

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering in Grace, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

JUNE 2025 Newsletter

Pastor's Ponderings



What do you love about summer? The weather? Beautiful gardens, plants, and trees? Opportunities to spend time outdoors? One of the things I love about summer is the freedom to do things we might not be able to do during the rest of the year. Sometimes summer feels like our time to live without limits.

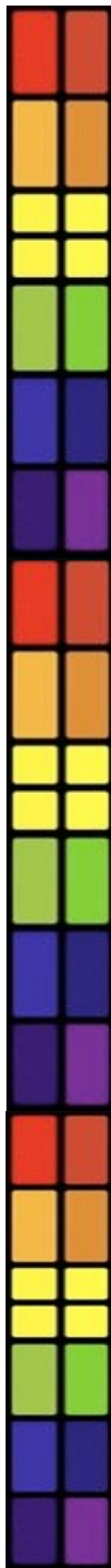
But we remember just a few years ago, when COVID taught us what it felt like to live with limitations. Our travel and social gatherings were limited. Our activities and routines were limited, and many of us lived with frustration and some degree of fear, which was difficult to deal with. But we got a small taste of the sorts of limitations some people deal with more regularly. Many people can't travel, due to lack of resources, health issues, or lack of time. Some people are regularly homebound. Some deal with physical disabilities, mental and emotional issues, and other limitations.

Last summer at the ELCA Youth Gathering, my favorite speaker was Jacqueline Bussie, who spoke powerfully about the love she experienced after the sudden, tragic loss of her husband. For months, she had been profoundly limited by grief and loss. It was the love of her friends and family that lifted her up and supported her. And now, a couple years later, rather than feeling limited by her grief, she's discovered a new freedom to be there for others in their tough times. She's titled 2025, "My Year of Showing Up," for those who cared for her and who need love. She wrote, "Tragic freedom is still FREE-DOM. And I choose to compost it. To spend my freedom showing the world that love wins and that we don't have to be fully healed ourselves to show up for one another and that we are more than just our grief or the crappy things that happen to us."

I love this – the idea that we can turn our "limitations" into opportunities, particularly opportunities to share love. No matter how much we feel limited by our bodies, our life situations, or the world around us, we're never limited on how much we can love. There's great freedom in that. So this month, I invite you to join me in reading Jacqueline Bussie's book, "Love Without Limits." (See inside for information on Grace's "Summer Book Club.") This summer, may God bless you with freedom and opportunities to love without limits.

In Christ,
+ *Pastor Jennifer*

A personal note: I so appreciate your continued prayers for my husband Erik. After a few months of being on a clinical trial of a new cancer drug, we learned that his cancer has grown, so he's no longer on the trial. Until new treatments are found, he'll continue on chemotherapy. Thank you for your support and kindness.





Church Picnic

Mark your calendar for the Annual Grace Church Picnic, on Sunday, July 27th! We'll enjoy treats on the grill, potluck sides, and a bag competition. Look for more information to come next month!



Join us for Summer Spirit Day

Save the Date: August 24th. Come one, come all! Step right up and experience the wonders waiting for you at our carnival-themed afternoon of faith, fun, and family. We're thrilled to announce a brand-new event—a one-day Vacation Bible School-style celebration filled with games, laughter, and meaningful lessons. Throughout the afternoon, children will explore how Jesus, like a joyful carnival barker, calls out to each of us to witness the wonders of God's love. And the best part? All are welcome!



Weekend of Whys and Wonderings is back!

After a lengthy hiatus, we're bringing back the "Weekend of Whys and Wonderings," your opportunity to ask the things you've always wondered about God, faith, the Bible, and religion. On Sunday, June 22, Pastor Jennifer & friends will answer your questions during worship. Simply write down a question or two that you've been wondering about, and put it in the *Whys and Wonderings* Box in the Fellowship Hall, or send your questions to Pastor Jennifer. Please submit your questions by June 18.

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>

Summer Book Club

Do you like to read? Do you enjoy talking to others about books? Then join us for Grace's Summer Book Club. We'll read 1 book a month and meet on a Sunday morning after worship to talk about it together. Our June book is "Love Without Limits" by Jacqueline Bussie. We'll meet to talk about this book on Sunday, June 22 at 10:15 am. You can buy this book on Amazon. Want us to purchase a copy for you? Contact Pastor Jennifer.



