



VOICE
OF
GRACE

Vol. 56 May 2025

One Day Closer

"Pastor, I'm one day closer." That's what a member said to me on the way out of church one day. This statement is actually a very good perspective for all of us to have, especially when we are running a race in which we can't quite see when the end will be. (Don't miss the story of the family a few paragraphs down.)

In the month of May, many students (and teachers, too!) are looking forward to the end of the school year. Our *Endure* theme will finally come to an end, but it won't yet be *The End*. Thus, we will need to keep *ENDuring*. Yes, the word "end" is included in "endure." Endure is continuing to patiently persevere. At the same time, endure assumes there *will be* an *END* and endurance will have finally reached its goal (and end). So, for now, we keep going, knowing every day, we are one day closer to finally reaching the end: **HEAVEN**.

That's what the church member was talking about on their way out of church that day. They were one day closer to reaching, by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, their life in heaven with the Lord and all His redeemed. No matter the stage of life we are in, it's good for us to look forward. It's also good for us to live one day at a time, seeking to make the most of each day and to enjoy the goodness God has for us in that day.

When writing this article, I stumbled across a family's website about a ministry called "*One Day Closer*." This family lost their 15-year old son in a tragic accident. After a period of grieving, the family came to a realization. In their words, "*In our tragedy, it is tempting for us to count down the days that we survive without our son, but it's time to count forward to heaven.*" The family also realized, "*God's desire for us isn't just to have a decent life on earth until we get to our eternal life in heaven, He wants our lives on earth to be full, purposeful and overflowing. For us that is loving the Lord with our whole hearts, loving others, sharing the hope of Jesus with others and continuing to make disciples.* As Matthew 24:14 says, '*This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*' Each day we are one day closer to heaven and we have one day less to tell of the goodness of our Heavenly Father and our hope of salvation. We want to make the most of each day here making much of Jesus."



Vacation Bible School

2025



We want YOU at VBS!

Ages: 3 years – 5th Grade

Dates: June 9–13, 8:30am–12pm

Registration opens May 1

Grace Lutheran Church
327 Ave C SE
Winter Haven FL 33880

**volunteer &
participant
registration**



Upcoming Discover Grace Classes

If you are interested in membership at Grace Lutheran Church, or if you would like to know more about Lutheran theology, please join us for a series of classes on Wednesday evenings, May 7, May 14, May 21, and May 28 from 6:30 PM – 8 PM. It is a great time to learn and grow with other people who have questions also. For more information, or to sign up, please contact Michelle Reddick at the church 863.293.8447, or at mreddick@glwh.org.

Grace Bytes

If you are interested in learning about the Bible and Lutheran theology, please join us for Grace Bytes on the second Tuesday of each month starting in the sanctuary at 5:30 PM. We will have a short time of prayer then move to the Mary Martha Room for pizza and a time of learning and discussion led by Pastor Reich. Bring a friend, your questions, and join us!

May's Topic: **The Lord's Supper: "What is This Bread?"**

"What is this bread?
Christ's body risen from the dead:
This bread we break,
This life we take,
Was crushed to pay for our release.
O taste and see—the Lord is peace."

(The Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 629)

Tuesday Prayer Service Schedule

We are making some changes to our Tuesday Evening Prayer Service. Each week will focus on something different.

- 1st Tuesday - A Service of Healing with Holy Communion (special prayers for all surgeries and medical procedures that month)
- 2nd Tuesday - A brief Prayer Service, praying for all names on our printed prayer list, followed by *Grace Bytes*. (See below for a full description of Grace Bytes.)
- 3rd Tuesday - General Prayer Service with Holy Communion
- 4th Tuesday - Service of Relationship Healing with Holy Communion (special prayers for healing in family and social relationships)
- 5th Tuesday - General Prayer Service with Holy Communion



Voice of Grace is published monthly by Grace Lutheran Church
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Easter Egg Hunt - A Huge Success!

