

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**PREPARED FOR**

**THE SEMI-ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
OF  
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Wenatchee, WA**

**JANUARY 25, 2026**



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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Grace Lutheran Semi-Annual Meeting  
Agenda  
January 25, 2025

**Mission Statement**

To proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus through word and sacraments so that a community of believers is created, trained, nurtured, and sent into mission.

**Members and Guests Sign In**

**Call to Order** – Suellen Harris

**Establish Quorum** – Chad Dulac

**Appointment of Parliamentarian** - Suellen Harris

**Opening Prayer**– Pastor James

**Approval of Agenda**– Suellen Harris

**Review and Approval of 10/19/25 Semi- Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes** – Chad Dulac

**Acceptance of Annual Written Reports**- Chad Dulac

**Acknowledgement of Outgoing Leaders**- Pastor James and Suellen Harris

**Staff Report**– Pastor James and Deacon Ruth

**Construction Report** – Tom Gausman

**Update of 2025 Financials** – Dennis Burgett

**OLD BUSINESS**

Leadership Elections- Suellen Harris

**NEW BUSINESS**

2026 Budget – Dennis Burgett and Suellen Harris

**Good of the Order** – Suellen Harris

**Closing Prayer** – Deacon Ruth

**Adjournment**

Council asks everyone to dispose of their cups, lunch bags, food wrappers, and food scraps in the appropriate containers in the back of the sanctuary.

Please place any clean, unwanted papers in the recycling bin.

Thank you.

Grace Lutheran Church

**Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes**

October 19<sup>th</sup> , 2025, 12:00 PM at Grace

**Call to order**- Meeting called to order at 11:57 by Council President Suellen Harris

**Established a Quorum**- 59 members were present.

**Parliamentarian Appointed**- Jody Marquardt

**Opening prayer**- Pastor James led congregation in prayer.

**Review and Accept Agenda**- Phil Gregg moved to accept the meeting agenda as presented. Lisa Zanol seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Review and Approval of 1/26/ 2025 Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes**- Riva Morgan moved to accept the January 26<sup>th</sup> 2025 Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes as presented. Kristen Thorstensen seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Pastor's Update**- Pastor expressed gratitude for all the hard work, dedication, packing, sorting, and effort that has helped enable our renovation project. Many thanks to the hands that helped, but also to the congregation for their patience as the building has been rehabilitated.

Pastor also lifted up his 2025 preaching cohort group focused on listening to the voice of the 'people' and the introspection of our members that share experiences and faithfulness. He discussed our churchwide discernment group, the 100+ members involved that provided their time and insights, and the progress made toward revisiting Grace's future ministry.

Pastor remembered Jackson's tragic death earlier this year and invited the assembled members to express thoughts and prayers for the family.

**Deacon's Update**- Deacon lifted up the Church Council, employee staff, choir members, and intern for their help and contributions this last year. She also talked about the various groups that participated in local area musical gifts. Deacon highlighted that the second annual Judy Olson Organ Scholarship winner has been award. Other activities involved supporting low-income music programs for schools, fundraisers for music outreach, and Irish music celebrations.

**Financial Update**- Dennis Burgett provided a report of current financial position, income, and expenses. He also mentioned thoughtful reflection will need to go into the 2026 annual budget based on current gift giving and tithes.

**Discernment Group Update**- Riva Morgan thanked the congregation members who contributed their spirit-filled voices to help us look toward where our energy, community, and passion for ministry should be dedicated in the coming year. Only by lifting up our insights and hearts could we come together in conversation for the benefit of all.

A finalized discernment report will be brought before Church Council for next steps.

### **Old Business-**

**Renovation Update-** Mark Woolsey talked about various upgrades, unexpected expenses, delays, and successes of the renovation project. New outlets, permits, interior sprinklers, and routed duct work were among the many unexpected but needed additional modifications. Also a collapsed drain line was found under the area where the new patio is, drain issues were found to be inadequate to prevent the lower level from getting flooded, a buried retaining wall was found, and unexpected permitting fees occurred increasing the cost of our project. Bathrooms have been renovated, the kitchen has been renovated, security cameras have been added, acoustic tiles have been added to the fellowship hall and the electrical system has been updated (among other work being completed). The current project will hopefully be concluded before year's end.

