



GRACE TO YOU

November 2026

Grace United
Protestant Church

266 Somonauk St.
Park Forest, IL 60466
Phone: 708-748-4567

PASTOR APPRECIATION SUNDAY



Mission Statement of Our

Reconciling Ministries:

Through God's grace and as apprentices of Christ's living example, we stand united in our commitment to welcome and embrace the diversity of all children of God, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, and wish to reach out to those underserved to provide a safe space for spiritual growth. We strive to create an inclusive fellowship welcoming of the LGBTQ+ community, their families, and support networks, to foster fairness, justice, peace, love, and understanding among all as is reflected in our name—Grace United Protestant Church.



*A spiritual home for
worship and service.*

Website: graceupc.org

UPCOMING CALENDAR

PLEASE CHECK OUT THE
CALENDAR ON PAGE 11.



November 2026

A Shoot from the Stump

November 29 marks the beginning of the Advent season and the Christian year. At this time, the decline of the Christian Church comes to mind. Technological advances and greater access to resources that meet human needs without reference to God have diminished the church's influence in society. This is a serious concern, as many churches are closing and few young people are interested in attending church. Many view career success as the sole reward for their hard work rather than as a blessing from God. Many also question the need for prayer. In light of these trends, an important question arises: What is the future of the Christian Church if the young people to whom we are called to pass on our faith and traditions are not interested?

This important concern will be addressed in our Advent sermon series, "**A Shoot from the Stump**," through which we will hear God's promise of hope and reassurance that we need not panic. It is a promise of future flourishing. Just as Christianity survived the persecution of the early Church and the trials of the Dark Ages, it will also survive this technological age. We hold fast to Jesus' promise that "the gates of hell shall not prevail." (Matthew 16:18).

This Advent, we begin with Isaiah's promise of a shoot and arrive at Christmas with the long-awaited gift of the seed. For out of darkness, a light shines. From a dead stump, a shoot grows.

Please be present and invite a friend and family member to this series:

November 29, 2026--A Shoot from a Stump

A Sign of **Hope** Isaiah 11:1–9, Luke 1:26–38

December 06, 2026--From Repentance to Growth

Peace Isaiah 27:1–6, Matthew 3:1–12

December 13, 2026--Wilderness of Despair to Flourishing of **Joy**

Isaiah 41:17–20, Luke 1:46–55

December 20, 2026--The Loving Gardener

Love Isaiah 37:26–32, Matthew 1:18–

Christmas Eve--The Promised Seed

Christ Isaiah 61; Luke 2:1–20

I appreciate your presence and dedication to our shared mission on Commitment Sunday, October 25. I pray that our commitment will serve as an impetus for the continued growth of our church. The Charge Conference on October 25 also focused on our church's future. We believe that through our collective dedication and commitment, the church will continue to stay alive, move forward in spreading the Gospel, and make disciples of Christ.

Our condolences go out to the family of Bill Langmeyer, who transitioned into eternity on October 5, 2026. Bill was truly a man of God's heart. He served the Lord selflessly in many ways within our church, participated in church outreach programs, and was always available to assist with our IT needs. We will miss him dearly. May his soul rest in peace, and may God comfort his family.

November 26th is Thanksgiving Day. As you gather around your dinner table, reflect on God's goodness despite all challenges and give thanks to God.

We celebrate the birthdays and wedding anniversaries for this month. May you continue to flourish under God's blessing.

Yours by His Grace,
Pastor Amos Oladipo

WCA NEWS

WCA Board monthly meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month in the parlor. The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 1st at 10:00 AM. All women are invited and encouraged to attend.

PANERA NIGHT

Panera Bread in Matteson has been very gracious with offering us many Panera Night fundraisers. This has been a well-supported activity in the past...everyone loves food, right?!

With that in mind, the WCA will have their next Panera Night on Sunday, November 8th from 4:00 to 8:00 PM. The needed flyer is on page 10. Please be sure to take it with you. Or you can call Leslie Langmeyer at 708-481-1578 and she will email it to you to show digitally at the time you order. Thank you!

