
April 2025 In Touch with Grace



Dear family and friends of Grace,

We are in the midst of our Lenten journey to the cross. During this time, we reflect on our own life and practice spiritual discipline. Our youth will host brunch on Palm Sunday when we begin Holy Week. We will remember the last supper on Maundy Thursday, We will host Good Friday with our neighboring Lutheran churches and combined choirs. We will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday knowing this promise is true for us. Take time to join us for each of these special worship services. On our faithful journey this spring, we are joined by a seminary student, Vincent J. Momoh. As we offer hospitality by welcoming him, here is a little more about Vincent.

See you in worship!
Pastor Karen

I am Rev. Vincent Jabbie Momoh, a pastor from the Evangelical Lutheran Church Sierra Leone. I was born from Muslim parents, late Jabbie Momoh father, and Battu Jabbie mother who is alive. I and my partner Aminata have two blessed gifts from God, a boy and a girl, Moses 9 years and Esther 5 years. Moses is in class Four and Esther class One, they are living in Freetown with their mother.

My spiritual formation started with my parents. My late father allowed me to be a Christian because of his desire for his children to be educated. In the 1980s, most educated people were Christians. I attended the Muslim Friday Juma services with my father, and on Sundays, based on the policies of my Roman Catholic primary school, I attended Sunday services at a Roman Catholic church. If we failed, we were punished on Monday. My father fully supported this.

This continued until my uncle, a pastor, requested my dad to live with him in the capital city of Freetown, Sierra Leone, to pursue my education. My uncle introduced compulsory evening and morning devotions, attendance at Sunday services, and other spiritual practices, including youth camping, retreats, and other church activities. I was in trouble if he woke up for morning devotions and I slept, or if we failed to attend service without solid reasons.

The conversion to Christianity was greatly influenced and guided by the Holy Spirit, notwithstanding the encouragement I received from my parents, and the disciplinary spiritual practices implemented by my uncle. It was also supported by spiritual practices in both the primary and secondary schools I attended.

I was not only a Sunday worshipper, but engaged in different activities including prayer groups, Bible studies, signing, youth programs, retreats, seminary and outreach activities. This nurturing supported and strengthened my faith in following Christ to serve Him in different capacities as a volunteer janitor, chorister, youth leader, Sunday school teacher, and evangelist. The transformation led to my consecration as a Deacon in November 2019 and an ordained pastor in May 2021, as pastor in charge of two congregations Calvary in Freetown and Incarnation Church in Kenema Lutheran.

In 2021 and 2022, I applied for a Master of Theology at Yola Lutheran Seminary twice, I had two admissions but was denied a scholarship from LWF and the ELCA. I was frustrated, I decided not to pursue and any master's program in theology. I enrolled for a master's in development and administration at the University of Sierra Leone in 2022. While pursuing the master's this year, the Bishop of ELCSL emailed 46 seminaries and universities in the USA and Canada and encouraged me to apply and not to give up. He said, "You're a journalist exploring the internet."

Based on my undergrad degree course in Church History, I learned about Martin Luther. I saw Luther Seminary, I typed on Google on the seminary website, and I explored. I sent an email and expressed interest. Within a week, I had a conversation with Marie Hayes, presented my credentials, and she encouraged me to apply. I received my admission letter on December 22, 2022, and a scholarship on May 3, 2023. I have a US VISA and come on the 10th of September 2023. will be graduating with a Master of Arts in Leadership and Innovation from the Luther Seminary. What a mighty God we are serving.

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Pastor Vincent Momoh Biography (continued from page 1)

I have a master's in development and administration, Institute of Public Administration University of Sierra Leone, Master in Leader and Innovation in Ministry Luther Seminary, St. Paul Minnesota, USA, awaiting, bachelor's in accounting and finance from the Institute of Advanced Management and Technology (IAMTECH) an affiliate of the Njala University Division one, Bachelor's degree in theology Pastoral Studies, The College of Theology (TECH) Jui and Diploma Accounting and Finance Institute of Advance Management and Technology (IAMTECH) an affiliate of Njala University.