**Funding Allocation-** Clerks of the Works- Tami Woolsey moved that the Congregation authorize Church Council to use remaining Fox Memorial Funds (as needed) to complete the current building renovation project as previously approved by this congregation. Alan Smith seconded. Discussion ensued about total cost required. Phil Gregg called the question. The motion carried unanimously.

### **New Business-**

**Memorial Garden Plans-** Tami Woolsey mentioned there are approx. 9 niches left in the current memorial guardian and she expressed the Memorial Garden group is exploring having a second niche wall installed to expand the garden capacity. They have engaged with the previous architect who designed the original wall, Larry Hibbard (pro bono), who has volunteered assistance with designs for a second niche as well as an estimated cost. The hope is to have the expansion in place sometimes spring 2026.

Suellen clarified that all funds and projects to the Memorial Garden are covered by their own funding sources and are not paid for via Grace's operational budget.

**Mission Endowment Distributions-** Mission Endowment submitted the following projects for approval:

- Wenatchee Valley Afghan Support Circle- \$2,400
- BBT Foundation Music and Arts Fund- \$13,000
- Doris' Place- \$2,500
- ELCA Global Mission/ Service and Justice Unit- \$7,500
- Project Hope and Healthy Neighbors International in Nicaragua- \$1,600
- Grace Quilters- \$500
- Women's Resource Center Bruce Transitional Housing- \$,2500

President Harris conducted a paper vote with the congregation to approve endowment fund distributions as presented. All recommended distributions were unanimously approved.

**Leadership Elections-** The following list of positions and nominees were presented to the congregation for election consideration:

- **Vice President-** Tom Gausman (1<sup>st</sup> term). Jody Marquardt moved to elect Tom Gausman as Vice President, Kristen Thorstensen seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Secretary-** no nomination
- **Member at Large (pos 3)-** Tory Schmidt (2<sup>nd</sup> term). Paula Salter moved to elect Tory Schmidt as Member at Large (pos 3), Phil Gregg seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Member at Large (pos 4)-** Kristen Thorstenson (1<sup>st</sup> term). Dee Ann Greg moved to elect Kristen Thorstenson as Member at Large (pos 4), Lisa Zanol seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Grace Memorial Garden (pos 3)-** no nomination
- **Mission Endowment (pos 3)-** Ruth Flanigan. Karen Zanol moved to elect Ruth Flanigan as Mission Endowment (pos 3). Alan Smith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Audit Committee-** no nomination
- **Synod Assembly Female-** no nomination
- **Synod Assembly Male-** no nomination

**Strategic Planning-** Suellen discussed reassessing what kind of ministry we as a church will do, both as Grace and in our community. That we need wisdom and insight as a congregation to help decide how to cater to our existing congregation (young and old) and what ministry/ direction will look like in the future.

**Celebrations and Affirmations-** Thank you Tami Woolsey and JuLee Fiebelkorn for setting up our fabulous sack lunches. Thank you Marlena La Paz for providing the audio support. Thank you to Tami for the new directories. Mark Woolsey and Tom Gausman deserve a huge round of applause for the work and energy spent moving church items around in preparation for the renovation project.

Alan Smith lifted up Don Haven for his mentorship and guidance for the Discernment Group. Many props for our faithful gardens members who helped and supported that project.

**Good of the Order-** Please sort your trash at the rear of the church accordingly.

**Adjournment with Prayer-** Suellen adjourned the meeting at 1:16pm with prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Chad Dulac, Council Secretary