A FAN FAVORITE! FALL FUNDRAISER

Mark your calendars for the Fall LaBraid Fundraiser — ButterBraid coffee cakes, Joyful Traditions cake rolls, Otis Spunkmeyer cookies, and Amish Pretzel Co. pretzels will be available. Sale dates will be **October 18th, 25th, and November 1st**. Delivery will be after church on Sunday, November 15th. The proceeds of this and all WCA fundraisers support our missions. You can see a list of those missions in the WCA yearbook. **Please check out the information for the fundraiser on page 9.**

DATES TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

Sunday, November 29th -- **Hanging of the Greens** with a chili lunch.

** Come help decorate our church for Christmas and join for fellowship time afterward!

Sundays, December 6th, December 13th, and December 20th – **the Annual Bizarre Bazaar**

** Please save your trinkets that you'd like to donate for our "shopping table!"

BIBLE TRIVIA

1. Who was the brother of Moses chosen by God to serve as his spokesman and helper before Pharaoh?

2. Which Old Testament prophet was taken up to heaven alive in a whirlwind by a chariot of fire and horses of fire?

3. During his voyage to Rome as a prisoner, the Apostle Paul was shipwrecked on an island whose inhabitants showed unusual kindness. What was the name of this island?

4. Which tragic judge of Israel made a rash vow to God that if given victory over the Ammonites, he would sacrifice whatever came out of his house first, which turned out to be his only child?

5. On which rocky, isolated island was the Apostle John when he received and penned the apocalyptic visions recorded in the Book of Revelation?

6. Which New Testament writing famously begins its eleventh chapter with the classic definition: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"?

Answers are on page 7

RESPOND NOW

Respond Now's vision is that everyone in the Chicago south suburbs has access to food, housing and health care. These are basic human rights and Respond Now provides compassionate services, helping those in need and striving to break the cycle of poverty. Their short-term assistance to meet daily needs can lead to long-term solutions.

Please give as you are able to this local organization that Grace Church has sponsored for many years. Use a blue envelope from the sanctuary for your donation or indicate Respond Now on your check, payable to Grace. Food pantry donations can be left in the shopping cart across from the church office.

HOLIDAY TOY DRIVES

We will continue with two toy drives during this holiday season. New toys suitable for children receiving cancer treatments can be left in the box under the coat rack for Pediatric Oncology Treasure Chest. There is a list of suggested items. Let's honor our dear friend Nan Beard with toys to fill lots of toy chests at sponsored cancer treatment centers throughout the U.S.

Every year Rebekah Circle provides unwrapped gifts for children of all ages at Jones Community Center to distribute at their yearly Christmas programs. These will be collected by Rebekah Circle members or can be left in the church parlor before December 8th.

FLOWERS

Flowers on the piano/altar help to brighten the sanctuary each Sunday. The 2026 flower chart is posted in the narthex. Be sure to pick your special date(s) and sign up to beautify our sanctuary before your date is gone.

We are asking that you either supply your own flowers...there are vases at the church...or contact our flower chairperson, Sue Cassara at 708-785-5186, and she will purchase the flowers for you. The cost will be \$20. **We are also asking that you contact the church office at 708-748-4567 or graceupchurch2@gmail.com to tell Elaine Degenhart what you would like printed in the bulletin.** Thank you!

GO TEAM TRAINING

"The mission of the Lake South District of the Northern Illinois Conference is to encourage, equip, connect and support our local churches in their call to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World."

In keeping with this, Dr. Audrea Nanabray invites you to scheduled Zoom meetings, for Go Team training for members and friends of the church.

