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|  | AUGUST 2025 |
| **A purple hands with a cross  Description automatically generated** | AMAZING GRACE  CONNECTIONS  **Faith > Family > Community** |

**Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake**

**5N600 Hanson Rd, St. Charles, IL 60175**

**Pastor David Mercurio**

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| **Worship every Sunday**  **At 9:30 am with Communion**  .   * August 3 – Indoor Worship and Coffee Hour * August 10 – Outdoor Worship * August 17 – Outdoor Worship * August 24 – Outdoor Worship * August 31 – Outdoor Worship   Friday, August 15th is Mary Mother of our Lord Day |

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| **A group of kids in a field  AI-generated content may be incorrect. CHILDREN’S EVENT**  **11am to 1pm – AUGUST 9th**    We will gather our Sunday School children and some friends on Saturday, August 9th from 11 am – 1 pm for crafts, games, food and a Bible lesson; and maybe a song. Open to our Sunday School children from 4 to 12 years old. Each child may also bring a friend. Please text Marty Bradley (630-777-1074) with the number of children coming when the time comes so that we can plan for lunch and craft items needed. |

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| A person wearing glasses  Description automatically generated with low confidence  **FROM PASTOR DAVID, August 2025**  Recently, Nobel Prize winner Geoffrey Hinton, considered the godfather of  AI (Artificial Intelligence), has been making the media rounds, sounding a clarion call to humanity regarding the dangers of his invention. I think most of us have heard the term AI enough times to at least be somewhat familiar with what it is, a computer program that mimics human thinking and reasoning. But AI is way more sophisticated than an advanced spreadsheet or an algorithm. AI has at its disposal all of written human history and knowledge and can process through its entirety in seconds, not just regurgitating facts, but powering robots, creating ideas, generating poems, songs, images, even movies, and all fairly high quality!  The current army of AI developers touts its benefits: developing cures for heretofore uncurable diseases; replacing dreary, mindless factory work with robots which can work 24/7 and don’t take vacations; reducing costs and human error. Are there any downsides? You bet! Many jobs (some estimate millions) will be replaced by AI, and not just factory jobs, but professional positions in law,  medicine, accounting, finance, and design. Plumbers are safe for now! Teachers and professors have already discovered that too many of their students are using AI to author their papers or do their homework, further dulling their critical thinking skills. Even many professionals boast how AI is making their work more efficient and accurate, apparently oblivious to the spider’s web they are walking into. There have even been reports of evil and demonic responses from AI to questions posed to it.  Hinton believes there is a real possibility AI can become an existential threat to humanity if it decides we are the enemy and we must be destroyed b means such as electrical and communications blackouts, lethal (AI) manufactured viruses or nuclear obliteration. And AI is so ingrained in everyday human life, that we are long past the ability to just “pull the plug” to stop it causing us great harm. He is calling for the world to pause and think about the ramifications of continued development of this tool and to implement safety measures before we reach the  point of no return. Sadly, I don’t see the world doing such things as each country races to reach computing superiority.  So, if these threats are real, what is the Christian response to our predicament? First, be wary of using it. Sometimes you don’t have a choice as you see all internet searches are now AI generated, or your employer requires it. Be skeptical of any information generated by AI, applying your reasoning and critical thinking skills against it. But most importantly, ask yourself, does the AI output pass the “God test?” Does it reflect God’s virtues of transparency, goodness, truth, beauty, and love? Does it reflect the fruits of the Spirit? Those are clearly not easy to see if you’re trying to solve a quadratic equation or estimating a mortgage payment, but any opinions or advice you receive from it applies. Finally, as with all existential threats to either the entirety of humanity, or  to any one of us individually, remember that we are only on this earth for a short time. This is not our destination. It is our testing ground, on which God strengthens us through the trials and tribulations that life throws at us every day. As our faith grows, our troubles and our worries shrink. Each of us is too small and insignificant to turn the tide of history that is playing out before us. But our God is an awesome God, and with Him in control, we have nothing to worry about.  AMEN  ***Pastor’s Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays plus Sundays and as needed and by appointment when requested.*** |

