



VOICE  
OF  
GRACE

Vol. 56 October 2025

# *What Comes Next?*

I like to take my time when traveling long distances. Back-country roads, where the speed limit sits between 45 and 55, suit me just fine. My dog Lily and I began our trek southward from our townhome, a middle unit with cedar siding painted red, only a three-minute walk from the Erie Canal. From that freshly sealed driveway, we jumped in the car and headed south to Winter Haven, Florida.

The world changes quite a bit over the course of 1300 miles. Each place, every state, town, city, or country road bringing a new surprise or different flavor of culture. A new accent, some famous landmark, and, of course, a change in people. As someone who likes to get off the interstate and travel the backroads, I find myself continually surprised by the places I get to see and the people I get to meet.

There is so much to appreciate in this world that it's hard to be still, and yet all these things can pass you by in an instant if you don't learn to slow down. Amidst change, it's hard to take a moment, step back, and appreciate what God is doing. Too often, when change comes, our first response is to dive in head first and tackle as much as possible. We like to create our to do list of this, that, and the other. While this might help get things going or calm the anxiety that comes with change, what we often miss out on is the opportunity to breathe, step back, and appreciate what God is doing through this change.

The past month has been a time of transition for all of us. Grace has been in this transition for a much longer time. Waiting for a new associate, praying for him, and letting God lead and guide on His own time is no easy thing. The old JG Wentworth slogan comes to mind: "It's my money, and I need it now!" To rephrase it, we might more frequently pray to God, "It's my time, and I want things done on my time!" We want this or that done when it is most convenient and comfortable for us.

Whether we like it or not, that's not how God works. God's timing is often uncomfortable. He brings about change when we feel comfortable; He speeds past us when we can barely catch our breath; and He calls us to slow down when all we want to do is go go go. God challenges us in these moments to trust in Him; to rely on His timing, and trust His direction.

For me, I am so grateful to be here at Grace - to join in the ministry of this congregation. I'm eager to partner with our staff, to make a joyful noise with our school, and to grow together as deeply-rooted disciples of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I'm eager to settle into an apartment, get to know the community, and make a home here among you; to discover dog parks, eat at new restaurants, and make new friends. I want these things to happen in an instant, but the realization is this: these things come in God's timing.

Since arriving at Grace, I've been asking God, "So, what comes next?" Perhaps you've asked that same question of yourself. "After waiting a year, God has supplied the associate... So, what comes next?" Proverbs 16:9 says, **"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."**

Our God is amazing. He stands at our side working with us and through us. Sometimes He's there pulling us back. Sometimes He's pushing us forward. Sometimes He simply stands there watching, hands folded, patiently twirling his thumbs with a cheeky smile and saying, **"Be still, and know that I am God."** (Psalm 46:10) Nothing surprises our God. He already knows what comes next, and that's ours to discover together in His time and fashion. Family of Grace, I am so excited to be with you all, to join in the blessed ministry of this congregation, and see what God has in store for us. God is at work; let's see what He's up to next!

Blessings,  
Pr. Steve

# **JUST FOR YOU!**

## **FIRST TUESDAY EACH MONTH AT 5:30 PM**

Are you scheduled for an upcoming surgery or procedure?  
Are you dealing with a diagnosis that has changed your life?  
Are you facing treatment decisions that overwhelm you?  
Are you living with a chronic condition that is wearing you down?  
Or, do you have loved ones who are in need of prayers for healing?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, we have a place for you to take your concerns, anxieties, fears, and confusion. Our Tuesday evening Prayer Services have been redesigned to fit your needs.

### **Every First Tuesday of the month we offer**

prayers especially for physical healings and surgeries; and also prayers for body, mind, and spirit.

Come and feel the calming presence of our Lord Jesus and partake of Holy Communion for the strengthening of your faith.