Thank You Bell Choir

Grateful thanks to the Grace Bell Choir for their music this season! Your dedication and talent are truly appreciated as we make music to glorify our God: Karen Johson, Diane Fronek, Rich Fronek, Jennifer Kuhnert, Jody Haaz, Wendy Franke, Jennifer Horgan-Geis, Lori Jenson, Jill Stevens, April Mickelson, Brenda Lovick, Evie Lund and alternates, Ramie Bakken, Nora Kuhnert and Jeanine Thurow. With sincere appreciation, Ann Engelstad, Director



Monday Night Adult Study



This month, our Bible study continues to explore the Youth Gathering theme, "Created to Be" – Authentic, Free, Disruptive, and Disciples. We'll hear some of the dynamic speakers from last year's Gathering and will talk about how God calls us to be each of these things. 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.



Welcome to "Camp Believe It!"



Kids' Takeover Worship May 18, 2025



Member Deaths/Funerals

Willie Nagel - Funeral May 14, 2025

Mary Ellen Smith - died May 19; Funeral May 31, 2025


JUNE VOLUNTEERS



- June 1 -** Ushers: Felix & Jan Egli
Reader: April Mickelson
Communion Servers: Shawn Whitman & Angie Bauer Williams
Communion Set Up: Lydia Circle
Acolytes: August Ciha & Blake Schutte
Coffee Hour Hosts: Gottschalk & Lovick-Gill
Assisting Minister: Erik Olsen
- June 8 -** Ushers: Dale & Marcia Klemp
Reader: Amanda Kress
Communion Servers: Rich & Diane Fronek
Communion Set Up: Lydia Circle
Acolytes: George & Henry Albrecht
Coffee Hour: Marsden & Schuler
Assisting Minister: Shawn Whitman
- June 15-** Ushers: Richard & Jean Scott
Reader: Char Luchterhand
Communion Servers: Randy Luchterhand & Judy Heidebrecht
Communion Set Up: Lydia Circle
Acolytes: Crew Cunningham & Aiden Williams
Coffee Hour Hosts: Kreuser & Breah Klemp
Assisting Minister: Andrya Coutts
- June 22 -** Ushers: Tim & Evie Jeffers
Reader: Jean Scott
Communion Servers: Jean Scott & Sharon Erb
Communion Set Up: Geis Family
Acolytes: Kinsley Stenjem & Haven Gill
Coffee Hour Hosts: Erb & Kress
Assisting Minister: Diane Fronek
- June 29 -** Ushers: Al & Pat Northey
Reader: Ann Engelstad
Communion Servers: Kelly Witte & Tammi Collin
Communion Set Up: Pat Northey
Acolytes: Emmett & Paxton Koehler
Coffee Hour Hosts: Jensen & Engelstad
Assisting Minister: Rich Fronek

Altar Guild - Pat Hall, Pat Northey & Sharon Erb

JUNE AT GRACE

Sunday	Monday	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook	2 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Adult Study	3	4 9 am Ruth Circle 11am Outreach Committee	5	6	7
8 PENTECOST SUNDAY 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook 	9 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Adult Study	10 7pm Council Meeting	11 9 am Lydia Circle	12 2 pm Staff Mtg	13	14
15 FATHER'S DAY 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook	16 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Adult Study Newsletter content due	17	18	19	20	21
22 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook	23 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Adult Study	24	25	26	27	28
29 9 am Worship SERVICE- Also on Cable Channel 987 & Facebook	30 9:30 am Quilters 7pm Adult Study	JULY 1	2 9 am Ruth Circle 11am Outreach Committee	3	4 Office Closed Independence Day	5

Summer Office Hours

The Church Office is open from 9 am – noon, Mon., Tues., Thurs., & Fri. 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

GROWING FAITH-FILLED KIDS



Sunday School Update

Sunday School is now on break for the summer! Special thanks to our teachers for the awesome year: Kristin Rue, Kristine Schutte, Traci Becker, Emily Fleck, Robin Marsden, and Bridgette Hermanson. We're already looking ahead to September and will be in need of teachers when we return. If you're interested in serving or would like more information, please don't hesitate to reach out to Breah Klemp!



“Save the Bees” Project



In April, the Stewardship Committee (currently consisting of Connie Kreuser, Mary Bielefeldt, and Steve Geis) worked in conjunction with Breah Klemp, the Sunday School Coordinator, to develop a short children's environmental program to raise awareness of the declining bee population and to encourage participation in the Pollinator Garden. On Sunday, April 27th, the children were shown a short presentation explaining how important bees are to our earth, hopefully inspiring them to raise funds for the Earth Justice foundation, and to consider signing up to help weed and water our garden. “Bee Banks” were put in each classroom.

In addition, the adults of the congregation were also encouraged to help and “bee banks” were placed on the tables in Fellowship Hall. Cash or checks to Grace Lutheran Church can be placed in these jars

We will collect funds through Sunday, June 1st, and then together with the children's offerings, provide a check to Earth Justice.

