working to give the seeds the best chance, and trusting that growth will happen. This garden metaphor is as fitting for our work as the church as it is in the great outdoors. God has given us this church to tend and care for, so we can share the harvest with others.

You've been given unique abilities and talents. You've been given tools, resources, and gifts to share, gifts that help God's Garden grow and flourish. In the next week, I invite you to think about your gifts and how you'd like to use them to help tend God's Garden here at Grace. On November 10, we'll celebrate living in God's Garden and the ways in which we're committing to tend it in this next year. We invite you to bring your Pledge Card and Time & Talent Sheet to worship on that day as your thank-offering to God. May God continue to bless us as we Tend God's Garden of Grace together. In Christ,

+ *Pastor Jennifer*

P.S. - Didn't get a copy in the mail? We've got extras.





All Saints' & Confirmation Sunday



Sunday, November 3 will be an eventful day at Grace. We'll remember those who have gone before us on All Saints' Sunday. Come light a candle in memory of a loved one. And we'll also celebrate our 9th graders who are affirming their baptisms. Please join us for this very special All Saints' and Confirmation Sunday, and please pray for our confirmands:

Cash Cunningham
Gordie Grender
Marissa Kilburg

Mason Neuenschwander
Rory Sullivan
Rylan Tobias

Thank You!



So many big jobs happen behind the scenes here at Grace. We're so grateful for the people who see and do things that need to be done. Thanks to Wendy Lehr for washing all our worship leader robes. Thank you to Rich & Diane Fronek for trimming the overgrown bushes by the front entrance. Thanks to Neil & Karen Johnson for creating a pew schematic so it's easy to put moved pews back in their original spots. And thanks to all the others who have helped in ways we haven't seen or mentioned.

Don't Miss Another Award-Winning Performance

Be sure to mark your calendars for this year's Christmas program, during worship on December 15th!



Want to worship from home? Here's how!

You may have noticed that there have been broadcast issues on Spectrum cable channel 987 lately. 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>

Monday Adult Study

This month, we'll finish Season 4 of "The Chosen", and we'll set our sights on the upcoming Advent season. Classes typically start at 7:00 p.m. but the first 2 classes will start at 6:45, as the videos are over an hour.

If you're new to the series or already a fan, please join us for these enlightening episodes and conversations!



Nov. 4 – The Last Sign (starting at 6:45)

Nov. 11 – Humble (starting at 6:45)

Nov. 18 – TBA

Nov. 25 – Advent Study

Like to Bake or Plan a Party?



The Hospitality Committee will meet on November 10th during coffee hour. If you like to plan celebrations, make desserts, decorate, or help in the kitchen, we'd love for you to join us at this informal meeting.

Christmas Card Ministry

Have you ever been alone during the holidays? Have you ever struggled to feel joy at Christmas? Imagine how difficult it must be for people who are in jail during the holidays. Madison Area Jail Ministry is inviting us to help brighten people's holiday season with Christmas cards for those who won't be home for the holidays. For the next few weeks, there will be Christmas cards in the Fellowship Hall for you to write messages of hope and encouragement during this special season. Please note the guidelines included. Questions? Contact Jenny Horgan-Geis - horgange@gmail.com

Grace Office Hours

The Church Office is open from 9 am – noon, Monday - 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



NOVEMBER VOLUNTEERS



- Nov 3** - Ushers: Amy Simdon & Jennifer Budewitz Assisting Minister: Andrya Coutts
Reader: Amy Simdon
Communion Servers: April Mickelson & Rachel Drotzer
Communion Set Up: Ruth Circle
Acolytes: Jackson Rue & Blake Schutte
Coffee Hour Hosts: Hussey & Hausz
- Nov 10** - Ushers: Alice Wolfgram & Judy Heidebrecht Assisting Minister: Kelly Witte
Reader: Ward Nottestad
Communion Servers: Mary Behling & Kenny Zickert
Communion Set Up: Ruth Circle
Acolytes: Paxton & Emmett Koehler
Coffee Hour Hosts: Behling/Lund
- Nov 17** - Ushers: Justin Williams Family Assisting Minister: Erik Olsen
Reader: Shawn Whitman
Communion Servers: Shawn Whitman & Sharon Erb
Communion Set Up: Ruth Circle
Acolytes: Cael & Corbin Klemp
Coffee Hour: Falk & Williams
- Nov 24** - Ushers: Bill & Betty Reay Assisting Minister: Rich Fronek
Reader: Ann Engelstad
Communion Servers: Marcia Klemp & Shauna Thayer
Communion Set Up: Geis Family
Acolytes: George & Henry Albrecht
Coffee Hour: Tatlock & Gafner



