



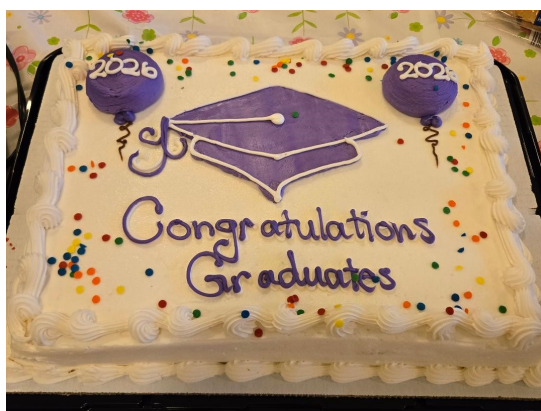
GRACE TO YOU

August 2026

Grace United
Protestant Church

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

Congratulations to our 2026 high school and college graduates!
May God bless you in your future endeavors!



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, and 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 12.



THE PASTOR'S PAGE

This month, while Pastor Amos is on vacation, our Lay Leader, Alice Wasney, will be sharing a report from the Annual Conference:

Dear friends and members of the body of Christ,

The NIC Annual Conference this year was both thought-provoking and inspiring.

First, to cover the business items that might touch you most closely:

Legislation was passed to require a preliminary report of the Conference proceedings to be available no more than ninety days after the end of the Annual Conference, and a final report to be available no less than ninety days before the following year's Conference.

Second, and I know this is something that touches some of us closely, it was decided to suspend operations of the two camps for 2027, in order to conduct a feasibility study on continuing to keep them open. They end every year with a financial shortfall, and that comes out of NIC funds, which might be better used elsewhere.

These two items generated a great deal of discussion, but I think we reached a reasonable consensus.

The theme of this year's Conference, and this year for the UMC, is "Practicing Hope," and our speakers approached that in several ways. Bishop Schwerin spoke of "Refugia Faith" - making faith our refuge, and acting as refuge for others. He told us about his experiences in areas of Chicago during ICE's Operation Midway Blitz, of clergy, legally here, who had to be sheltered in people's basements to keep them safe from ICE. He told us about the struggle of church members to gain access to detainees at the Bridgeview detention facility, to offer them communion and spiritual solace.. When they were finally allowed in on Maundy Thursday, every one of the feet they washed was shackled.

Church members are learning to do whistle patrols and bike patrols, to keep an eye out for ICE in neighborhoods. We were called to practice hope in our daily lives, to use our voices and our actions to "pray with our feet" in protest to what is happening to our brothers and sisters. There are things we each can do, wherever and whoever we are, and several of our speakers reminded us that we are a body together, that we are strong in each other and that the body of the church is resilient. As Eugene Williams, Conference co-layleader told us, we need to keep moving forward. In the face of uncertainty and difficult times, we're still here. "We're all here to walk each other home."



WCA NEWS

WCA Board monthly meetings are on hiatus for the months of July and August. The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 3rd at 10:00 AM.

LOOKING AHEAD

Saturday, September 26th — 10:30 AM

This year, our Spiritual Retreat will be at the church with the movie St. John in Exile. There will be a discussion following; this proves to be a wonderful retreat. We will plan to go to Peachtree Restaurant in Matteson following the retreat. Everyone is welcome!

NOTHING BUNDT CAKES FUNDRAISER



Again this year, the WCA will be taking orders for **Nothing Bundt Cakes** Individual Bundtlets!

Cost: \$7 each

The last date to order is July 26th before and after church

Flavors available: Red Velvet, Chocolate Chocolate Chip, White Chocolate Raspberry, Lemon, OREO® Cookies & Cream, Strawberries & Cream, Confetti, Carrot, Gluten-Free Chocolate Chip Cookie, Gluten-Free Lemon Raspberry, and Classic Vanilla.

To order or if you have questions, contact Leslie Langmeyer (708-481-1578).

Delivery will be Sunday, August 9th at church.

Orders will need to be pre-paid, please.

*** PANERA BREAD NIGHT ***

On Sunday, July 26th, please plan to have dinner (or pick up dinner and take home) anytime from 4:00-8:00 PM at Panera Bread in Matteson! Please print the flyer on page 11 or pick up one (or several for your families and friends) at the church on the table in the narthex. Or Leslie can email you a flyer that you can show digitally. Contact her at llangmeyer@aol.com. You will need to show the flyer at the time you order. Panera will donate up to 30% of the total net sales to the WCA. Enjoy dinner at Panera on a hot summer evening!

Thank you for your support! It's really appreciated and all proceeds are given to missions!

OUTDOOR SERVICE

On Sunday, July 26th, Grace Church will celebrate worship with an outdoor service. Because we want to share worship with the neighborhood, we do not plan to use the pavilion and will be on the front lawn. There will be some chairs available, but please feel free to bring your own.

