



# Grace Abounds

May 2024

Grace Lutheran Church

A Center of Mission and Ministry—Celebrating and Sharing God's Grace!



I know I've said this in sermons a number of times since I've been here and I said it again this Sunday. **THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE DO ON THIS EARTH IS WORSHIP!** I first heard Bishop Leonard Bolick say that some years ago now, but as COVID and other societal events have brought major changes into our 21st century days of living, I think that becomes even more true. No longer is the church the center of the community. No longer is Sunday morning sacred time. No longer are Wednesday evenings reserved for "church" time. It's

a new day. And so, both opportunity and challenge are before us as we shape the North American Church of the 21st century. And worship is the central focus of church!

So, that brings me back to worship. For many of us worship has just been something you do. In my family – and I'm guessing in many of yours - when the church doors were open the whole family went to church. And while we did "go to church" the depth of the gifts of worship were sometime not on the forefront. And so, the question: what is worship? What is worship? My homiletics professor in seminary asked us that question in class one day. After we gave the standard answers, he asked another question. Suppose, he said, worship is a drama. Who would you say is the actor? Who the audience? That led to some interesting discussion. Let me share his insights. If worship were a drama, then God is the actor and we, the congregation, are the audience. Everything we receive in worship comes from God. The words of forgiveness, the words of the scriptures, the words of the liturgy and hymns, the words of sermon proclamation, the meal—all are gifts from God – gifts from God we receive in worship—and nowhere else. In that sense, God is the actor. So, he continued, what if we taught our people to remember that when they come to worship—not when they "go to church" but when they come to worship—they find themselves in the very tangible presence of God? Would that make a difference? Would we, the congregation, pay more attention to the words we are speaking or singing? Would we, the congregation, find it easier to be still and know that God is God instead of looking at our watches (now our phones) and getting upset at the number of verses in a hymn or God forbid, a new hymn we have to learn? Would we stay more centered on the gifts of God for the people of God rather than on whatever is on our minds that day, that moment. Would visualizing God's tangible presence right there in front of us make a difference in how we worship? In summary, then, the professor said to us that for us Lutherans, worship is indeed not so much about what we do, but about what God does for us. We simply respond in prayer and praise to the God who comes down to our level. The focus in Lutheran worship is not on how we feel but on how God comes to us.

So, ponder a little. How might these insights on worship change/grow you? How might these insights on worship change/grow our worship here at Grace. Important questions, I believe, because I also believe worship is the most important thing we do on this earth. God's Peace, *Pastor Jane*

## New Service Liturgy

As part of Youth Sunday on June 2, our Youth will introduce a new sung liturgy setting to the congregation. Setting 8 is a joyful, more contemporary setting that the Youth have been working to learn during Sunday School. If you would like an opportunity to hear this liturgy ahead of the June 2 worship service, please join us in the Adult Sunday School Class on Sunday, May 25 at 9:30 am. Breakfast is available for all at 9 a.m. ☺





**MAY**  
Birthdays

- 1 - Ally Nelson, Sophia Welch
- 2 - Mike Hall
- 6 - Angela D. Clark
- 8 - Lyric McCormick
- 9 - Payton Metts, Sharon Neel
- 11 - Maria Morgan, Searra Fishbeck,  
Michelle Shealy
- 16 - Easton Derrick
- 17 - LaRou Peters
- 18 - John David Dawkins
- 19 - Michael Riley
- 20 - Kim Metz, Mary Wicker
- 23 - Katrina Welch
- 25 - Olivia Murray
- 26 - Jacob Nelson, Russell Pitts
- 27 - Bashtin Dawkins
- 28 - Tim Dominick
- 29 - Caroline Whitlock
- 31 - Melissa V. Busby



**MAY**  
Baptisms

- 1 - Susan Dawkins\*  
Pastor James Henricks
- 3 - Alison Bowers
- 8 - Laura Hardy
- 9 - Lori Derrick, Katrina Welch  
Sophia Welch
- 13 - Edwina Wicker
- 15 - Donna Hall
- 16 - Candy Bouknight
- 20 - Will Konle
- 21 - Easton Griffin
- 23 - Heather Harris
- 26 - Zach Frick
- 29 - Holmes Epting  
George Dawkins Jr.
- 30 - Patricia Kislevitz