Altar Guild - Pat Hall, Pat Northey & Sharon Erb

NOVEMBER AT GRACE

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
27 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Choir Rehearsal	28 9:30 am Quilters 7 pm Adult Study	29	30 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:30 Dessert Reception	31	1	2
3 CONFIRMATION SUNDAY 9 am Worship SERVICE- Al- so on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Choir Rehearsal	4 9:30 am Quilters 7 pm Adult Study	5	6 9 am Ruth Circle 10 am Staff Mtg 11am Outreach Committee 6:30 pm Confirmation	7	8	9
10 COMMITMENT SUNDAY 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Choir Rehearsal	11 9:30 am Quilters 7 pm Adult Study	12 7pm Council Mtg	13 9 am Lydia Circle 6:30 pm Confirmation	14	15 Newsletter content deadline	16
17 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Choir Rehearsal	18 9:30 am Quilters 7 pm Adult Study	19	20 6:30 pm Confirmation	21	22	23
24 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 10:10 am Sunday School 10:15 am Choir Rehearsal	25 9:30 am Quilters 7 pm Adult Study	26	27 6:30 pm Ciha Baptism	28	29	30

GROWING FAITH-FILLED KIDS



Sunday School in Full Swing

We are getting ready for the holiday season with our next series, *Joy Story!* Be sure to mark your calendars for this year's Christmas program during worship on December 15th

At Christmas, gifts are all around us, but we know the holiday isn't about the toys—it's about the joy of Jesus' birth. We might experience joy from opening up gifts, but God gives us even greater joy through Jesus. In this 5-week series, kids will learn all about the joy Jesus brought into the world. They'll learn that Jesus is the savior God promised, how God sent Jesus at the perfect time, and what it means to say Jesus is God's greatest gift.

Confirmation Corner



Our Confirmation class is continuing our study of the Ten Commandments and what they mean in our lives today. Just a reminder that each student is to take 2 sermon notes a month. Mentorship night is November 6 at 6:30 p.m. Our original schedule will be changed – we'll do a class about Holy Baptism on November 20. Then, although there's no Confirmation Class on November 27, all are welcome to come celebrate the Baptism of August Ciha with us at 6:30 p.m.



Grateful and Blessed

In case you missed it, in October we celebrated Pastor Jennifer on *Pastor Appreciation Day*. We are grateful and blessed to have her lead our congregation.

Thanks for all you do, Pastor Jennifer!

Outreach and Social Justice: Food Pantry Basket Update

We have green beans! We met our Thanksgiving 200-can goal and then some! Thank you to everyone who generously donated. God is good!



Our support for food donations is switching gears this month to help our Cambridge Food Pantry build Christmas baskets. What goes well with green beans? Cream of Mushroom soup, of course! We have been challenged to collect 200 cans of soup. We will be collecting for Christmas Baskets the weeks of November 10 through November 24.

No time to shop? Just write "soup" in the memo part of your Venmo and/or check donation and we'll do the shopping for you. If you have any questions, please contact April Mickelson at 608-225-8955.

Got Sheets or Fabric?

Grace Quilters are in great need of clean, stain-free, cotton sheets. Please consider donating sheets by bringing them to the church office or to the quilter's corner in Fellowship Hall.

Any sewers who have unused fabric around, the quilters could use that too. Monetary donations are also always welcome. All donations can also be dropped off at the church office, with the designation "quilts".