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
COUNCIL MEMBERS, TEAM LEADERS AND COMMITTEES**

**2026 Church Council**

**President** – Suellen Harris

**Vice-President** – Tom Gausman

**Secretary** – open

**Treasurer** – Dennis Burgett

**Members-at-Large:** Tory Schmidt

Kristen Thorstenson

Paula Salter

Tami Woolsey

**2026 Ministry Team Leaders**

**Arts** – Marshall Thomas

**Buildings and Grounds** – Dave Coe, Tom Gausman

**Evangelism** – open

**Faith Formation/Stewardship** – open

**Fellowship** – open position

**Graceful Garden** – Linda Sinnett

**Intern** – Mark Woolsey

**Personnel** - open

**Social Concerns** – Kay Fisher

**Stream Team** – Marlena La Paz

**Worship** – Kathy Gavin

**Youth and Community** – Sue Coe

### 2026 Committees

**Audit** – Kate Gregg

**Memorial Garden** – Ernie Bentsen, George Asan, open

**Mission Endowment** – Jody Marquardt, Karen Zanol, Ruth Flanigan

**Pastoral Support** – Julie Banken, Patton Boyle

**Staff Support** – open

### Other Teams/Groups Not Listed Above

**Anna Circle** – Faye DeJong, Linda Sinnett

**Miriam Circle** – Melanie McQuaig

**BeFRIENDERS** – Jan Herman, Colleen Smith

**Clerks of the Works** – Milt Herman, Tom Gausman

**Offering Counters** – Sue Marshall

**Book Club** – Nancy Gradwohl

**Quilters** – Dee Ann Gregg

**Reconciling in Christ** – open

**Caring Meals** – Linda Sinnett

### GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH STAFF

**Pastor James Aalgaard**

**Deacon Ruth Anderson** – Director of Music Ministries

**Pastoral Intern** – Laura Olsen

**Jen Pearson-Gale** – Office Administrator

**Ann Martinson -Bartlett** – Office Assistant

## CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025

2025 was a significant year. As the months passed our construction project met unexpected challenges and the completion date was pushed back multiple times. This project dominated much of Congregational Council's time. It was necessary to return to Congregation to increase funding. The increases were largely due to infrastructure repairs and code compliance unforeseen in the original planning. The Clerks of the Works was instituted to oversee the construction and to audit all billing, payments, and receipts.

Joyfully Council reports that our construction project will be deemed complete on Transfiguration Sunday February 15, 2026. A brief blessing will be offered on that day and a celebration with friends, neighbors and the larger community planned for April.

Another project was completed in 2025. This was a three-year budget project underwritten by memorial funds that provided the resources for increasing our music and youth ministries. Three hundred thousand dollars were placed in reserve to cover three years of deficit spending. Thanks in part to the interest earned on the Fox and Huggins funds less than a third of those dollars were needed.

Going forward into 2026 we are blessed with a strong music ministry, an organ scholarship fund, a music foundation, and the beginning of a generational approach involving youth and children in congregational fellowship and education. More innovation and planning for our younger members continues and Council is listening to suggestions for this ministry. Now, in 2026, we must be faithful in our stewardship and continue to support the ministries we have begun.

Our 2025 plan to realign our constitution with the larger ELCA constitution had to be tabled due to several factors including bereavement. Following the next revision of the national ELCA constitution, we at Grace Lutheran Wenatchee will resume our task.

Finally, the Discernment Project remains incomplete only in the sense that discernment is an ongoing practice at GLC. We are committed to listen not only to each other, but also to the Holy Spirit and in so doing strengthen our ministries, our outreach, and our fellowship.

As I enter my last year as Congregational President, I continue to meet with members in as many church teams, activities, and services as possible. I thank you for your advice, mentorship, observations, questions, and good humor. I especially thank you for your strong faith that strengthens mine. I am only able to serve because of your generosity and kindness.

Suellen Harris

509-264-0299  
[suellenwa@mac.com](mailto:suellenwa@mac.com)

## Pastor's Report to the Congregation

Dear People of Grace;

Please find below a few ministry highlights from 2025.