## **Grace Bytes**

### **Second Tuesday each Month at 5:30 PM**

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 for a short time of prayer at 5:30 PM. We will then go to the Mary-Martha room for pizza, learning, and discussion led by Pastor Reich. Bring a friend, your questions, and join us!

### **Tuesday, October 14 - 5:30 PM - Meet in the Sanctuary**

October's Topic: **The Priesthood of All Believers: Are You a Priest?**

If you have any questions, please call the church office and speak to Michelle at 863.293.8447, or email [mreddick@glwh.org](mailto:mreddick@glwh.org). Looking forward to seeing you there.



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

# Trunk or Treat

**Thursday, October 30  
6-7 PM  
on Bates Ave SE**

**Candy - Costumes - Community**

327 Ave C SE, Winter Haven, FL 33880

**Hosted by Amazing Grace Youth/Kids' Ministry and Friends!**

We're excited to host **Trunk or Treat** again this year on **Thursday, October 30 at 6-7 PM on Bates Ave SE**. We'd love for you to join us again with your decorated trunk and candy to share.

If you'd like to participate, please let us know [clicking this link](#) or using the QR code below, so we can reserve your spot. Whether spooky (Not too spooky, this is still a church event!), silly, or sweet, your trunk makes a difference and we can't wait to see what you come up with this year! Thank you again for sharing your time and creativity with our community.



# Trunk or Treat

## SIGN UPS

**Thursday, October 30  
6-7 PM  
on Bates Ave SE**

327 Ave C SE, Winter Haven, FL 33880

**Hosted by Amazing Grace Youth/Kids' Ministry and Friends!**

**CANDY DONATION NEEDED TOO.**  
**Drop off in school or church office**

Voice of Grace is published monthly by Grace Lutheran Church  
327 Avenue C SE  
Winter Haven, FL 33880  
[www.glwh.org](http://www.glwh.org)

**CHURCH PHONE:**  
**863-293-8447**

**SENIOR PASTOR**  
Charles Reich

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR**  
Steven Braun

**VICAR**  
Stephen Moore

**CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR**  
Sharon Wilson

**OFFICE ASSISTANT**  
Linda Aceto

**FACILITIES MANAGER**  
Alan Baker

**FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR**  
Carrie Beckwith

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**  
Casey Billman

**MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR**  
Peggy Jo Griffin

**MEMBERSHIP/ OUTREACH**  
Michelle Reddick

**DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP ARTS**  
Thomas Schulteis

**SCHOOL PHONE:**  
**863-293-9744**

**PRE-SCHOOL PHONE:**  
**863-299-9186**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL MINISTRY**  
Michael Rottmann

**MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**  
Jon Peterson

**MIDDLE SCHOOL DEAN**  
Jacob McGee

**PS-5 PRINCIPAL**  
Aleah Hearn

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**  
Susie Woods

**ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**  
Gillian McIntee

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**  
Christie Thompson

# Youth Group

6:30-8pm

**Middle  
School**

*2nd & 4th  
Wednesdays of the  
month*



**High  
School**

*1st & 3rd  
Wednesdays of the  
month*

## JUST ADULTING

**"ADULTING IS TOUGH.**

**FAITH MAKES IT EASIER."**

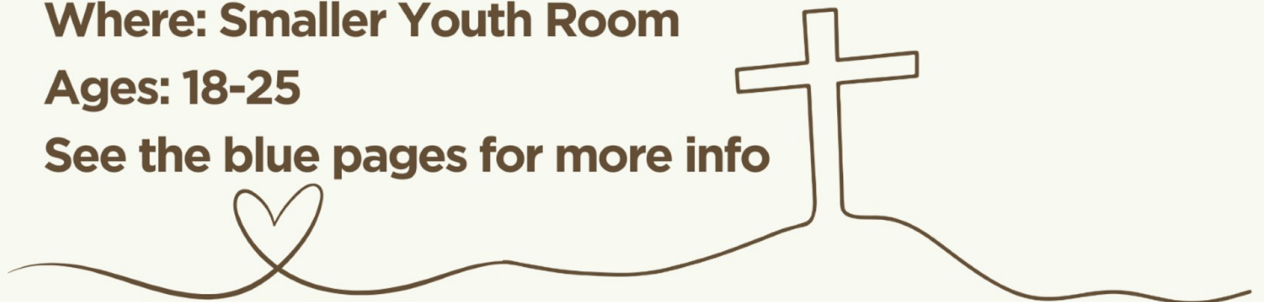
**When: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday nights**