Our Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 12, was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who showed up and all of our behind-the-scenes volunteers - we appreciate you!



Congratulations, Confirmands!

On Sunday, April 13, ten of our children publicly renewed their baptismal covenant in the 10:45 AM worship service. The prayer of the congregation is that God will daily increase in them His gifts of grace.

Confirmation is a pastoral and educational ministry of the church which helps the baptized child identify more deeply with the Christian community and participate more fully in its mission.

Members of this year's class are:

**Brooke Denise Furland
Colin Joseph Irby
Charlee Peyton LeFan
Stella Jayne Taylor
Vera Anne Terry**

**Chloe Danielle Warschauer
Alexander Thomas White
Cameron Grace Winget
Logan Joseph Wycoff
Ellie Rae Zealley**



MUSIC NOTES

He's Risen, He's Risen

LSB 480:1, 3–4

- 1 He's risen, He's risen, Christ Jesus, the Lord;
He opened death's prison, the incarnate, true Word.
Break forth, hosts of heaven, in jubilant song
And earth, sea, and mountain their praises prolong.
- 3 But short was their triumph; the Savior arose,
And death, hell, and Satan He vanquished, His foes.
The conquering Lord lifts His banner on high;
He lives, yes, He lives, and will nevermore die.
- 4 O, where is your sting, death? We fear you no more;
Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden's door.
For all our transgressions His blood does atone;
Redeemed and forgiven, we now are His own.

Text: C. F. W. Walther, 1811–87, abr.; tr. Anna M. Meyer, 1867–1941, alt.

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000942

This month's hymn may be less familiar to some people, but for those who have been in Lutheran Churches around the country for any length of time (especially during the Easter season), you may have heard of a guy by the name of C.F.W. Walther. He is one of the founders of our church body (the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod). When people first sang his hymn (which was originally written in German, and then translated to English), they likely were not fond of learning a new hymn. I have brought some newer tunes to this congregation in the first year of leading the music here, and I am always looking to have people sing their faith: “but short was their [devil's and demons'] triumph; the Savior arose...He lives, yes, He lives!”

When presented with a new tune for the first time, some people may choose not to sing. One way I try to encourage all people to sing newer tunes is that the whole congregation might not sing the first verse. Sometimes the choir may sing that first verse. Being able to listen to how the melody goes one time can help people feel more confident. With that in mind, let us sing to the Lord a new song!

- Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- ² Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
 - ³ Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
 - ⁴ For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.
 - ⁵ For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
 - ⁶ Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

Psalms 96:1-6 NIV

Thomas Schulteis
Director of Worship Arts



Sunshine Club News



Thursday, May 1, 10:00 AM...Movie and Brown Bag lunch (Bring your own lunch) Join us in the Mary/Martha room for the movie, **"The Forge."** A Christian movie about a young man named Isaish Wright who is searching for his purpose in life. The movie was created by the Kendrick Brothers, who also made **"War Room."** Drinks and root beer floats provided.



Thursday, June 5...Join us for a presentation on **Safety for Fun!** Lara M. Ward is a Certified Safety Professional (CSP) who is excited to share with you some common hazards and safety concerns that you may encounter both inside your home and when you are out. She will then provide some simple, effective solutions to keep you safe and independent.

Gathering 11-11:30 AM; devotions and announcements at 11:30; lunch at noon; program at 12:30 PM. Pot luck– fried chicken and beverages provided.

One of the most active groups (1961-present) in our church community, Sunshine club focuses on individuals and couples, providing social interaction, support and spiritual growth. Join us the first Thursday of the month for food and fellowship. Everyone is welcome.

Senior Singles

Senior Singles mark your calendars for Friday, May 16. We will enjoy lunch at Tanners Lakeside Restaurant at 11:45.

Friends are always welcome. Meet at Tanners Lakeside Restaurant, located at 10006 S. Lake Howard Dr in Winter Haven.