- I am involved in teaching ministry through leading confirmation and weekly lectionary study. I led an acolyte training, coordinated with Celebration Lutheran Church. We have seen acolytes periodically, helping lead our worship. Also, a small group of members joined an online cohort learning about preaching from my good friend Rev. Dr. Shauna Hannan, who was then professor of preaching at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. We are hosting a one-year intern: Laura Olsen. Laura has demonstrated attentiveness to the word of scripture and a desire for intergenerational faith formation, among many other things. I look forward to continuing to mentor her until her completion of internship this August. I had limited involvement in our ecumenical Vacation Bible School. I led an end-of-life planning workshop held at Celebration Lutheran Church.
- Worship news: The worship team acquired some beautiful items to replace/add to our worship space: a new set of lighting sticks and a stand, and a new flagon for Eucharist. During the season of Easter, we tried out the practice of proclaiming the Gospel from the middle of the assembly. We had a guest preacher, Pastor Jenna Bergeson, who was our intern 2019-2020. We worshiped with Celebration Lutheran for three Sundays in September due to renovation needs. Starting this May, we will have a monthly evening prayer service using the tradition of Taizé. We would like to share this service ecumenically, worshiping at partnering churches from time to time. These services will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, starting May 11.
- I am involved in caring ministry by providing pastoral care periodically and providing leadership for our BeFriender ministry. We hosted a zoom workshop led by the BeFriender home office on the topic of dementia. We added more members to the BeFriender team. I have also worked with grieving families and helped to plan and lead memorial services.
- I have participated in leadership at Grace in many ways. I designed listening circles for a season, and received generally positive feedback about the need to take time to listen to one another, including during times when we can have differing opinions and ideas. The renovation project is very near completion. There is excitement building to move back into our space and get a feel for the new flow. I hope that the congregation can also express excitement to come together more often in our programmatic ministries. I have helped to coordinate moving and storing of things so we could have space for the renovation work. I have contributed feedback for budgeting and planning for ministry. I have provided guidance for the Graceful Garden team. I helped to coordinate a presentation given by Sylvia Hwang of her year as a Young Adult in Global Mission in Türkiye. I helped to convene a guiding group called the Discernment Initiative Group (affectionately known as DiGgers) to facilitate conversations within the congregation about places the Spirit is guiding us into ministry. I am now also serving on the Northwest Intermountain Synod Council, and am part of the planning team for our upcoming Synod Assembly. We had two rounds of New Member classes. We purchased two new computers for office use. Our congregation hosted Wilson and Ezekiel, pastors from Tanzania.
- I celebrated twenty-five years of ordained ministry and had a wonderful time with the congregation during a beautiful reception. I was also grateful to have the presence of our Bishop

for this event. I elected to discontinue my health insurance through our Church network (Portico) and begin health coverage with my wife's employer, the Wenatchee School District. I'm thankful that the cost is now less for the congregation, even with added compensation to cover those premiums. I completed my spiritual direction program through the Shalem Institute. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn and explore the movement of the Spirit of God in self and others.

- As we look forward to moving back in to new and renovated spaces, I urge us all to keep up the spirit of cooperation. Let's have an invitation-mindset as we give the greater community a place of welcome in the name of Christ.

I remain grateful for the place called Grace, and for the many people who come together to be the Church.

Pastor James Aalgaard

**Members received:**

- Cheryl Knudson, Marlena La Paz, Howard Morris, Corrina Nelson, Linda Grandorff, Sara Bates, Sharon Bolz, Charlotte Turner, Steve Turner Jr., Robin Waller, Chris Prince, Chris Brushwood, Dave Brushwood, Adam Campbell, Megan Campbell, Jaana Hatton, Wayne Herman
- Through baptism: Matilda Anne Bates
- Confirmation: Jackson Dunckel

**Removed:**

- Through death: Jackson Dunckel, Patty Christensen, Bonnie Howeiler, Jane Hensel, David Dorsey, Erling Rivedal, Dick Smith
- Other reasons: Joanne Dalinkus, Gail DuVall, Larry DuVall, Jaana Hatton, Lindsay, Jeff, Alex, Becca, & Liz Henning

**Non Member Memorial Services/Funerals:**

- Clara Jean Langendorff, Delores Freeberg, Guy Studeman, Mim Schwich

## Arts Team

The Friday Night Out concert series presented two events this year: *Music from Ireland and Neighboring Isles* concert in March and a *Messiah Sing-In* in May. (Building construction restraints prevented us from additional offerings later in the year.) Donations from these concerts were channeled into our music outreach endeavors, as our emerging Building Better Tomorrows (BBT) Foundation was formulated.

The BBT Foundation Board worked hard to establish itself as a bona fide 501(c)3 organization. We received this non-profit status after drawing up articles of incorporation and accompanying bylaws. Our sincere thanks to the Earl Tilly family for their generous contributions in handling the legal/IRS arrangements. A website was created (bbt.foundation), thanks to the assistance of Intern Laura and Lisa Zanol. An official telephone number, bank account, and address completed the package, and preparations for grant writing are underway.