**MAY**  
Anniversaries

- 2 - Davis and Tyler Till - (4th)
- 17 - John and Judy Bedenbaugh +
- 17 - Sonny and Sharon Scott (19th)
- 22 - Chad and Candace Frick (25th)
- 25 - Cody and Jessica Dominick (11th)
- 29 - Brad and Melodie Waters (20th)
- 31 - Lisa and John Sulka (38th)
- + Memorial Anniversary


**IN THE MAIL . . .**

To our dear friends at Grace,  
Bob and I sincerely thank all of you individually and as a congregation for all of the cards of love and prayer that you have sent to us in this new phase of our lives. We miss you and still hope to come back one day. Grace is our home with so many friends. Our love to all,  
Bob and Cissie Dibble

Church Family,  
Thank you so much for the beautiful card. We know it came from the heart. I welled up in tears when I received the card. It made my day!  
Love, Abby Lasater

Thank you Grace Family for your prayers with us for our grandson Caleb Salyers, U.S. Army. Caleb has completed his military service and returned home to his family. He is now preparing for his next adventure as a university student. Rejoice with us! Al Potter & Timothea Sharpe

Dear Grace Family,  
Thank you for the card and generous love offering to our family after the birth of Diana to help us with expenses while she was in the hospital. We truly felt lifted up through this time! With her amazing progress she was discharged April 6, and we appreciate your continued prayers and support for us as we start the next chapter at home. We look forward to when she can meet you.  
God's Peace, James and Christina Henricks



## April Memorials and Honorariums

### Gifts to the Current Budget Fund

- ◇ In honor of the 90th birthday of David Riley by Bart & Debbie Dominick
- ◇ In memory of Julia Wessinger by Everett & Glenda Crafts
- ◇ In loving memory of Charles Hartman by Faye Hartman
- ◇ In loving remembrance of our parents' wedding anniversary for Judy and John Bedenbaugh by Kim & John Uhas
- ◇ In honor of Mary Nichols' birthday by Lloyd and Jane Mitcham
- ◇ In memory of Raymond Wright by Judy Bedenbaugh

### Gifts to the Maintenance Fund

- ◇ In honor of our church family, friends, and relatives by Bob and Heather Harris
- ◇ In memory of Richard and Sue Hartman by Faye Hartman
- ◇ In honor of our church family and relatives by Bob & Heather Harris
- ◇ In memory of Richard and Sue Hartman by Faye Hartman
- ◇ In memory of Raymond Paul Wright by Bob & Heather Harris



### Grace Prayer List



**Grace Family:** David Riley; Sharon Neel; Barry Hartman; The Henricks Family; Marysue Rivers; David Eldridge; Evelyn Harmon; Wayne Mitchell; Pastor Al Potter; Cissie & Bob Dibble; Glenda & Everett Crafts; Heather & Bob Harris; Faye Hartman; Lois Amick.

**Residential Care:** Sadie Epting (*Springfield Place, Rm. 11*); Allene Dawkins (*Springfield Place, Unit 4 Rm. 207*); Wendy and Michael Riley (*J.F. Hawkins, Rm. 221*).

**College Students:** Zach Frick (*USC*); Hayden Hall (*Piedmont*); Bryce Medlock (*Bluefield University*); Lexi Medlock (*Midlands Tech*); Payton Metts (*Piedmont*); Taylor Metz (*MUSC*); Bailey Stewart (*USC-Union*).

**Extended Family:** James Michael Torrence (*Jeanna Hall's brother*); Kathy Buchanan (*Beverly Hawkin's cousin*); Libby & Billy Bedenbaugh; Jimmy Martin (*Robert Martin's brother*); Grey Westbury (*Sue Mitchell's great-niece*); Brittany Merck, Broko Boland (*Melodie Waters' cousins*); Mary Ellen Hartzog (*Eddie Rivers' cousin*); Sullivan Shealy.