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| **VISION TEAM REPORT**  At their July 15th meeting the Vision Team:   * Approved minutes and treasurer’s report from June meeting. * Updated and approved Building Use Policy and Gifts Policy.   **Pastor’s Report: Mid Year Review**   * Renewed the mortgage loan, reduced the monthly payment from $7,178 to $6,387, saving $800/month. * Installed a new boiler and water filtration system. * New siding and gutters on the pavilion. * Removed asbestos from parsonage. * Hired full time pastor with extended hours. * Renewed Bldg. Insurance Policy at modest 6.8% increase in premium. * Completed first year of preschool program with a class of 8 children. * Appointed preschool board. * Average Sunday attendance increases. * Elected Lee Strom to replace outgoing Kurt Redemann * Successful Lenten Bible study. * Easter service with 100+ attendance. * Started door knocking campaign to introduce our neighbors to Grace. * Installed new printer in office. * Successful spring rummage sale raising over $5000. * Received legacy gift from the estate of Pastor Nelson for $39,500. * Refurbished riding mower, extending its life. * Resolved question over Grace’s corporate status.   *See minutes located on the gathering room table for more information.*  *If you have any questions or concerns, please contact a Vision Team member: Pastor David, Dallas Peters, Tricia Painter, Lee Strom, Nancy Schnaitman, and Cathy Linquist.* |

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| A thank you card with red leaves  AI-generated content may be incorrect.**SPECIAL THANKS to all who have shared their time and talents with Grace , including but not limited to:**   * Tricia for all the financial information she tracks and compiles weekly and monthly; and for paying all the bills. * Vicki and Suzanne (and the Rebecca Circle) for coordination the luncheon following Kirk Hooey’s funeral. * Kelly and Piotr Gwizdala, for leading the games at our Kids Event on June 19th and to all the children who attended and brought friends. * Margaret Swanson’s family for use of memorial funds to replace AC unit on roof that cools the Grace Room and offices. * And to many more of you who give generously of your time! |

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| *FINANCIAL MATTERS – AUGUST 2025*  • Summer months are upon us, and generally our giving donations trend downwards for a month or so. Your continued donations are a blessing to Grace and allow a variety of our ministries to continue to help serve our community.  • The Finance Team will not be sending out mid-year Giving Statements (many people no longer need these for tax purposes, already have financial receipts, etc.) If you would still like to receive a mid-year statement, please contact Cara Turner 630-291-6896 or email clturner2063@yahoo.com. • As of this writing, we are awaiting the installation of a new AC unit on our roof (one of 2 units on the roof) that cools the Grace Room and church offices (including Pastor’s ofc!) We were advised of a gracious blessing of this gift from the Margaret Swanson Memorial. We are thankful for Margaret’s blessings from above.  Brief recap of June financials:  2025 2024  June 2025 Year-t0-date Year-to-date  INCOME $ 22,617 $ $ 162,838 $100,998  EXPENSES $ 20,204 $ 120,521 $ 90,298  NET +/- **$ 2,413 $ 42,317 2024 $ 10,700**  I pray for continued blessings upon our Grace family in the month of August ~ Blessings, Tricia Painter, Treasure |

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| ***PRE School Program***  [This Photo](http://ijboudreaux.com/) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/3.0/)  Our Parents Day Out Program is now called a Pre-School program. The school year is complete and will resume in September still on Mondays and Wednesdays. **Registration is open for the 2025-2026 school year.** Please tell anyone you know with a 3 to 5 year-old child to check out our website at graceoflilylake.org/PDO. You can also contact Janice Muncie directly at 630-854-1066. |

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| ***A group of colorful people  Description automatically generated***  ***REBECCA CIRCLE***  *Our next meeting is* ***Tuesday, August 19th at 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall with Linda Smykowski and Cathy Lindquist as hostesses.***  Please bring an item or two for the Elburn Food Pantry: suggested items include large soup cans (like Progresso) in a variety of flavors except chicken noodle, ketchup, adult cereals, crackers. |
| **A house with a lawn and a yard  AI-generated content may be incorrect.HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - POTTAWATOMIE**  Grace Lutheran is a partnership church. Nancy Corbige, our representative to Habitat for Humanity, reports that they have started building a new house in St. Charles, north of Rte 64 and that volunteers are needed. Times you may volunteer include, Wednesday, Friday or Saturday from 8:30 am to 4 pm.  *If you can volunteer a day or more, please send your name and email address to Nancy at* [*ncorbige@gmail.com*](mailto:ncorbige@gmail.com)*. She will keep us updated on the progress of the build. Volunteers do a variety of jobs, including providing lunches, doing clean up, painting and construction work.* |