**Time: 6:30-8PM**

**Where: Smaller Youth Room**

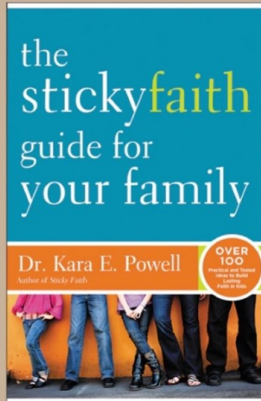
**Ages: 18-25**

**See the blue pages for more info**





# MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT FALL BIBLE STUDY



“STICKY FAITH:  
A GUIDE FOR YOUR FAMILY”  
TRINITY HALL  
2<sup>ND</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> WEDNESDAYS  
6:30-8PM

TOPIC: FOSTERING A FAITH THAT STICKS WITH YOUR  
CHILDREN AS THEY GROW AND ENTER YOUNG ADULT LIFE



## Grace Lutheran Church **Sunshine Club News**



October is Pastor Appreciation Month...Join us in Trinity Hall on Thursday, Oct. 2 for a time to celebrate Pastors Reich and Braun. We'll gather from 11-11:30 for fellowship, followed by devotions, announcements and lunch. A Mexican taco bar and dessert will be provided by the club. Cards and notes are always a lovely way to say thank you. A thank offering basket will be passed to cover luncheon costs.



Thursday, November 6 - We'll gather from 11-11:30 AM for fellowship, followed by devotions, announcements and lunch. It's a Thanksgiving lunch theme. We'll provide turkey, stuffing and gravy. Plan to bring a side dish or dessert to share. A special organ concert will be presented by our very own Thomas Schulteis from 12:50-1:20 PM in the church sanctuary. A thank offering will be taken to cover luncheon costs.

*One of the most active groups 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.*

# MUSIC NOTES

## LSB 818 In Thee Is Gladness

1 In Thee is gladness  
Amid all sadness,  
Jesus, sunshine of my heart.  
By Thee are given  
The gifts of heaven,  
Thou the true Redeemer art.  
Our souls Thou wakest,  
Our bonds Thou breakest;  
Who trusts Thee surely  
Has built securely;  
He stands forever: Alleluia!  
Our hearts are pining  
To see Thy shining,  
Dying or living  
To Thee are cleaving;  
Naught can us sever: Alleluia!

2 Since He is ours,  
We fear no powers,  
Not of earth nor sin nor death.  
He sees and blesses  
In worst distresses;  
He can change them with a breath.  
Wherefore the story  
Tell of His glory  
With hearts and voices;  
All heav'n rejoices  
In Him forever: Alleluia!  
We shout for gladness,  
Triumph o'er sadness,  
Love Him and praise Him  
And still shall raise Him  
Glad hymns forever: Alleluia!

Even when the world brings much pain and suffering to our lives as Christians, we can be confident that in the Lord there is gladness even amidst such suffering. The reason for this: He has given His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation through His death on the cross. Because we are His, we need not fear the power of sin and death: "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10). Because of this we make a joyful noise; we shout for gladness; we triumph over sadness. So, keep making that joyful noise and keep singing to the Lord a new song! Alleluia!