ADULT GAME DAY

TRINITY HALL 1-3 PM

**JOIN US ON THE 4TH THURSDAY OF THE MONTH FOR
GAMES, FELLOWSHIP, FUN & SNACKS**



Let us join hands in observing

NATIONAL
★ ★ ★ DAY OF ★ ★ ★
PRAYER

May 1, 2025



VOTERS'

Meeting

SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2025

TRINITY HALL | 9:45 AM

Treasurer's Report for the Nine Months Ending March 31, 2025

	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance
<u>Church</u>				
Income	\$ 135,135.26	\$ 1,226,457.99	\$ 1,235,700.09	\$ (9,242.10)
Expenses	\$ 119,630.98	\$ 1,088,900.81	\$ 1,142,537.91	\$ (53,637.10)
Total Church	\$ 15,504.28	\$ 137,557.18	\$ 93,162.18	\$ 44,395.00

<u>School</u>				
Income	\$ 76,166.09	\$ 3,029,524.39	\$ 2,941,182.73	\$ 88,341.66
Expenses	\$ 326,312.33	\$ 2,966,577.19	\$ 2,960,626.00	\$ 5,951.19
Net	\$ (250,146.24)	\$ 62,947.20	\$ (19,443.27)	\$ 82,390.47
Designated (In/Out Accounts)	\$ 8,330.45	\$ (21,267.23)		
Total School	\$ (258,476.69)	\$ 84,214.43		

Investment Assets

Church Investments - Restricted	\$ 11,525.26
Church Endowment Fund	\$ 948,107.01
School Endowment Fund	\$ 659,457.36
Bernthal Endowment Scholarship Fund	\$ 137,943.48
All Other Scholarships/Investments	\$ 23,735.33



Parish Statistics

Deaths

Sue Andrews - 3/19/2025
Karen Cokonougher - 3/19/2025
Norbert Demaline - 3/25/2025
Joan Wilcox - 3/31/2025
Dave Calkin - 4/22/2025



COMPUTER and LIBRARY

Exciting Happenings in the Library & Computer Lab!

April was an exciting month in the library! We hosted a BOGO Book Fair, giving students the perfect opportunity to stock up on books for summer reading. Thank you to everyone who supported the fair and helped build a love of reading!

As we wrap up the school year, we are thrilled to celebrate our top readers. Students who have earned 100+ AR points will be treated to a special reward—lunch provided by Dairy Queen, followed by a fun afternoon of bowling! Their dedication to reading has truly paid off, and we can't wait to celebrate their hard work.

In the computer lab, students are finishing up projects and exploring new skills to carry into the summer. Whether it's coding, digital design, or research, we are proud of their progress this year.

GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL CONGRATULATES OUR HONOR STUDENTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER:

Principal's List

2nd Grade: Adeline, Aiden, Blakely, Branson, Brayden, Brinleigh, Franklin, Harper, Hazel, Jace, John, Jude, Kai, Knox, Kyler, Layla, Leonardo, Lincoln, Moirah, Olivia, Paisley, Samira, Sayuri, Sophia, Teagan, Willa, Zion; **3rd Grade:** Alhana, Alexa, Annabelle, Annalee, Arabella, Blake, Cadence, Carson, Carter H, Carter S, Catherine, Elijah G, Elijah P, Gavin, Jack, John, Keaton, Liam, Madden, Mazie, Miles, Myles, Nash, Nola, Peyton, Pierce, Presley, Preston, Walter, Zacchara; **4th Grade:** Abigail A, Abigail L, Adalyn, Addison, Braaten, Caroline A, Caroline H, Fischer, General, Greenly, Hannah, Harper, Jacob, Jonah, Kathryn, Lucy, Mackenzie, Mason, Selene, Warren; **5th Grade:** Aliyah, Charlotte, Elizabeth, Ethan, Louis, Levi, Luke E, Luke H, Talan, Theron, Wills; **6th Grade:** Bryson, Carden, Dean, Ella P, Ella T, Emma, Irelyn, Jolie, Skylar, Trinity; **7th Grade:** Kamryn, Khloe, Kyrsten, Maxton, Raegan, Sydney; **8th Grade:** Ayla, Brooke, Charlee, Chloe, Colin, Jeremiah, Stella, Zoey.