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| **Cartoon character running on a black background  Description automatically generated**  ***ROAD RUNNERS 2025 TRIP***  Dear Grace Roadrunners,  Spring Greetings! Plans are coming together for our 2025 Roadrunner trip –“Let’s Travel to Iowa.” The trip leaves Monday, September 22 and returns Saturday 27. We decided to concentrate on the NE corner of the state -Decorah, Dyersville, Mason City and Dubuque. We found some interesting stops in some of the smaller towns in this area too. We’ll go to the Field of Dreams, National Mississippi Museum and Aquarium, Vesterheim- the National Norwegian-America Museum, Bily Clocks Museum and Music Man Square.  *Continued on next page*  This trip will cost $1030 - $1130 per person based on double occupancy. If you desire a single room, add $340. A deposit of $500 due June 26th holds your place with the balance due August 1st . Checks should be made out to Grace Lutheran Church of Lily Lake with Grace Roadrunners written on the memo line.  The first 40 registrations are guaranteed a spot on the coach, and then a waiting list will be started. Please mail your registration sheet and check to: Suzanne Girsch, 370 Delnor Glen Dr., St. Charles, IL 60174. The $500 deposit will be refundable before July 31st . Refunds after the final payment is due will be based on what we are able to be compensated for. Contact Suzanne Girsch at sgirsch1012@gmail.com or 630-888-7254 if you have questions.  Blessings this Spring, Roadrunner Planning Committee:  Suzanne Girsch, Karen North, Dawn Root and Sharon Sabin |

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| ***Children wishing to help decorate and ride on the float, can arrive at Cathy Whiteside’s house at 4 pm to finish decorating and stay through the parade.***  ***Please let Janice Muncie know if you would like to help decorate the float and/or ride on the float (630-854-1066 or janice.muncie@***[***gmail.com***](http://gmail.com/)***).  All are welcome!  We are also accepting bags of candy to give out on parade day (preferably not chocolate...it tends to get all melty!) Thank you!*** |

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| **NOISY OFFERING**  Every Sunday we collect a “noisy offering” when you wish to empty your change purse or pockets. We are currently collecting for maintenance items. Thank you. |

**MISCELLANOUS INFORMATION**

* **SPECIAL TECH NEED**: **Are you familiar with IT / computer technology / streaming ??  We are asking  for several people to become familiar with or learn the technology that we use to record our church services with.  Seeking several people so we will be able to spread out the weekly tasks, so your assistance is not necessary every week ~ please consider ~ and contact Pastor or Tricia Painter**
* **If you can knit or crochet, we need you to help make more prayer shawls as we are running low. We have the yarn so please contact Helen Gruber if you can help. If you know of someone needing a PRAYER SHAWL, please let Twyla Strom know.**
* **The Finance Team is looking for volunteers to sign up as counters (counting our weekly offerings after worship). Please see Linda Smykowski or Tricia Painter for further details.**

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| ***SPECIAL MINISTRY INFORMATION***  **Bridge to Life Group’s Jesus Closet (homeless in Elgin)**: Items needed are backpacks, blankets, gym shoes, t-shirts, jeans, coats and socks***.***Please mark donated items to the attention of Cathy Whiteside (630/605-1096).  Thank you for all the donations.  Clothing and miscellaneous items for those in need in Chicago are being collected by Cathy Whiteside (630/605-1096) to be given to Pastor Anna-Kari Johnson for distribution in Chicago. Thank you to all who have donated in the past. |
| **CONTACTS:**  For emergencies, please contact the church office at 630-365-6751. For prayer requests or other needs please call Kathy Hooey at 630-341-2293 or leave a message at the church office at 630-365-6751. Messages are checked daily at noon & 5 pm. |

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| **Information for the September newsletter will be due by August 25th– please send items to Marty Bradley at** [**masbradley50@gmail.com**](mailto:masbradley50@gmail.com)**. Thank you** |

**CHILDREN’S EVENT ON JUNE 19TH**

**A group of people posing for a photo

AI-generated content may be incorrect.**

**Painted Rocks**

**A group of napkins with drawings on them

AI-generated content may be incorrect.**