Thomas Schulteis  
Dir. of Worship Arts (Organist)



Grace Women's Ministry

# SOCKS & SHOE DRIVE

DROP-OFF  
LOCATIONS:

**NARTHEX  
TRINITY HALL  
CHURCH  
OFFICE**

Got gently worn, used,  
or new shoes you no longer  
need? Give them a  
second life by donating  
to our Shoe Drive Event!

- New socks
- All sizes and styles welcome
- Clean out your closet for a cause

**OCTOBER  
&  
NOVEMBER**

**Join Our Socks & Shoe Drive and  
Make a Difference!**





Our new year of service has arrived. We already have our calendar of events prepared for this year and are eager to get to work. The first of our events will be October thru November with a collection of SHOOZ AND SOX (shoes and socks) much needed for those in our community in need. We will be collecting shoes and socks of any size, whether new or in good condition, for male or female, and for any age group, to be given to The Mission here in Winter Haven. Please look for the “green” collection bins throughout the buildings. Our congregation is always so supportive of all our mission endeavors, and we pray you will participate in this much-needed cause.

Looking ahead, we will again have our annual Thanksgiving Pie Sale in November. As usual, our ladies will be baking the pies here in the church kitchen. Please keep watching the “Blue Pages” for all the details and dates when we will begin taking orders. Also, remember all proceeds from the sale allow us to continue supporting our mission projects which also, as usual, include the support of a seminary student.

On November 8, all Grace ladies will have the opportunity to attend the LWM Zone Rally at Christ Lutheran, Lakeland, from 9 AM until noon, for a morning of study, fellowship, and participation in a service project.

Please mark your calendars for these events and check the “Blue Pages” for further events and opportunities to serve our Lord.

Martha Circle meets the second Thursday of each month at 1 PM with all ladies invited. Also, remember the quilting group meets every Thursday morning and welcomes all ladies to come and check it out and possibly join them.

## Nominations

The Nominating Committee is asking congregation members, if they wish to do so, to nominate qualified voters in good-standing for positions on the Board of Directors. Nominations must be sent in by Monday, October 26. We ask that the nominee's permission has been obtained prior to submission of his or her name. Positions open for nomination for next year are President, Vice President, Financial Secretary, and one member-at-large position. We are also looking for individuals willing to be an Elder who would be responsible for congregational members. Please submit names to Roger Walker, Nominating Committee Chairman, at 863-221-0882 or [rolowalker@aol.com](mailto:rolowalker@aol.com)



## Treasurer's Report for the Two Months Ending August 31, 2025

	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance
<b><u>Church</u></b>				
Income	\$ 159,501.81	\$ 242,929.80	\$ 249,433.32	\$ (6,503.52)
Expenses	\$ 124,793.23	\$ 229,700.96	\$ 237,797.15	\$ (8,096.19)
Total Church	<b>\$ 34,708.58</b>	<b>\$ 13,228.84</b>	<b>\$ 11,636.17</b>	<b>\$ 1,592.67</b>
<b><u>School</u></b>				
Income	\$ 663,006.88	\$ 799,043.55	\$ 857,455.72	\$ (58,412.17)
Expenses	\$ 420,142.86	\$ 898,858.52	\$ 792,196.24	\$ 106,662.28
Net	\$ 242,864.02	\$ (99,814.97)	\$ 65,259.48	\$ (165,074.45)
Designated (In/Out Accounts)	\$ (7,346.06)	\$ (6,243.29)		
Total School	<b>\$ 250,210.08</b>	<b>\$ (93,571.68)</b>		

### **Investment Assets**

Church Endowment Fund	\$ 771,825.70
School Endowment Fund	\$ 513,502.13
Bernthal Endowment Scholarship Fund	\$ 146,465.78
All Other Scholarships/Investments	\$ 23,766.54



### Parish Statistics

#### Deaths

Melissa Kearis  
9/3/25



## Preschool and Elementary

We're excited to share that Grace Lutheran Preschool and Elementary School is off to a fantastic start this school year! 🦁 On Wednesday, September 2, we gathered for our very first Chapel Family of the year. It was a wonderful time of worship, fellowship, and coming together as a school community. We are looking forward to an amazing year filled with growth, learning, and blessings as we continue to nurture our students spiritually, academically, and socially.