The next one will be held Saturday, November 7th at 10:30 AM. The topic for the morning will be "God is for us and in us as we do God's work, so nothing and no one can successfully stand against us." (John 13:10, Romans 8:31)

The Zoom link is [Zoom Link](#), Meeting ID 964 1732 9893, Passcode 081053

INSPIRATION PAGE

Please share your devotions, readings, and inspirations that are special to you so that others can be inspired, too. Please email me with your contributions at llangmeyer@aol.com. Thank you!

~ Leslie

From *Walking in Grace*

You will be my witnesses.— Acts 1:8 (ESV)

“Miss Evelyn, are you *praying*?” The neighbor teen riding in my backseat was distressed. She had lost her valued earbuds, maybe at a school dance, maybe in the family car parked 5 miles away, maybe in a school friend’s car.

This was not the first such inquiry. Over several years, several times a week I had said to her, “Can we pray for the day?” Then my “Dear Jesus...” salutation introduced petitions for strength and safety, for resolution of troubles and stresses. I added thanksgivings, though not often enough. I’ve been modeling. She’s been listening, and prayer is gaining ground among her coping mechanisms.

On that dark Friday evening, her mom was busy. She called to ask if I could take her around town—to retrace her steps. After recruiting someone to ride along, I drove to the school, now locked tight. We searched sidewalks. She asked the urgent question once and then again as we neared another unfamiliar destination. “Are you praying?!” Yes, I assured her—pleading silently that the lost would be found.

I prayed, knowing God is not a genie granting abracadabra wishes. And yet we’re told to look to Him and ask for help.

On Friday evening we didn’t locate the lost earbuds. But on Saturday morning the teen called. “Found them.”

My immediate response? “Dear Jesus, thank you!” God—and the teen—heard my grateful words.

Lord, as people of prayer, may we be seen as witnesses to Your presence in the world.

~ Evelyn Bence

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From *Jesus Listens* by Sarah Young

Jesus, my Treasure,

Teach me how to live more fully in the present—refusing to *worry about tomorrow*. I really do want to live present tense in Your Presence, making *You* the main pursuit of my life. This is quite a struggle for me because planning and worrying come so naturally to me.

Please help me resist the temptation to worry. I live in such a fallen world—full of sin and struggles. I’m continually faced with things that can make me anxious if I let them. But Your Word tells me that *each day has enough trouble of its own*. You carefully calibrate the amount of difficulty I’ll encounter on a given day, and You know exactly how much I can handle. Moreover, You are always near—ready to strengthen, encourage, and comfort me.

I’ve found that pursuing a close walk with You is the most effective way to live abundantly. I need to keep bringing my thoughts back to You whenever they wander. I can return to You joyfully, knowing that *You take great delight in me and rejoice over me with singing*.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL



Our 3-12 year class is off to a good start this fall. We've had five members and one guest, ages 6-12. Our focus before Advent is exploring God's gifts to us and learning to read in the Bible. We are grateful to Grandpa Dan for his continued help and welcome other volunteers, especially for crafts and/or music.

WEEKLY PRAYER GROUP

The prayer group meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 in the Banner Room (room 116). Everyone with concerns for the church, the community, the country, or themselves, is welcome and encouraged to join this informal group.

Please let Alice Wasney or the church office know of any prayer needs.

GRACE CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT FROM RICK WASNEY

	Amount Received	Amount Needed	Surplus/ Deficit
January 2026	\$ 10,466.87	\$ 13,246.00	\$ 2,779.13
February 2026	\$14,016.79	\$13,246.00	\$ 770.79
March 2026	\$11,026.28	\$13,246.00	\$ 2,219.72
April 2026	\$12,805.23	\$13,246.00	\$ 440.77
May 2026	\$ 9,941.40	\$13,246.00	\$ 3,304.60
June 2026	\$11,578.88	\$13,246.00	\$ 1,667.12
July 2026	\$10,923.61	\$13,246.00	\$ 2,322.39
August 2026	\$14,375.56	\$13,246.00	\$ 1,129.56
September 2026	\$10,303.10	\$13,246.00	\$ 2,942.90
Year to Date 2026	\$105,437.72	\$119,214.00	\$ 9,640.55

PLEASE HELP!