MISSION NEWS

UMCOR

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), a unit of Global Ministries, is Grace's mission for July and August. UMCOR is a humanitarian organization that helps alleviate human suffering, one of the two main goals of Global Ministries. UMCOR's work is carried out by providing relief and assistance in response to natural and human-made disasters and supporting programs in the areas of migration, health, food security and environmental sustainability.

When a community is impacted by a natural or civil disaster, UMCOR is there. This vital work extends beyond immediate relief, helping communities rebuild their lives and recover over the long term. UMCOR is there to provide hope, help and healing. We come alongside communities to strengthen their response — equipping them with resources for immediate relief and long term recovery, while helping rebuild for a more resilient future.



The earthquakes in Venezuela are especially devastating and UMCOR is there to aid wherever needed.

Please support UMCOR as you are able. If you write a check, make it out to Grace Church and put UMCOR on the memo line and/or put your offering into one of the blue mission envelopes. 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, August 8th at 10:30 AM. The topic for the morning will be "We love all on God's behalf." (John 13:34-35)

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

AFTER-CHURCH COFFEES



Everyone enjoys fellowship time at the coffees on Jazz Sunday. But, it seems as though the same people donate food and time each month. There is a sign-up sheet on the small table in the narthex and we are asking that everyone takes a turn. Men, too! You don't have to bake or cook! Store-bought items are fine! If two people sign up for a month, there will be less to do!

Please pick a month. There will be a WCA board member to help you find plates, napkins, etc. and will help set-up and clean-up. But, it's not just up to the board to provide goodies! Thank you!

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

I found this in my mom's Bible and wanted to share:

June 2001 Musings from your pastor

Do you ever get tired of the negative attitudes that seem to surround us in our society...the put-down humor, the road rage, school shootings, gossip that is character assassination, etc., etc.? What ever happened to positive attitudes — the ability to see the “glass half full instead of half empty?” Mostly, I am a bloomin’ optimist and try to see the good in life — in people. So I was happy to find a new book called *Attitudes of Gratitude*. The quote that opens Chapter 2 jumped out at me:

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion to clarity...Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. By Melody Beattie.

Developing attitudes of gratitude is possible. It is a choice we make every day — every minute! How do we do it? Simple. See the glass half full. Your job is to choose the kind of day you will have. For example:

- Today, I can be glad that my finances encourage me to plan my purchases wisely and guide me from waste, or I can feel sad that I don't have more money.
- Today I can be thankful the grass is being watered free, or I can complain the weather is rainy again.
- Today, I can rejoice that I am alive, or I can grumble about my health.
- Today I can feel grateful that my parents allowed me to be born, or I can cry over all they didn't give me when I was growing up.
- Today, I can celebrate that thorns have roses, or I can cry because roses have thorns.
- Today I can excitedly embark upon a quest to discover new relationships, or I can mourn my lack of friends.
- Today, I can shout for joy because I have a job to do, or I can whine because I have to go to work.
- Today, I can eagerly open my mind and fill it with bits of knowledge, or I can complain because I have to go to school.
- Today, stretches ahead of me, waiting to be shaped, and here I am, the sculptor, who gets to do the shaping.

What today will be like is up to me. I can choose what kind of day I will have! Life is sweet when attitudes of gratitude prevail!

Blessings as you shape your days, *Pastor Judy*

• • • • •

From *The One Year Book of Personal Prayer*

I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble. *Psalms 142:1-3*

O God, renew our spirits by your Holy Spirit, and draw our hearts unto yourself, that our work may not be a burden, but a delight. Let us not serve as slaves with the spirit of bondage, but with freedom and gladness as your sons, rejoicing in your will; for Jesus Christ's sake.

~Benjamin Jenks

FAMILY FUN NIGHTS — “Let’s Fly a Kite”

During the summer Family Fun Nights, Kristy Whitson and Valerie Nicholson led discussions around the Serenity Prayer, *"God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference."* They shared various Bible verses that supported wisdom and change. We made balloons to be able to let go of the things we cannot change. (They were taken home instead of sending them into the heavens!)

Then came the fun project of building our kites. There were many beautiful ones! Unfortunately, it was a very still night and we had to create our own breeze to fly our kites!



BIBLE TRIVIA

Bible Trivia for August is going back-to-school month so these questions focus on Jesus' students, the disciples.

1. Who was the first disciple chosen by Jesus? (John 1:42)
2. What are the names of the 12 disciples? (Matthew 10:2-4)
3. What two disciples were put into prison in Jerusalem for preaching the Gospel? (Acts 4:3)
4. Who was the only one of the 12 disciples not from Galilee?
5. Which of the disciples were fishermen?
6. (Bonus question) Who was not one of the original twelve though he probably labored harder for the gospel than anyone else?

This info was taken from *The Complete Book of Trivia* by J. Stephen Lang.

Thank you to Sue Dukes for compiling this!

Answers are on page 9.

FLOWERS

Flowers on the piano/altar help to brighten the sanctuary each Sunday. The 2026 flower chart has been 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!