**Military:** Staff SGT. Anderson Dibble (*Marines/Stone Bay, NC— The Dibble's granddaughter*); Everett Crafts V (*Air Force/Guam - Glenda/Everett Craft's grandson*); Walker Eldridge (*USCG/Seattle, WA*).

**Community:** Steve Culbertson; Landon Soper; Jackie Perry; Amy Frick Wicker; Davida Monsanto; Violet Wilmot; Mary Lawson; Pastor William & Karen Hightower; Brian Cassady.

**God's World:** victims of gun violence; Haiti, Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, and neighboring countries; those affected by wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and other natural disasters; military families; homeless; jobless/underemployed; refugees; those suffering due to unrest and fighting throughout the world; our enemies.

*To add or remove a name from the Prayer List, please contact the office at 803-364-3331 or email us at [gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com) or leave a written note in the office box.*

***We would love to keep this list up-to-date.***

*Serving in May*

**Assisting Ministers**

- 5 Andy Hawkins
- 12 Judy Bedenbaugh
- 19 Melodie Waters
- 26 Jessica Shealy

**Altar Greenery/Flowers**

- 5 Andrea Lewis
- 12 Roberta Meyers Capó
- 19
- 26 Chad, Candace & Zoe Frick

**Acolyte**

Jonathan Shealy

**Torch Bearers**

- 19 Zoe Frick, Jaxon Wessinger
- 26 Allie Waters, Raelynn Wessinger

**Crucifers**

- 19 Camryn Shealy
- 26 Hunter Hall

**Communion Assistant**

Edwina Wicker

**Communion Preparation**

Mike Whitlock

**Ushers**

Wade Dominick, Sally Dominick,  
Candace Frick, Chad Frick, Craig Metz

**Greeters**

Jonathan Shealy, Mike Shealy

**Offering Tabulators**

Johnny Merck, Beverly Merck,  
Brad Waters, Melodie Waters

**Altar Guild**

Brad and Melodie Waters

**Pew Helper**

Edwina Wicker

**Front Sign**

Jessica Shealy

**Sanctuary Lamp Sponsor**

During the month of May the Sanctuary Lamp burns to the glory of God and in loving honor of our mothers, Beverly Merck and Mickey Waters, with thanksgiving to God for the beautiful gift of motherly love by Brad and Melodie Waters.



**Worship**

	Sanctuary	* Online	Total
<i>Easter Sunday</i>	115	12	127
4/07	54	16	60
4/14	47	22	69
4/21	48	20	68
4/28	57	14	71

**Sunday School**



3/31	29
4/07	28
4/14	22
4/21	16
4/28	27

**Altar Flower Sign Up**

A number of Sundays are still available. Please sign up on the chart on the narthex bulletin board or contact the church office to reserve a date. May 19th is available.

**People of Grace Updates**

Andrea Lewis' cell # 803-924-4627

Eddie Rivers' Email address:

[eddierivers1947@gmail.com](mailto:eddierivers1947@gmail.com)

Kim Uhas' email address at home:

[kimuhas@gmail.com](mailto:kimuhas@gmail.com)

**Our Offerings for April**

*Through April 28*

*(Does not include March EFTs)*

**MINISTRY BUDGET** *Our Monthly Need: \$13,634*

Given during month.....	12,023.55
Given year-to-date.....	36,629.55
Goal through April 28.....	53,488.80

**MAINTENANCE/UPKEEP FUND**

Given during month .....	1,714.00
Given year-to-date.....	11,913.94

**PARSONAGE FUND**

Given during month.....	0.00
Given year-to-date .....	0.00
Fund Balance, April 28 .....	4,640.38

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Given during month .....	99.00
Given year-to-date .....	434.00

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Given during month .....	0.00
Given year-to-date .....	0.00