I love putting pictures in each edition of the Grace to You. However, I'm not able to be at all events to take pictures. I'm asking help in this endeavor. Please be the photographer for me! I'd rather have 100 pictures of an event than none! Please email me your pics of the various events within the church: llangmeyer@aol.com. Thank you!

And thank you to Sue Dukes for the pictures of Pastor Appreciation Sunday!

~ Leslie

Answers to Bible Trivia:

1. Aaron
2. Elijah
3. Malta
4. Jephthah
5. Patmos
6. Hebrews

THE SUNDAY VIRTUAL SERVICE

Each Sunday, the church service is available virtually on Zoom. The service is live. *The bulletin and the words to the songs are on your screen each week. If you join by phone and want the bulletin emailed to you, please let the church office know.*

Pastor Amos emails the Zoom link each Sunday morning for anyone who would like to have it. Please let the office know if you want to have him send the link to you. Email the office at graceupchurch2@gmail.com.

A gentle reminder: It's wonderful to be able to socialize before and after the service, but with the virtual system in place, we need to mute our own computers during the service. As a courtesy to others, please remember to mute during the service.

CELEBRATIONS FOR NOVEMBER



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Sue Cassara—2nd

Maddi Kunkel—19th

Alice Wasney—26th



PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

We thank God for many answered prayers as we continue to pray for:

The Members of our church, near and far, Our Veterans, our Troops, and our Country,
World Peace, that the hungry can be fed, and the end of violence.

Ray Abels

The Family of Nan Beard

Sophia Buie

Brian Butler

Jackie Ceres

Gabe Chachakis

Daniel Christain

The Family of Ray Dunbar

Charlotte Earving

Melissa Harms

Niki Juarez-Cummings

Alice Knox

Malcolm Knox

The Family of Bill Langmeyer

Pat MacInnes

Becky Meyery

Marge Neel

Forrest (Lee) Nelson

Ronan Nelson

Valerie Nicholson

The Family of Nancy Schlenke

The Family of Allan Smith

Jeff Steiner

Rick Wasney

Alma White

The Migrant, Immigrants, and
Refugees among us

The Victims of Gun Violence

The People of Iran

The People of Israel and Gaza

The People of Ukraine



Our Scouting America Troop 185 is a family scouting experience for boys and girls in the fifth grade through high school. Service, community engagement and leadership development are important parts of the program as youth lead their own activities and work their way toward earning Scouting's highest rank, Eagle Scout. We meet on Tuesday nights at 7:00 PM. Point of contact is Dan Chachakis, dchachak@prodigy.net



Congratulations to Alijah for earning his Life Rank! He joins an elite group working on those last steps to Eagle. We know he will fly high.



The weekend of October 17th will be the Halloween campout. This time they will camp at Kankakee KOA in Chebanse, IL What fun! They will bring costumes for trick or treating!



The Scouts' Popcorn Sales are going strong! The last sale date is October 20th, so be sure to grab yours while you can!
Thank you to everyone who has already supported the Scouts!

Sale dates are October 18th, October 25th, and November 1st.

Delivery will be after church on Sunday, November 15th.

If you are unable to pick up your orders, arrangements can be made to deliver them. Butter Braid Pastries, Cake rolls, Otis Spunkmeyer cookie doughs, and Soft Pretzels and bites are all available:

The Holidays are coming— Be sure to stock up now!