We combined ecumenical music forces with other leadership roles, producing four Taizé evening prayer services in the summer months. Locations throughout the community included Grace Lutheran, Celebration Lutheran, Brethren Baptist and St. Luke's Episcopal.

A large number of community musicians participated in Bonnie Howeiler's memorial service.

The Paul Fritts & Company Organ Builders made numerous repairs on our pipe organ and agreed to provide regular maintenance work.

Internal reports were posted, alongside plans and observations for the coming year, including:

- *Curatorial Protocols for Exhibiting in a Church Narthex* by Dr. Marshall Thomas was discussed, reviewed, and generally accepted by all without objections.
- *Arts Team Strategic Plan: Healing Through Creative Community* by Dr. Marshall Thomas was reviewed, commented upon, with recommendation that Pastor and Council review and approve.

Sent, with thanks to Staff, Council and all Arts Team Members (Deacon Ruth Anderson, Rose Applegate, Pam Asan, Phil Gregg, Mary Henson, Riva Morgan, Judy Olson, Sonia Ramsey, Gigi Shaw-Machtleay)

Reported on behalf of the Arts Team, Grace Lutheran, Wenatchee, WA

Dr. Marshall A. Thomas, Chair

Jan. 13, 2016

## **Building & Grounds Team**

The Building & Grounds (“B & G”) Team oversees regular maintenance, repair, and improvement of the grounds and buildings of Grace Lutheran Church. B & G meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 3:30 pm. Current team members are Tom Gausman and Dave Coe, co-chairs; Mark Woolsey, Dean O’Daffer, Kathy Otheim, Milt Herman, Mike Sweeney, and Dee Ann Gregg. Our team members volunteer many hours in maintaining our church facilities. In 2025, our team provided countless hours in oversight and labor for GLC’s major renovation project. Some of the B & G accomplishments during 2025 include:

- ❖ Supporting the extensive remodel of the office wing, main bathrooms and narthex, now in its final stage. B & G members Tom Gausman, Milt Herman, Dean O’Daffer, and Mark Woolsey have served as “Clerks of the Works”, the church’s liaison group which has regularly met with our contractor, architect, and kitchen designer to monitor all aspects of the project.
- ❖ Saving money by providing labor to remove cabinetry and appliances in the kitchen and fellowship hall in advance of the “firewall” project and kitchen remodel. Providing labor and leadership in packing and removal of all items in the kitchen and fellowship hall for storage in a second shipping container.
- ❖ Designing and constructing a dry well for stormwater from the downspout adjacent to the Elliot St. entrance.
- ❖ Supporting funeral receptions by obtaining seating from another congregation and setting up tables and chairs.
- ❖ Sponsored and scheduled spring and fall “clean up” days on April 5 and November 22. B & G and congregation members participated in exterior gardening and interior cleaning in the spring, and leaf raking in the fall. Arranged for delivery and labor for spreading of new bark in the Memorial Garden in June.
- ❖ Oversight and support for our janitorial contractor (Clear View Services), including purchasing all necessary supplies. B & G members regularly communicate with the contractor concerning staff and congregation needs.
- ❖ Many odd jobs around our church home, include replacing locks, doorstop repairs, repairing lighting, troubleshooting electrical issues, maintaining irrigation systems, lawn mowing, snow removal, and cleaning projects not covered by janitor service.

- Submitted by Dave Coe, B & G co-chair

## GLC Caring Ministry

The Grace BeFRIENDERS grew in number during 2025 and now consists of nine individuals who continue to meet monthly. We strive to stay in touch with our church members whom we have not seen or heard from for some time. The leadership maintains a roster of individuals desiring to receive communion in their home due to illness or being homebound, and BeFRIENDERS are available for home communion. Each BeFRIENDER tries to reach out with home visits, phone calls or sending greeting cards.

A training session for four new individuals took place in February and their commissioning occurred in November.

Continuing education is an important part of BeFRIENDERS, and in May 2025 several members participated in a learning seminar about dementia. This was well attended and was followed with time for discussion and insight into how to serve in this dimension. This education will continue with additional seminars in 2026.

The BeFRIENDER ministry members make every effort to provide a presence at memorial services and each Peace at the Last request. We stay in touch with individuals grieving from the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, home or health.