I have experience in preaching, planting and growing churches, mentorship, training, retreats, youth camping, evangelism, building teams, gender justice, practical theology, mission, caring and loving for neighbors, research, communication, journalism, finance, auditing, reporting management, Church administration, and women and youth empowerment. My inspirational and servant leadership skills ensure that activities are in line with the mission and value of the ministry, and they have earned me positive results in achieving strategic goals. I am knowledgeable about partnerships, building relationships with interfaith organizations, and fostering growth.

In addition, I have experience in the management of human and financial resources, developing performance budgets, and maintaining transparency and accountability. Fundraising strategies and financial sustainability, corporate investment and entrepreneurship. Identify problems, develop strategic plans, implement the plans, test, monitor and evaluate. Examples filling, recording reporting, and internal audit. By the same token, organizing different groups in fundraising activities, and inspiring youths and children on human resource capacity building.

My top strengths include learner, restorative, activator, belief, empathy, communication, responsibility, adaptive and strategic.

Travelled to Beijing Republic of China, Abuja Nigeria, Guinea as refugee, St. Paul Minnesota USA, Chicago, Texas and travelled across all the districts in Sierra Leone.

I love travelling, reading, writing, and listening to gospel music and football. I support Manchester united football club in England.



Aminata, Vincent, Moses (9), Esther (5)



Announcements

- Growing through Loss is a wonderful program offered through the Twin Cities East Metro Grief Coalition. Grace is partnering with our neighbors to offer support around grief. We will meet at St. Pascal's on five Tuesdays beginning April 22 through May 20 at 7 p.m. There will be a speaker and topic each week followed by small group breakout sessions. Pastor Karen will be a small group leader each week along with others. Grief of all kinds can be an overwhelming thing. Join us for support.
- Palm Sunday Brunch on Sunday, April 13, will once again be hosted by our youth families. All proceeds will support our youth ministries. Tickets will be sold on Sundays and Lenten Wednesdays leading up to Palm Sunday. Always a delicious, home-cooked meal. Join us!
- On the third Wednesday of each month from 2-3 p.m., Cerenity-Marian Park Senior Living offers a Dementia Support Group. Consider attending and finding the support and understanding you need with others who are caregivers and seeing loved ones going through this. All are welcome.
- If you have a family member suffering from dementia, there is a Dementia Support Group that meets every third Wednesday of the month from 2-3 p.m. at Cerenity-Marian. (225 Frank Street, St. Paul. All are welcome to attend.

- Paid summer internships for young adults ages 17-21 with the St. Paul Area Synod. Flexible hours, June 9-August 22, and a generous stipend! There are many options such as working with feeding the hungry, refugees and immigrants, children, community gardening, social work, and the elderly to name areas of interest. Email internships@spas-elca.org. Have an extra-meaningful summer!

New Member Sunday is coming up! Are you interested in becoming a member of Grace Lutheran Church? See Pastor Karen for more details. Welcome to our family!!!

Lent continues in April

Wednesdays April 2 & April 9, Soup Suppers begin at 5:45 p.m., Worship at 6:30 p.m.

Palm Sunday, April 13 Worship 9:30 a.m. followed by Brunch hosted by our Youth families

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 10:30 a.m. worship followed by lunch, 6:30 p.m. worship

Good Friday, April 18, 7 p.m. with our Eastside neighboring congregations

Easter, April 20, 9:30 Festival Worship!

- June 1st will be our Graduate Recognition Sunday! If you are graduating or know someone who is graduating from any school or program, please let us know so that we can add them to our list of Graduates. Talk with Pastor Karen or let the office know.

APRIL MISSION OF THE MONTH

The Mission of the Month for April at Grace is International Rescue Committee. The IRC is a global humanitarian aid, relief, and developmental organization.

For over 90 years IRC has provided humanitarian aid and long term support to people affected by conflict, disaster, and displacement. The IRC works in countries where people don't have the support they need to recover from crisis. The IRC helps people survive, recover and rebuild.

Today IRC works in 40+ countries to deliver lifesaving emergency relief and to help people rebuild.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to this organization which reaches out to God's people in need in many areas around the world and makes a difference in their lives. Please use your blue multi-purpose envelope, mark mission of the month and place in the offering plate or mail to the church office. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.