Butter Braid Pastries — \$18.00 each:

Apple	Four Cheese & Herb
Bavarian Crème	Raspberry
Blueberry Cream Cheese	Strawberry Cream Cheese
Cherry	Caramel Rolls
Cinnamon	Cinnamon Rolls



Joyful Traditions Cake Rolls—\$18.00 each:

Carrot Cake roll	Pumpkin cake roll
Chocolate cake roll	Red Velvet cake roll
Lemon Crème cake roll	Strawberry Cheesecake cake roll



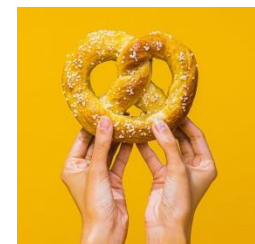
Otis Spunkmeyer Cookie Dough—\$20.00 each:

Chocolate Chip	Lemon Burst
Chocolate Chip Toffee Crunch	Peanut Butter
Snickerdoodle	Triple Chocolate Chunk
Strawberry Shortcake	White Chocolate Macadamia Nut



Amish Pretzel Co. Soft Pretzels and Pretzel Bites—\$20.00 each:

6 Pretzels per box or Approx. 30 Pretzel Bites per box



Please order at church or call/email Sue Dukes (815-931-5145; email sdukes555@hotmail.com) or Chris Long (708-606-9143; email longabc51@gmail.com) or Leslie Langmeyer (708-481-1578; email llangmeyer@aol.com) to place your order.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL ORDERS NEED TO BE PRE-PAID.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO THE WCA MISSIONS.**



We're raising dough!

GRACE UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH

**November 8, 2026
4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
4864 211th Street, Matteson, IL**

25%
OF NET SALES
WILL BE
DONATED*

Use code FUND4U at panerabread.com, in the Panera App,
or at the kiosk in-cafe.

Online orders placed all day at your event cafe will count toward your total sales.

Bring this flyer or show a digital copy to your
cashier when ordering at the cafe to ensure your
organization gets a portion of the net sales.

Panera
FUNDRAISING

*20% fundraiser: Up to 20% of net sales from your designated and registered fundraising event will be donated to your approved organization. Minimum sales of \$100 on the specified date, time and location required to receive 20% donation. 25% fundraiser: Up to 25% of net sales from your designated and registered fundraising event will be donated to your approved organization. Minimum sales of \$150 on the specified date, time and location required to receive 25% donation. General terms: Details on percentage of net sales to be donated and the minimum sales requirement will be provided during the event registration process. Fundraising events available only at participating US bakery-cafes. Fundraising event details and available dates and times for fundraising events will vary by bakery-cafe. Gift card purchases, catering orders, and orders placed on third party delivery sites are excluded and will not count towards the total net sales from your designated fundraising event. This offer will be void if flyer is distributed in or near the participating bakery-cafe on the night of the event. Fundraising events may be cancelled without notice due to abuse, error, fraud, computer error, electronic or technical malfunctions, or other unforeseen or unintended circumstances. Other restrictions may apply. For more information on how our fundraising events work, please visit: <https://fundraising.panerabread.com/faq>.

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NOVEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion Sunday Worship and Sunday School 11:00 AM	2	3 Men's Chat and Chew at Big Apple <u>8:00 AM</u> Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	4 Prayer Group 9:30 AM	5 WCA Board meeting 10:00 AM	6	7 Go Team training on Zoom 10:30 AM
8 Sunday Worship and Sunday School <u>11:00 AM</u> Ringalings practice after worship	9	10 Men's Chat and Chew at Big Apple <u>8:00 AM</u> Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	11 Prayer Group 9:30 AM	12	13	14 ART meeting 9:30 AM
15 Jazz Sunday Worship and Sunday School <u>11:00 AM</u> Coffee and Fellowship <u>following church</u> WCA fundraiser delivery	16	17 Men's Chat and Chew at Big Apple <u>8:00 AM</u> Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	18 Prayer Group <u>9:30 AM</u> Tabitha Circle 2:00 PM in parlor	19	20	21
22 Jazz Sunday Worship and Sunday School <u>11:00 AM</u> Coffee & Fellowship following church	23	24 Men's Chat and Chew at Big Apple <u>8:00 AM</u> Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	25 Prayer Group 9:30 AM	26 	27	28
29 Sunday Worship and Sunday School <u>11:00 AM</u> <u>Hanging of the</u> <u>Greens</u>	30					