Our monthly meetings give us an opportunity to support each other, and to be aware of individual needs within the church.

Gratefully,  
Jan Herman  
Colleen Smith

## **Faith Formation Team**

The Faith Formation ministry of Grace had a focus on summer gatherings in the community and began an intergenerational faith formation offering in the fall, meeting Sunday mornings twice a month. We would like to continue our emphasis on intergenerational relationships as a way to share in ministry in other parts of the church's life. We look forward to a more settled 2026 where we can organize more learning opportunities.

Pastor James Aalgaard

## **Mission Endowment Committee**

Distributions from the Endowment Fund for 2025 were not only possible but approved at the annual meeting in October & subsequently made from spendable earnings in the Fund as of June 30. As of November 30, the Endowment Fund balance was \$259,920 compared to \$276,467 on 12/31/24. The Aasen Fund (for music ministry) balance was \$30,947 as of November 30, compared to \$32,005 on 12/31/24. Distributions from this fund totaled \$5,544 this year. Only earnings are allowed to be spent from either fund, leaving principal intact. Both funds are invested in the Endowment Fund of the ELCA. Market values seem to be on an upward trend so far. We look forward to being able to distribute from the Endowment Fund again later this year if earnings are at least over \$5,000.

Out of nine local & worldwide applications to the Endowment Fund, we were able to partially fund seven; playground improvements were again postponed due to ongoing construction. The seven projects totaling \$30,000 are as follows:

1. Wenatchee Valley Afghan Support Circle – \$2,400 for one month rent for a refugee family.
2. BBT Foundation of the Arts & Music – \$13,000 to provide music, instruments & lessons to under-served & under-privileged public-school children in the Wenatchee Valley.
3. Doris' Place – \$2,500 for a new social respite care program at the Seventh Day Adventist Church opening spring of 2026.
4. Pastor Jenna Bergeson, Missionary – \$7,500 supporting long-term work with ELCA's Service and Justice Unit as the Southeast Asia Regional Representative serving Cambodia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and more, with a home base in Thailand.
5. Project Hope & Healthy Neighbors International in Nicaragua – \$1,600 to subsidize 40 Ecocina Stoves that are much more efficient & put out less harmful smoke than an open wood fire.
6. Quilting (used locally & shipped worldwide) – \$500 for batting & backing material, shipping, truck rental, boxes for packing.
7. Women's Resource Center Bruce Transitional Housing – \$2,500 for gift cards for children living there as incentives & for fun activities outside the facility.

May God continue to bless us to be a blessing!  
On behalf of Melanie McQuaig & Jody Marquardt,  
Karen Zanol, Chair

## Graceful Garden Team

Members of the Graceful Garden Team during 2025 were Dean O'Daffer, Sherry Krebs, Eli Hensen, Jayke Olson, Jackson Dunckel, Ethan Rich, Sharon Bolz, and Dianne Gillin

During 2025 the Graceful Garden had a total of 18 above the ground beds. The team planted 3 boxes early in the season and planted the 2 reserved for Washington School in May after the students had harvested their radishes. Crops included tomatoes, basil, oregano, carrots, kale, zucchini, eggplant, bush beans, beets, peppers and zinnias.

In March over 80 Washington School second graders planted radishes and heard a tutorial about plant growth and benefits presented by Tammy Woolsey. They returned in May to harvest their radishes. This was the 2nd year for this program and the team and school plan to continue offering it again in 2026.

There were some major changes during 2025:

1. Since the church was in construction no Little Free Pantry was on Grace's premises, so the garden produce was distributed through the little pantry at the Methodist Church on Washington and Miller.
2. There was a balance of \$4,640.32 on our grant with Cascadia Conservation District that was lost when the Federal Government froze all of Cascadia's grant funds. No further information has been available regarding this freeze.
3. Jayke Olson was hired part time to help with weeding, planting, and general maintenance during the growing season.
4. In the lawn areas around the garden, sprinklers with a timing system were installed and paid for with garden funds.
5. A game camera, that had been purchased with grant money, was mounted to monitor activity in the garden.

Because Grace Lutheran has partnered with Winton MFG as a drop off location for their composting program, they provided a large pile of compost at no cost to use on the garden plots in the fall.