Stewardship: Tending God's Garden

Our annual stewardship drive is under way! Leading up to Pledge Sunday on November 10, we've had a series of temple talks related to the theme "Tending God's Garden."

Taking care of creation is a big job; fortunately we don't have to do it alone. Working together, sharing financial resources, and recognizing our talents bring church into being. Fellowship time with others, doing a project, learning in a class, making music, and volunteering all are ways to help our congregation and to unite with the wider church. To be a responsible organization, the church council needs your input to make good decisions and plans.

Depending on your interests and talents, there are so many ways to contribute. You have received a mailing with a Time & Talents form, a letter, and a financial pledge card. Please consider prayerfully what you can and want to do. Everyone can be an active steward and give back a share of God's many gifts and blessings. Thank you!



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
October 8, 2024**

(Minutes will be reviewed & approved at next Council meeting)

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

Attendance. Present: Sandi Aston Hall, Pr. Jennifer Jelinek, John Jensen, Bob Koepp, Connie Kreuser, Charlene Luchterhand, Peggy Punsel, Kristin Rue, Richard Scott, Amy Simdon, Kelly Witte. **Absent:** April Mickelson, Shawn Whitman.

Devotions. Kristin shared devotions.

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

Approval of Agenda. Sandi moved to approve the agenda. Amy seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Correspondence. None

Treasurer's Report. (Amy) In sum, both giving and expenses were higher than last year at this time, but nothing unexpected. We had a net loss of \$1,786.33 in September and a net loss of \$4,735.27 for the year. Our year-to-date (YTD) General Giving at the end of September was \$13,203 higher than 2023 and \$3,262 under the YTD budget. YTD Special Giving was \$10,464 more than last year and \$8,913 more than budget. Our YTD expenses were \$72,786 more than last year. If we didn't include our one-time expenses of the sabbatical, Youth Gathering and the door project, our expenses would be \$3,193 more than last year. We are \$26,060 over our budget due to those same one-time expenses. We would have a \$1,531 loss if the sabbatical grant and expenses were not included. This is about \$7,264 less than last year at the end of September. The checking balance was \$1,692 less than at the end of August with the general fund balance approximately \$3,636 less. Char moved to approve this treasurer's report and send it to audit. Bob seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Pastor's Report.

Pastor will attend the ELCA South-Central Synod Fall Theological Conference this coming Thursday and Friday. She will be in Florida October 24-27. Pastor Erik Jelinek will fill in Sunday, the 27th. November 3 is both confirmation and All Saints Sunday. There are 14 students in confirmation class this year, including one 6th grader, who would have been alone in class next year. Organizers for the Cambridge Community Café missed scheduling our congregation this year. We will be scheduled to serve in October 2025.

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

- **Outreach & Social Justice.** (April) The committee has accepted the challenge to assist the food pantry for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. Our goal is to provide 200 cans of green beans by October 28. Our November challenge is 200 cans of cream of mushroom soup.

Sabbatical Team Report. (Bob) Pastor Jennifer will be writing a report to Lilly Endowment Inc, the foundation that supported her sabbatical with Bob writing the congregational component. Bob will e-mail some questions to council members to solicit our feedback for this report.

Old Business.

- **Health Insurance for Pastor.** Discussed options for the family policy. A decision is due before midnight Monday, October 14. Erik Jelinek joined via phone, as more information is needed regarding the health insurance coverage he will receive now that he is on disability leave. He will contact the ELCA benefit provider, Portico Benefit Services and let us know. We will continue this discussion and vote via e-mail when we have more information.

New Business.

- **Congregational Security & Emergency Policy.** A congregational task force is being established. Topic to be discussed in the future.
- **2025 Budget.** Amy distributed Fiscal Year Budget Request Forms to Council representatives of committees and requested completion. Amy will try to have a draft budget available for the next Council meeting.
- **Stewardship Campaign.** (Connie) The 2024 campaign entitled Tending God's Garden is starting this month. The Stewardship Committee tweaked the time/talent sheet. They are planning an electronic survey for use in future years. As in the past, there will be speakers at several Sunday services.