Honor Roll

2nd Grade: Javon, Rosemary; **3rd Grade:** Nicholas; **4th Grade:** August, Cole, Emily, Forest, Jackson, Jonathan,

Reed, Sydney; **5th Grade:** Addilee, Brielyn, Declan, Desmond, Kiran, Madilyn, Mateo, R'Mya; **6th Grade:** Cole, Lane; **7th Grade:** Jayden, Kyrsten, Madeleine, Slayter; **8th Grade:** Carson, Jackson P, Jackson W, Laila, Owen, Payton, Torin.

ART

Artists of the Month



Ember
Kindergarten



Mackenzie
4th grade



Annalee
3rd grade

SCHOOL CALENDAR

May

2: No School - Parent/Teacher Conferences
5 - 9: Teacher Appreciation Week
8: \$2 N.U.T. Day
9: Flag Football and Girls Soccer FLAA State Tournaments
14: Middle School Youth Group 6:30 - 8:00PM
22: Preschool Last Day of School
N.U.T. Day
23: Last Day of School for Grades K - 8
End of 4th Quarter
10:30AM Early Release
26: Memorial Day
School Office Closed
27 - 30: First Week of Summer Camp
Faculty End of Year Meetings

June

2 - 6: 2nd Week of Summer Camp
9 - 13: VBS
Theatre Summer Camp 12:30 - 3:30PM
16 - 20: 4th Week of Summer Camp
23 - 27: 5th Week of Summer Camp
30: 6th Week of Summer Camp

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF GLS: The mission of Grace Lutheran School is to provide its students and their families with a strong spiritual and academic foundation so that they know and understand God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ and are also able to live lives appropriate to their positions in their families, churches, community, and country.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:30 AM LWR Quilters 10AM Sunshine Club 6 PM AHG & TL	2 10 AM Bible Study - MM 1:30 PM PACE Bd Mtg.	3 5 PM Worship Svc
4 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship	5 7:30 AM Staff Devos 7 PM Elder Meeting	6 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff 12 PM God's Guys 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	7 1 PM WM Board Mtg. 6:30 PM HS Youth 7 PM Discover Grace	8 9:30 AM LWR Quilters 1 PM Martha Circle-MM 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	9 10 AM Bible Study - MM 7:30 PM Night of Worship	10 5 PM Worship Svc
11 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 Voters' Meeting 10:45 AM Worship 	12 7:30 AM Staff Devos 6 PM School Board	13 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff 5:30 PM Grace Bytes 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	14 6:30 PM MS Youth 7 PM Discover Grace	15 9:30 AM LWR Quilters 6 PM AHG & TL 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	16 10 AM Bible Study - MM	17 5 PM Worship Svc
BLOOD MOBILE 18 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship 12 PM Families in the Park - Grace	19 7:30 AM Staff Devos	20 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff 12 PM God's Guys 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	21 8:15 AM PACE Coffee Talk 2 PM PACE Coffee Talk 6 PM Stephen Ministry 6:30 PM HS Youth 7 PM Discover Grace	22 9:30 AM LWR Quilters 1 PM Adult Game Day 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	Last Day of School 23 10 AM Bible Study - MM	24 5 PM Worship Svc
25 8:30 AM Worship 8th Grade Graduation 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship	26 7:30 AM Staff Devos 5:30 Business Mgmt. 6:30 BOD Meeting	27 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	28 6:30 PM MS Youth 7 PM Discover Grace	29 9:30 AM LWR Quilters 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	30 10 AM Bible Study - MM	31 5 PM Worship Svc



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