Sign up sheets with helpful information will be available for those who are interested in caring for the Pollinator Garden.

The bees thank you for your support!

Baby Kit Outreach

Summer is on its way and so is the start of the Baby Care Kits project! It's time to start stalking those garage sales for kit items. Please bring your donations to the church any time through July at the collection display near the entrance of the fellowship hall. If you wish to donate to the purchase of cloth diapers or other items, please use VENMO or write a check to Grace and include Baby Kits in the memo line. The Baby Care Kits will be boxed and sent to Lutheran World Relief in September to be distributed around the world.

The following are included in each Baby Care Kit:

- two lightweight cotton t-shirts (no Onesies ®)
- two long- or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (without feet)
- two receiving blankets, medium-weight cotton or flannel, or crocheted or knitted with lightweight yarn, between 36" and 52" square
- four cloth diapers, flat fold preferred
- one jacket, sweater or sweatshirt with a hood, or include a baby cap TWO pairs of socks
- one hand towel, dark color recommended
- two or three bath-size bars of gentle soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping; no mini or hotel size bars
- two diaper pins or large safety pins
- Guidelines for Baby Care Kits
- Please include sizes between 6 and 24 months. Varying the sizes of the clothing items included will make the Baby Care Kit useful as the baby grows.
- Sweaters may be knitted or crocheted from leftover yarn, or made from heavy double knits.
- Gently used, clean clothing and blankets (no stains or tears) may be substituted for new ones. It is especially important that the items be in excellent condition, as used clothing is increasingly difficult to get through customs in many countries.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.



Don't forget that we will be collecting items for the School Kit drive in August. Please look for more info to come. We hope you can help with one or both projects.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
May 13, 2025

(Minutes below not approved until next Council meeting)

Call to Order. President Kelly Witte called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Attendance. Present: Sandi Aston Hall, Steve Bielefeldt, Pr. Jennifer Jelinek, Marcia Klemp, Charlene Luchterhand, April Mickelson, Peggy Punsel, Kristin Rue, Richard Scott, Amy Simdon, Kelly Witte. **Absent:** John Jensen, Connie Kreuser.

Devotions. April shared her faith journey, and Pastor Jennifer led us in prayer.

Approval of Minutes. Amy moved to approve the April minutes. Sandi seconded the motion. Unanimously approved

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

Correspondence. None

Treasurer's Report. (Amy) We had a net loss of \$9,217.76 in April, giving us a total loss of \$8,187 for the year. Our General Giving through April was \$19,500 less than 2024 and \$13,260 less than the 2025 budget. The Special Giving through April was \$559 more than last year and \$798 less than budget. Our expenses through April were \$24,692 less than last year mainly due to the sabbatical expenses and we were \$6,121 under budget. The checking balance was \$9,200 less than at the end of March with the general fund balance approximately \$8,900 less.

Sandi moved to approve this treasurer's report and send it to audit. Marcia seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Discussed the decrease in giving. No need for alarm at this point, but we will include gentle reminders in the monthly newsletter and Sunday bulletin, to try to avoid financial challenges later this year.

Pastor's Report. Will be officiating at Willie Nagel's funeral tomorrow. High school graduation is May 23. Has been trying to pin down a date with graduates to recognize them during a Sunday service. Synod Assembly will be held this coming Friday and Saturday. Tami Collin and Kelly Witte will attend along with Pastor. She updated Council on her husband's health.

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

Education. (Kristen). Vacation Bible School is tentatively planned for the afternoon of August 24. Volunteers and teachers are needed. The last day of Sunday School for the 2024-25 year is May 18. The kids will also lead the worship service that day. Teachers will be needed for the 2025-26 year. This summer the youth room will be painted and the mural in the downstairs hallway finished. Flooring options will be discussed after the youth room is updated. Wondering if smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors should be added.

- **Outreach & Social Justice.** (April) The Lenten Challenge raised \$3,495.50 for refugees in Wisconsin. The committee added \$504.50 from their budget, rounding the total to \$4,000, which was sent to Lutheran Social Services for this purpose. Focus for June and July will be collecting items for Baby Care Kits. In August, items for School Kits will be collected. There was limited discussion about God's Work, Our Hands. It is a huge undertaking, and there are no plans currently to initiate service projects.
- **Worship.** (Sandi). Holy Week and Easter services were all well attended. There was a bit more music this year, including involving kids and adults playing instruments for the opening song. Plan to repeat that next year. Flowers and decorating were lovely. Thanks to Jill Jensen and her crew for decorating. Jeanine Thurow made new Easter paraments. Transitioning to summer schedule, so there will be no choir or handbells, but likely ensemble and solo, vocal and instrumental music for worship services.