GRACE CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT FROM RICK WASNEY

	Amount Received	Amount Needed	Surplus/ Deficit
January 2026	\$ 10,416.87	\$ 13,246.00	\$ 2,829.13
February 2026	\$13,416.79	\$13,246.00	\$ 170.79
March 2026	\$10,566.56	\$13,246.00	\$ 2,679.44
April 2026	\$12,805.23	\$13,246.00	\$ 440.77
May 2026	\$ 9,941.40	\$13,246.00	\$ 3,304.60
June 2026	\$10,550.43	\$13,246.00	\$ 2,695.57
Year to Date 2026	\$67,697.28	\$79,475.00	\$11,778.72

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL



The Sunday school class returns on September 13th following the Children's Moment in worship.

While the lessons are geared to 3-12 year olds, we welcome our older students to join anytime.

The theme for September/October is "Fall Faith" including Bible verses that express our faith.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT...

Grace Church has a Pastor's Discretionary Fund, which as the name states, is used at the Pastor's discretion.

There are some immediate needs that Pastor Amos hopes can be met.

Please feel free to donate to this fund making sure that you designate your donation for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Thank you for your generosity and the willingness to help others.

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.



SPECIAL "MUSIC" FOR THE SUMMER

Choir and bell practice has finished for the summer. But we all love special "music" time. There are many different ways to contribute your talents throughout the summer. Pick a Sunday and let Valerie Nicholson know what you'll be sharing! There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

PRAY FOR PEACE

Grace Church hosts a **monthly community-wide Prayer Vigil** on the

first Wednesday of each month at **6:00 PM.**

It will last approximately 20 minutes.

Please plan to join us in Somonauk Park on **Wednesday, August 5th** to support the Prayer Vigil for Peace.



CELEBRATIONS FOR AUGUST



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Omotayo Oladipo—6th
 Seth Whitson—8th
 Jackson Forbes—9th
 Leslie Langmeyer—10th
 Tobi Ajayi—18th
 Elaine Degenhart—18th
 Ike Oladipo—25th
 Fikayo Ajayi—30th



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

Tom and Sue Dukes—29th



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
 Nan Beard
 Abby Burchill
 Jackie Ceres
 Gabe Chachakis
 Magda Condon
 Charlotte Earving
 Melissa Harms
 Niki Juarez-Cummings
 Alice Knox
 Malcolm Knox
 Becky Meyrey

Marge Neel
 Forrest (Lee) Nelson
 Ronan Nelson
 Allan Smith
 Alma White
 Kristy Whitson
 The Migrants, Immigrants, and
 Refugees among us
 The Victims of Gun Violence
 The People of Iran
 The People of Israel and Gaza
 The People of Ukraine



Answers to Bible Trivia:

1. Simon Peter
2. Peter (Simon Peter), Andrew, James (the greater), John, Phillip, Bartholomew (Nathanael), Thomas (Didymus), Matthew (Levi), James (the less), Thaddaeus (Judas), Simon the Zealot, Judas Iscariot, Matthias replaced Judas after his death.
3. Peter and John
4. Judas Iscariot
5. Peter, Andrew, James, John
6. Paul

ABOUT Scouts

Summer Camp Fun at Camp Buffalo



Pottery class, making pinch pots and coating with iron oxide before firing



Sculpture class — making a small animal or person



First Aid class



The back packing crew has hit the trail for their four mile trek.



We're raising dough!

GRACE UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH

**July 26, 2026
4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
4864 211th Street, Matteson, IL**

30%

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>.

© 2024 Panera Bread. All Rights Reserved.



AUGUST 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion Sunday Worship 11:00 AM	3	4 Men's Chat and Chew Breakfast <u>8:00 AM</u> Scout meeting 7:00 PM	5 Prayer Group <u>9:30 AM</u> Community Prayer Vigil 6:00 PM	6	7	8 ART meeting <u>9:30 AM</u> Go Team training on Zoom 10:30 AM
9 Sunday Worship <u>11:00 AM</u> WCA Fundraiser pick up after church	10 Rebekah Circle at Arrie Christain's 7:00 PM	11 Men's Chat and Chew Breakfast <u>8:00 AM</u> Scout meeting 7:00 PM	12 Prayer Group <u>9:30 AM</u> Scout Committee meeting 7:00 PM	13	14	15
16 Jazz Sunday Worship <u>11:00 AM</u> Coffee & Fellowship following church	17	18 Men's Chat and Chew Breakfast <u>8:00 AM</u> Scout meeting 7:00 PM	19 Prayer Group <u>9:30 AM</u> Tabitha Circle in parlor 2:00 PM	20	21	22
23 Sunday Worship 11:00 AM	24	25 Men's Chat and Chew Breakfast <u>8:00 AM</u> Scout Court of Honor 7:00 PM	26 Prayer Group 9:30 AM	27	28	29 Family Fun Night BBQ 5:00 PM
30 Sunday Worship 11:00 AM	31					