Jayne is developing a pamphlet on controlling squash bugs to hand out to plot renters next year.

Kristen Thorstenson is refinishing the Graceful Garden sign during the winter.

Respectfully Submitted by Linda Sinnett

## **Social Concerns Team**

2025 was once again a very active year for the Social Concerns Team. We continued to pursue ways to serve individuals or organizations in need.

In February, the team reviewed applications for funding for 2025. In 2025, the following were selected as benevolences: Tuition for two students at the Lithuanian Christian college, support for our Tanzanian companion synod, Packing Friendship, Families in Need, Serve Wenatchee, and the Pantry each received quarterly donations. Chelan Douglas Community Action Council also received donations along with Wenatchee Rescue Mission. Our Families in Need Fund also provided assistance to a family relocating from Afghanistan. At the end of February, the team made a contribution to Lutheran World Relief for the Los Angeles Wildfires.

During Lent the team, along with the children in the congregation, held a noisy offering and collected \$1,305.00 for World Hunger.

In April, the Quilters sent 100 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. On Quilt Sunday four quilts were given to High School Seniors.

The team collected diapers and wipes this year and made donations to Chelan/Douglas Community Action Council and Serve Wenatchee. In June, to honor Barbara Tilly, the team donated \$1,000 to the Chelan/Douglas Community Action Council.

In October, volunteers from Serve Wenatchee, First United Methodist Church and Grace sorted and donated over 1,100 coats for school children in the Wenatchee, Eastmont, and Orondo school districts. Also, over \$10,000 in donations was raised to purchase coats. The Coats 4 Kids project went smoothly and was deemed a great success.

In November and December, the team collected gift cards for WHS students experiencing homelessness. This year the definition of homelessness was changed, so there were several more students who qualified as experiencing homelessness. Because of this, the need was greater and we increased the number served from 45 to more than 100 students. 65 of those bags had gift toiletries, food, gloves, hats, and socks. 45 of the bags included everything and gift cards.

### **Caring Meals**

Linda Sinnett continued to coordinate our Caring Meals Program. 54 meals were delivered during the year to families and individuals in need. We thank all members of our congregation who participated in preparing and providing the meals.

### **Grace to Go Bags**

These bags included toiletries, protein bars, water, and hand/feet warmers. They were available for congregation members to take and distribute throughout the community.

## **Packing Friendship**

Packing Friendship, our weekend backpack program, began 15 years ago with the hope that we would be able to recruit other churches to join us to provide food for students throughout the Wenatchee and Eastmont school districts. Thanks to the efforts of Barbara Tilly and a team of volunteers, that goal was met within a few years and the program continues today. Currently, 22 churches and service organizations are providing food to more than 450 students per week.

Grace Lutheran serves students at 3 schools: Washington Elementary School, Foothills Middle School, and Pinnacles Prep. During 2025 we provided more than 1200 bags of food to students. It was a bit of a challenge due to the construction project, but our volunteers were hard-working and flexible as we adapted throughout the year. Together, they volunteered approximately 400 hours of their time during 2025.

In addition to running our own program at Grace, members of our congregation help to coordinate and administer the overall Packing Friendship program. This program relies on grant funding to help support individual programs. In 2025, Chelan Douglas Community Action Council received a grant which allowed the purchase of approximately \$30,000 worth of food to be distributed to participating organizations. They have received the same grant this year. This has been a huge help to all who are involved with Packing Friendship.

Thank you to everyone who supports Packing Friendship, to St. Luke's Episcopal Church for providing a space to pack bags during our construction, and most importantly to our volunteers who keep this program running every week!

## **Little Free Pantry**

Due to the construction, the pantry did not operate during 2025. The team saved and donated monies to the Chelan/Douglas Community Action Council and Serve Wenatchee. We also made various donations to pantries across the valley.

We continue to see our committee as a vital outreach for our congregation and welcome new members to assist us in our efforts.

We thank the congregation and the staff of Grace for all your help. Without your help these outreach projects would not be possible.

Submitted by Kay Fisher

## Stream Team

The Streaming Services Ministry, as has done in past, continues research regarding equipment needs and implementation and live streaming needs and implementation. Our streaming platforms, FB & UTube, make changes for streamers, including their requirements, regularly and without notice.