Old Business.

- **Church Preservation Projects/Bids.** Boxes of materials no longer needed will be taken to a shredder on Saturday. A hose has been staked in place from the water source to the pollinator garden, making it much easier to water the garden this summer. Continuing to look at replacing outdoor lights.
- **Personal Safety Commission.** Had first meeting. Will be looking at all types of safety: fire, weather, medical emergency, violence. Many details were discussed, among them a written plan, signage, purchasing safety items, locking some doors at times, training for ushers and others, identifying members with expertise in various areas, and writing grants. Bill Becker and Breah Klemp are taking the lead. Next meeting is in August.
- **Pictorial Directory.** Printed copies are now available for pick-up. Requesting a small donation to defray the cost of printing. Later an on-line directory will be available for anyone who prefers it.
- **"Save the Bees."** Mary Bielefeldt attended the meeting, filling in for Connie Kreuser. The Sunday School kids viewed the power point presentation on April 27. Mary outlined plans for family involvement this summer with the garden and a fundraiser to "save the bees" through the organization Earthjustice.

New Business.

- **Church Picnic.** Scheduled for July 27.
- **Smoke Alarms/Carbon Monoxide Detectors.** Ordered 6 combination units.

Adjournment. April moved to adjourn the meeting. Peggy seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM. We ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 10 at 7:00 PM. Char is scheduled to present devotions.

Submitted by Charlene Luchterhand, Council Secretary

From the Treasurer

April 2025 Financial Snapshot

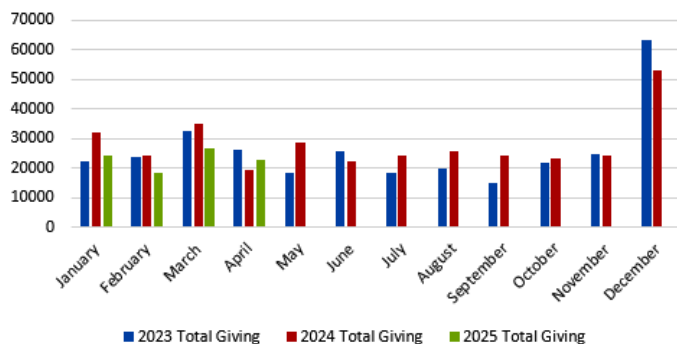
Income	Year-to-date April 2025 Ac-	Year-to-date 2025 Monthly	Over/(under) budget
General Giving	82,573	95,833	(13,260)
Special Giving	9,203	10,000	(798)
Misc Income	794	1,172	(378)
Total Income	92,570	107,005	(14,435)
Expenses			
Administrative	37,542	37,620	(78)
Mission	12,718	17,333	(4,615)
Pastoral	48,583	48,384	199
Program	1,914	3,540	(1,626)
Other	-	-	-
Total Expenses	100,757	106,877	(6,121)
Total Net Income (Loss)	(8,187)	128	(8,315)

We've seen a dip in giving this year and just want to gently remind everyone of the importance of staying faithful in this area. Your generosity fuels everything we do—from ministry to outreach—and every gift, big or small, makes a difference.

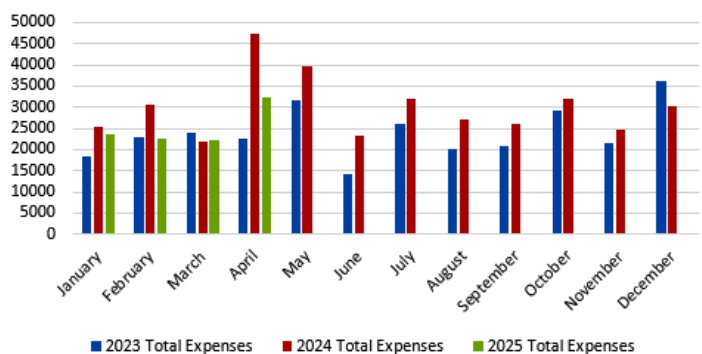
Let's continue trusting God together and giving with grateful hearts.

Thank you for being such a faithful and generous community!

Comparison of Total Giving - 2023/2024/2025



Comparison of Total Expenses - 2023/2024/2025





Staff and Council



STAFF

Pastor Jennifer Jelinek Cell: (608) 295-7120 pastorjenniferglc@gmail.com

Admin Assistant Catherine Elliott (608) 423-3135 gracelutherancambridgewi@gmail.com

Christian Ed Coordinator Breah Klemp christianedu.glc@gmail.com

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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