**CAMPERSHIP FUND**


Given during month .....	0.00
Given year-to-date .....	25.69

**COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND**

Community Assistance.....	0.00
Given year-to-date .....	100.00
Bookbag Food Ministry .....	0.00
Given year-to-date .....	210.10
Thanksgiving Meal .....	0.00
Given year-to-date .....	0.00
Total year-to-date .....	310.10

**SPECIAL 2024 OFFERINGS YTD**

Scholarship Fund Match 2023	386.38
Lenten Offering	698.12
Youth	25.69
Disaster Response	0.00
Souper Bowl (Feed Thy Neighbor)	326.51
Easter Lilies	231.00
Love Offering (Henricks Family)	960.00
Bereavement Meal Fund	0.00
Christian Schools	0.00



**MINISTRY BUDGET**

Needed Thru April 28:	\$ 53,488.80
Given thru April 28:	\$ 36,629.55
<b>Amount Behind Goal:</b>	<b>\$16,859.25</b>

*Love Offering Bucket*

*The kids' bucket has a new name! Over the months the times we've collected money for special projects has been the most successful, so we're changing the name to LOVE OFFERING BUCKET and the first project will be a love offering for Michael Torrence and his family. As you know, Michael has endured two major brain surgeries along with some negative side effects arising from both the surgeries and the brain tumor itself. Their financial expenses are unimaginable and so we want to help! During the months of April and May, each Sunday a love offering will be collected to show our love and support for this family. We will continue to collect money for this love offering during children's time as well as at the end of worship. We invite you to pray diligently for Michael and his family and to give as you are able to give.*



**Backpack Ministry Update**

*Thank you for all of your generous donations this school year to Grace's Backpack Ministry. We are short every month so we could still really use your donations of items on the shopping list. Thanks again for your support of this special ministry! We are feeding 13 children.*

**Manna House Item Needed for May: Bar Soap**

**Council Meeting Minutes—Tuesday, April 9, 2024**

Email vote on March 18th was approved to allow The Tim Harmon family to use the ministry center July 20th for a shower.

Devotions presented by Mrs. Deborah Ruff.

All reports adopted as presented.

David Luther reported that the Call Committee will meet with the bishop on 4/22 at 6:30pm.

*The Building a Culture of Generosity* was adopted as our Stewardship program. A committee will be formed at May meeting.

Worship Team will meet later this month to finalize plans for Building Loan Pay-off Celebration.

Vision Team Updates:

Care and Fellowship will be planning 165th anniversary and Golden Age Sunday for third Sunday in October.

Community Hope – Need donations for 13 person backpack ministry and Manna House.

Facilities Team- Mr. Johnny will be looking for a new microphone for the Pastor.

Lifelong Education – VBS set for June 17th -21st

Worship Team – meets later in April

Youth Ministries Team – meets May 7th to discuss plans for Summer

Treasurer position, Roof, and Parsonage also discussed.

Shepherding Concerns mentioned.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace Frick, Council Secretary











**March Financial Reports**

Current Fund Balance does not include designated monies for the LED Bulb Fund (\$534.37); Bereavement Meal Fund (\$1,460.45); Choir Fund (\$325) or Sydney Shealy Memorial Gift (\$307.74) contained within the Current Fund Checking Account. \*\*Maintenance Fund balance does not include Parsonage Fund (\$4,640.38) contained within the Maintenance Fund Checking Account. It does include \$31,582.64 given for Roof Repair only.

	<u>Balance, 3/1</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Disbursed</u>	<u>Balance, 3/31</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
Current/Budget Fund	\$ 52,219.40	\$ 15,019.12	\$ 12,920.37	\$ 54,318.15	\$ 11,218.68 CD
Maintenance Fund	\$ 47,785.93	\$ 3,383.16	\$ 1,757.00	\$ 49,412.09	n/a
Sunday School Account	\$ 3,361.23	\$ 180.00	\$ 311.59	\$ 3,229.64	n/a
Christian Schools Acct.	\$ 19,663.13	\$ 6,109.93	\$ 5,729.26	\$ 20,042.90	n/a
CS Educational Fund	\$ 5,934.40	\$ 100.00	\$ 224.97	\$ 5,809.43	n/a

\* Current Fund Balance does not include designated monies for the LED Bulb Fund (\$534.37); Bereavement Meal Fund (\$1,460.45); Choir Fund (\$325) or Sydney Shealy Memorial Gift (\$307.74) contained within the Current Fund Checking Account. \*\*Maintenance Fund balance does not include Parsonage Fund (\$4,640.38) contained within the Maintenance Fund Checking Account. It does include \$31,582.64 given for Roof Repair only.