## Middle School

The middle school is off to a fantastic start! Students are quickly settling into their routines, diving into core classes, and showing genuine excitement for learning. Our new math program has been launched smoothly. Bible classes and specials are bringing a strong balance to each day, and our middle school teachers are setting a positive, encouraging tone that is shaping a wonderful school atmosphere.



We are also excited to share the announcement of our 2025–2026 Middle School Student Council. Congratulations to the following students who will be serving their classmates and our school community this year: Kate, Raegan, Elizabeth, Lillian, Aubrey, Harris, Tifton, Khloe, Desmond, Madilyn, Emma, Carden, Sydney, Irelyn, and Ava.

These student leaders will help represent their peers, plan events, and serve as role models throughout the school year. We are proud of their willingness to step up and look forward to the great things they will accomplish together!

## Athletics

The fall sports season started at the end of August with tryouts for girls' volleyball and boys' soccer. There are 65 students participating this fall in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The JV girls' volleyball team is 2-0 and are coached by Grace alumni Caylee LeFan and Ava McCranie. The varsity girls are 0-2 and are coached by Grace alumni Kennedy Miller and Taylor Willis.

The JV boys' soccer team is 1-1 and the varsity boys' soccer team is 2-0. Both teams are coached by Coach Chris and Andrew Albrecht.

We have eight sports booster donations by families and businesses associated with Grace so far and could always use more boosters to help update our sports equipment. Thank you for all the support! Go Lions!!



## Curriculum Corner

We are excited to share that our new math curriculum is off to a smooth and successful start, helping students strengthen their skills and grow in confidence! Looking ahead, our Fall Book Fair will take place October 24–31. The Book Fair not only brings joy and excitement to our students, but it also plays a vital role in funding both our elementary and middle school libraries. Every purchase helps us add new titles, refresh well-loved favorites, and keep our libraries a vibrant resource that inspires a lifelong love of reading. Thank you for supporting this important mission!

## Artists of the Month

Chloe - 5th Grade  
Olivia - 3rd Grade  
Kinsley - 1st Grade



## SCHOOL CALENDAR

### October

- 1: Uniform Sales 7:30AM - 4:00PM
- 6: Middle School Poinsettia Sales Begin
- 8: Spirit Day/Night Panda Express (Winter Haven Location)
- Middle School Youth Group 6:30 - 8:00PM
- 9: Fall Picture Retakes
- 10: End of 1st Quarter
- 11: JV CFLAA Soccer and Volleyball Tournament (St. Paul, Lakeland)
- 13: Beginning of 2nd Quarter
- 15: Uniform Sales 7:30AM - 4:00PM
- P.A.C.E. Coffee Talk 8:15 - 8:00AM
- 16: \$2 Grade K - 5 N.U.T. Day
- 17: Last Day for Poinsettia Sales
- Fall Carnival 3:00 - 6:30PM
- 18: FLAA State Varsity Volleyball Tournament (St. Luke's, Oviedo)
- 22: Middle School Youth Group 6:30 - 8:00PM
- 23: Early Release
- Cain's Snowballs Spirit Day
- 24: No School (Lion's Den Open for Grades K—5 Only)
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 24 - 31: Scholastic Book Fair
- 25: FLAA State Varsity Boys Soccer Tournament (Trinity, Delray)
- 29: Uniform Sales 7:30AM - 4:00PM
- Middle School Youth Group 6:30 - 8:00PM
- 31: Grades K - 5 N.U.T. Day