Adjournment. Sandi moved to adjourn the meeting. Amy seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM. We ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 12 at 7:00 PM. Peggy is scheduled to present devotions.

Submitted by Charlene Luchterhand, Council Secretary

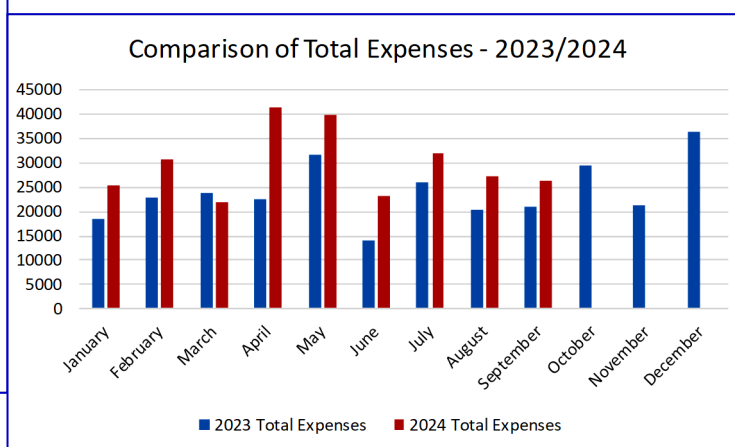
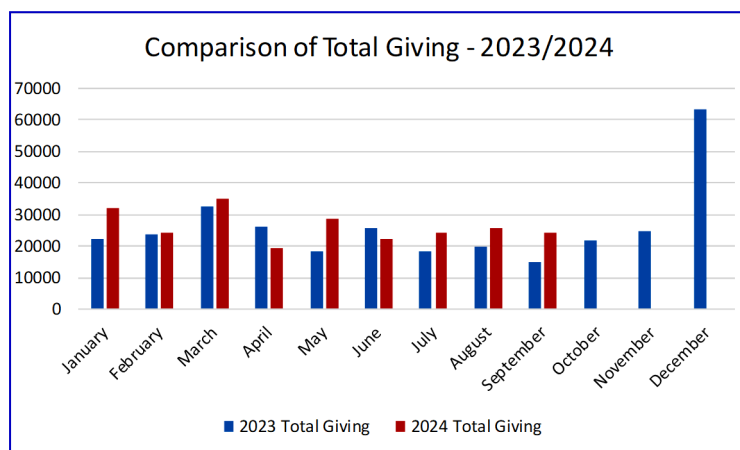


From the Treasurer

September 2024 Financial Snapshot

Income	Year-to-date September 2024 Actual	Year-to-date 2024 Monthly Budget	Over/(under) budget
General Giving	203,738	207,000	(3,262)
Special Giving	23,913	15,000	8,913
Sabbatical Giving	37,983	30,950	7,033
Misc Income	3,378	2,475	903
Total Income	269,012	255,425	13,587
Expenses			
Administrative	87,761	80,525	7,236
Mission	38,847	32,250	6,597
Pastoral	140,923	127,097	13,826
Program	6,217	7,815	(1,598)
Other	-	-	-
Total Expenses	273,747	247,687	26,060
Total Net Income	(4,735)	7,738	(12,474)

Thank you for your generous giving. Please remember that in addition to the Sunday service, you can give online through Vanco at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YYN7> or through Venmo, using the QR code.





Staff and Council



STAFF

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Organist Kenneth Hoversten kenneth.hoversten@gmail.com

Handbell Choir Director Ann Engelstad gaengelstad@charter.net

COUNCIL

President Kelly Witte

Vice President Bob Koepp

Secretary Char Luchterhand

Treasurer Amy Simdon

Outreach April Mickelson

Education Kristin Rue

Stewardship Connie Kreuser

Hospitality Peggy Punsel

Evangelism Shawn Whitman

Worship Sandi Aston Hall

Property John Jensen &

Richard Scott



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