# May 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> 6pm Women's Bible Study  7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> Breakfast- 9:15 am Sunday School- 9:30 am Worship - 10:30 am Covered Dish Lunch & Celebration of Bldg. Loan Payoff 12:00 pm	<b>6</b> 	<b>7</b> 6pm Youth Meeting  6:30 pm Council Meeting	<b>8</b> 6pm Women's Bible Study  7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> Breakfast- 9:15 am Sunday School- 9:30 am Worship - 10:30 am  	<b>13</b>  Preschool Year End Program 6:30 p.m.	<b>14</b>  Preschool Year End Program 6:30 p.m.	<b>15</b> 6pm Women's Bible Study  7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 	<b>18</b>
<b>19 Pentecost</b> Breakfast- 9:15 am Sunday School- 9:30 am Worship - 10:30 am GYM Time - 12-1:30 pm	<b>20</b> Newsletter Articles Due	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 6pm Women's Bible Study  7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> Breakfast- 9:15 am Sunday School- 9:30 am Worship - 10:30 am	<b>27</b> 	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Newsletter Team 9:30am 6pm Women's Bible Study  7:30 pm Choir	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 	



**Tuesday, 5/7 6:00 p.m.**  
*Youth Ministry Team Meeting*

**Sunday, 5/19**  
**GYM Time 12-1:30 pm**

Due to the 4th Sunday being Memorial Day weekend, we will have our GYM Time a week early. Let us know if you plan to attend because we need a head count for May's hamburger/hotdog meal. A sign up sheet will be on the narthex board.

**Sunday, 6/2**  
**Youth Sunday**

**Thanks for supporting our Youth!**

Thank you to Judy Bedenbaugh, Donna Jacobs, Deborah Ruff, Timothea Sharpe, Dale & Julie Shealy, Peggy Thomas, and Lynn Wessinger for providing our delicious April GYM Time meal of sub sandwiches, chips and desserts!

**Youth Sunday**

Grace Youth will lead the **June 2** worship service as we observe Youth Sunday for the first time in seven years. Youth will read the lessons, lead our music, and serve in other leadership roles as ushers, greeters, and communion assistants. We will be making plans and practicing during Youth Sunday School each Sunday in May. Please plan to be a part of this special Sunday!

**Save the Date for VBS!**

Grace Youth are encouraged to participate in Grace's Vacation Bible School June 17-21.



Youth in sixth grade and up are needed to serve as group assistants and station helpers. Sign up on the bulletin board across from the office. Preschool and elementary-aged youth are invited to participate as students.

**Youth, Your Input is Wanted!**

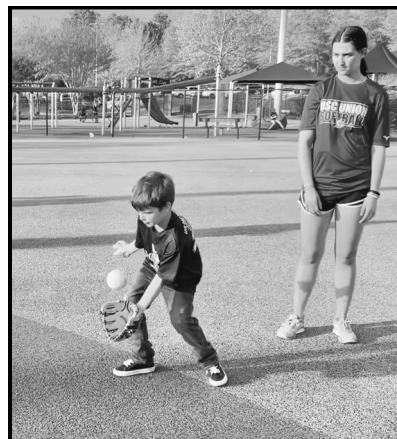
Do you have something you would like us to do as part of our monthly GYM Time? Maybe a game you'd like us to play? Or something to talk about or learn about? There is now a suggestion box in the Youth Room! It will be there through the summer so we can try to implement some of your ideas in the fall. All suggestions are welcome!