Our team held two important tutorials in the year past that members attended. They went into some depth regarding our streaming systems, proper terms and focused on audio aspects of streaming.

We paid off our new digital amplifier in 2025 leaving our budget slim. Even so, the team was able to fulfill a long-time wish of our Pastor – to supplement our Sunday services with a second camera which was installed with much thanks to Tom Gausman (high-wire cable runner) during our time sharing Sunday services at Celebration Lutheran Church last September. It is a fairly steep learning curve for us techs and a really fun challenge to use our second camera. Camera number 1 is Theodore (Roosevelt) and camera number 2 is Eleanor (Roosevelt) – Theo & Ellie.

Renovations of our church had the Stream Team move three times during the year. That was hard. How happy we are to return to use of our office! Stream Team office downstairs is a real necessity and blessing for the team and our church as it is, so far, large and secure enough to hold much tech equipment used for streaming and other technical functions of our church.

Viewership of our services remains consistent. Between 75 and 100 people view portions of our service each week (recalling portioned viewing is standard). Our website holds a very steady viewership number at between 89% and 91%.

We would like to have six people on the Streaming Services Team so that a healthy rotation of volunteers could be maintained. In 2025 the stream team membership has grown and now includes Marlena La Paz, Phil Gregg, Erik Olson, Asher Campbell and Adam Dunbar. We still seek that number 6 member. If you are interested in serving with this ministry, we encourage you to reach out.

Looking at 2026, the team will continue the frequent research needed to maintain our function and needed adjustments to our audio system which very likely will include replacement of mics, lavalieres and receivers.

Respectfully, Marlena La Paz

## **Youth and Community Team**

The mission of the Youth and Community Team is to further the mission of the Youth ministry program by advocating for the youth of Grace Lutheran, supporting our families, and fostering the GLC community through relationship and connection building activities. During 2025 the Youth and Community Team focused on relationship and connection building. Craft night continued until May when the Fellowship Hall became unavailable. Game night was able to continue all year thanks to Celebration Lutheran who hosted our monthly event. This was a good opportunity to not only foster relationships within our congregation but to also build new ones with friends from Celebration. Game night is continuing in 2026, and Craft Night will also return as soon as the space is available.

## **Worship Team**

Members: Kate Gregg, Phil Gregg, Peggy Swanson, Sonja Westerman, JuLee Fiebelkorn, Denise Miller, Marlena La Paz, Deacon Ruth Anderson, Pastor James Aalgaard, Pastoral Intern Laura Olsen, Team Leader Kathy Gavin.

**Mission Statement:** **It is the mission of the Worship Team to ensure that Worship is presented as a Holy experience and is enhanced by beauty, simplicity, quality, worthiness and appropriateness.**

**Purpose Statement:** **The Worship Team, in collaboration with the Pastoral Staff, oversees all worship assistants and is responsible to keep the worship space beautiful and in good order so that the setting enables the congregation to worship in a meaningful way for the Glory to God.**

Activities and responsibilities during the year:

1. The changing of the Banners and Paraments as it is appropriate for the Season/Liturgical worship. This last year the team voted to purchase new two new candle lighters, a stand to hold them, and a new Flagon.
2. The purchase, display, decorating and maintenance of plants for the Chancel and Sanctuary, during all the seasons of the Church year. This year's Christmas tree came from the yard of Kristen Thorstenson, and is now spending it's last days as a bird feeder for Gigi Shaw. This year's Palms were the finest we have seen, and we were blessed to be able to share with St. Lukes Congregation our extra bounty. Once again Easter flowers were provided by the Congregation and displayed and organized by team members immediately following the Easter Vigil.
3. Pastor James and the entire staff have run a marathon, or at least half a marathon, dealing with our enormous remodel. This inspired a different look to last year's Holy Week. Both Good Friday and the Easter Vigil began outdoors and incorporated our Memorial Garden into each service. Somehow the weather cooperated very nicely.
4. Deacon Ruth Anderson continues to be an inspiration and a key member of our Worship Team. Her organization of portions of the Messiah last spring, is another example of her amazing ability to spread God's light in our community through music and song.

Kathy Gavin Worship Team Lead 2025