### November

- 3-8: Food Drive (Hosted by P.A.C.E.)
- 7: Fall Theatre Production 6:00PM
- 8: Fall Theatre Production 1:00PM
- 12: Midterm of 2nd Quarter
- Uniform Sales 7:30AM - 4:00PM
- Middle School Youth Group 6:30 - 8:00PM
- 13: \$2 N.U.T. Day (Grades K - 5)
- 16: Grace Choristers Sing at 10:45AM Service
- 19: P.A.C.E. Coffee Talk 8:15AM
- 21: Early Release
- N.U.T. Day (Grades K - 5)
- Cain's Snowballs Spirit Day
- 24 - 28: Thanksgiving Break - No School



**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.

# OCTOBER



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b>  1 PM WM Board Mtg.  6:30 PM HS Youth 6:30 PM YA Bible Study	<b>2</b>  9:30 AM LWR Quilters 11:00 AM Sunshine Club  6 PM AHG & TL 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	<b>3</b>  10 AM Bible Study - MM	<b>4</b>  5 PM Worship Svc
<b>5</b>  <b>8:30 AM Worship</b> 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 9:45 AM Confirmation <b>10:45 AM Worship</b>	<b>6</b>  7:30 AM Staff Devos  9 AM Circuit Pastors Meeting  7 PM Elder Meeting	<b>7</b>  10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff 12 PM God's Guys  <b>5:30 PM Prayer Service of Healing</b> 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	<b>8</b>  7:30 AM Staff Devos  6:30 PM MS Youth 6:30 PM MS Parent Bible Study	<b>9</b>  9:30 AM LWR Quilters  1 PM Martha Circle  6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	<b>10</b>  10 AM Bible Study - MM	<b>11</b>  5 PM Worship Svc
<b>12</b>  <b>8:30 AM Worship</b> 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 9:45 AM Confirmation <b>10:45 AM Worship</b> <i>New Members Received</i>  12 PM Families in the Park	<b>13</b>  7:30 AM Staff Devos  6 PM School Board	<b>14</b>  10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff  <b>5:30 PM Grace Bytes</b> 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	<b>15</b>  8:15 AM PACE Coffee Talk - Trinity Hall  6 PM Stephen Ministry 6:30 PM HS Youth 6:30 PM YA Bible Study	<b>16</b>  9:30 AM LWR Quilters  6 PM AHG & TL 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	<b>17</b>  10 AM Bible Study - MM  <b>3 PM School Fall Carnival</b>	<b>18</b>  5 PM Worship Svc
<b>19</b>  <b>8:30 AM Worship</b> 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 9:45 AM Confirmation <b>10:45 AM Worship</b>	<b>20</b>  7:30 AM Staff Devos	<b>21</b>  10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff  <b>5:30 PM Prayer Svc</b> 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	<b>22</b>  6:30 PM MS Youth 6:30 PM MS Parent Bible Study	<b>23</b>  9:30 AM LWR Quilters  1 PM Adult Game Day  6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	<b>24</b>  10 AM Bible Study - MM	<b>25</b>  5 PM Worship Svc
<b>Reformation Sunday</b> <b>26</b>  <b>8:30 AM Worship</b> 9:45 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 9:45 AM Confirmation <b>10:45 AM Worship</b> 3:30 PM Pre-Svc Music <b>4 PM Circuit Reformation Svc</b> <i>St. Paul, Lakeland</i>	<b>27</b>  7:30 AM Staff Devos  5:30 Business Mgmt. 6:30 BOD Meeting	<b>28</b>  10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Church Staff  <b>5:30 PM Prayer Svc - Relationship Healing</b> 7 PM Praise Rehearsal	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  9:30 AM LWR Quilters  <b>6 PM Trunk or Treat</b> 6 PM Trinity Bells 7:15 PM Grace Chorale	<b>31</b>  10 AM Bible Study - MM	



**VOICE OF GRACE**

Grace Lutheran Church  
327 Avenue C, SE  
Winter Haven, FL 33880

NON PROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID LAKELAND, FL 33805 PERMIT NO. 1152
--

***CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JESUS***