Your friends are always welcome at our youth activities.

**More Youth = More Fun!**

**Grace Youth In the News**



**Bailey Stewart** and the USC Softball Team participated with the Miracle League of Union County!



**Bryce Medlock** has been inducted into the Honors Convocation at Bluefield University. These are students who maintain a 3.8 or higher GPA in the Masters' Program. *Congratulations Bryce!*



### How YOU Can Help Grow Grace's Social Media Presence

The suggestion has come up that Grace could use social media more. We *can* do that — it starts with each of us individually interacting with Grace on social media more! Here's what **you** can do on Facebook to help:

#### 1.) LIKE AND FOLLOW

Make sure you have liked and are following **Grace Lutheran Church-ELCA** on Facebook! Even if you think you are already good on this step, go check! You might be surprised. By liking the page, you are showing support of Grace, and by following the page, you should be getting updates from Grace in your news feed. Right now our page is sitting at 629 likes and 732 followers. That may seem like a lot already, but let's see how much we can increase these numbers!

#### 2.) REACT AND COMMENT

When you see posts from Grace Lutheran Church-ELCA, like (or love) them and comment on them! Facebook's algorithm prioritizes posts that generate higher levels of interaction, so the more reactions and comments a post gets, the more the post is likely to show up in people's news feeds (and the higher up in them too). The amount of reactions and comments on the church's posts also can be looked at as reflecting how engaged (or not) we are in what's happening at Grace.

#### 3.) SHARE

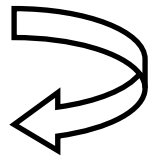
When we want to tell people about Jesus, what do we say we should do? Share the good news! So if you want to tell people about Grace, what can you do? Share Grace's Facebook posts! A post promoting an upcoming worship service or event? Share it to invite your friends! A post with pictures from a church gathering or activity? Share it to show your friends the good time you had at Grace or what Grace is doing for the community! The more shares our posts get, the more people they can reach, and the more our social media presence grows.

#### 4.) HELP PROVIDE CONTENT

Our volunteer Facebook administrators can't be at everything. But you might be there with your phone, so take some pictures if you don't see anyone doing so! Or plan ahead and let us know you're willing to take pictures at an event or group gathering and will send them to us to post! (Think: Grace's turn volunteering at Manna House, Grace's presence at Trunk-or-Treat, a Women's Bible Study gathering, etc.) People like to see pictures on Facebook of our church events and Grace at work! Help us be able to never miss an opportunity to post this kind of content!

**BONUS:** Did you know our preschool started their own Facebook page in October 2023? Show your support for this ministry of the church by liking and following **Grace Christian Preschool** on Facebook too!

The work of the church takes many members, and it's no different when it comes to growing Grace's social media presence! Did you see these beautiful pictures from Easter on our Facebook page?



	<p><b>Deadline for the June 2024 Newsletter is May 21st</b></p>
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**Grace Lutheran Church**  
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*Gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com*

*Ministers: The People of Grace*

*Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jane P. Mitcham*

*Online Giving*

*Scan this symbol  
 with your smartphone  
 to be connected to our  
 online giving page.*



**NONPROFIT  
 ORGANIZATION  
 US POSTAGE  
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 PROSPERITY SC  
 PERMIT NO. 7**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Coming Up at Grace



**Ministry Center Loan  
 Payoff Celebration &  
 Covered Dish Lunch**  
 May 5 - after church



**Preschool Year-End  
 Programs**  
 May 13, May 14  
 Last Day of Preschool - May 16)



**Pentecost Sunday**  
 May 19



**Youth Sunday**  
 June 2

**SC Synod Assembly June 8**  
 Voting members from Grace will meet together to participate online this year.



**"Camp Firelight" VBS**  
 June 17-21

Ages: through 5th grade with 6th grade and up as helpers. An Adult Class is also planned. Registration is open online at:

[myvbs.org/graceprosperity](http://myvbs.org/graceprosperity)

Printed registration forms are now available on the board across from the office.