Music Notes -

About 20 years ago, a Minnesotan by the name of Dan Buettner started working on a project sponsored by National Geographic, identifying where people 100 years old lived. The researchers identified 5 areas around the world where groups of centenarians lived. They circled these 5 areas by a blue pen, thus naming them the blue zones. The researchers, led by Buettner, narrowed down 9 specific traits these people had in common, other than having excellent DNA. The 9 traits were the following: 1) they walk a lot or do physical chores, 2) they get up in the morning with a purpose in mind 3) they work on lowering their stress level 4) they don't eat too much at a sitting 5) their diets are plant based, eating meat only 4 times a month 6) they drink wine, but only 1-2 glasses a day 7) they are attached to some religion 8) their family always comes first and lastly 9) they have positive, supportive friends.

These are excellent guidelines for all of us to follow, but how do they relate to hymns? Actually, there are many hymns that reinforce these traits. For example, following the first trait, the act of moving, walking, keeping physically active: #802 *Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus*, #325 *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*, #815 *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light* or of course, #697 *Just a Closer Walk with Thee*. How about trait #2, the getting up in the morning with a purpose in mind? #763 *My Life Flows on in Endless Song* seems to fill that bill, or perhaps #580 *How Clear Is Our Vocation*. #3 concentrates on calming the stresses in our lives. There are so many hymns that are personal favorites that can be recalled when times of stress surface. #764 *Have No Fear, Little Flock* may be one of them or #767 *Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me*. My favorite is #769 *If You But Trust in God to Guide You*.

Hymns supporting traits #4 and #5 are harder to find. Let me know if you find any that recognize conservative consumption or eating plant based meals. Hymns are being written daily that add to our resources. Any hymn found in the Communion section would support trait #6, drinking at the most 1-2 glasses of wine daily. As to trait #7, Martin Luther capsulized the Christian creed in his text to hymn #411 *We All Believe in One True God*. Not all those who live in the 5 blue zones are Christian, but they are part of a group that together express their belief. Trait #8 reinforces the love of family, such as in the hymn #640 *Our Father, by Whose Name* and finally trait #9, having good friends. #742 *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* comes to mind as well as one not in our hymnal but is quite popular, a song by Michael W. Smith, *Friends*.

Every day is given to us as a gift. These 9 traits help to add precious layers to those days.



Come Be a Part of the Worship Team!

Just as it "takes a village to raise a child," it takes a congregation to provide a complete worship experience each week. There is something for everyone to do! Here is a partial list: Greeter, Usher, Acolyte, Liturgist, Lay Reader, Communion Assistant, Musician, Money Counter, Fellowship Treats Provider, etc. This is your invitation to join "the team!"

There have been many changes in the last few years. We need to continue to reimagine how we "do" things. After Easter, there will be sign-up sheets available to volunteer to help for summer. There will be opportunities for all ages and abilities. Maybe a young child and parent would like to serve as acolyte together. Perhaps a family would like to usher together. If you'd like to be a lay reader, but don't want to navigate the stairs to the lectern, you can read from the floor, or your place in the pew. If you'd like to serve communion, but have difficulty standing and holding the communion tray, we can place the communion tray on a small table and you can stand/sit behind it and "say the words." We need everyone! Next month, there will be more information about each position. Please consider being an active part of our worship experience. Thank you!

FROM THE LIBRARY:

Here are a few suggestions:

FICTION -

Little Broken Things
Poppy Field
Lost Symbol
The Last Thing He Told Me
Extreme Measures

Nicole Baart
Deborah Carr
Dan Brown
Laura Dave
Vince Flynn

BOOK CLUB READS -

In The Garden of Beasts
Pontoon
The Reckoning

Eric Larson
Garrison Keillor
John Grisham

NONFICTION -

Not On Our Watch
Ice Bound

Don Cheadle & John Pendergast
Dr. Jerri Nielsen

SPIRITUAL -

New Testament Theology
Reclaiming the Bible for a Non-Religious World

Leon Morris
John Shelby Spong



Grace Book Club -

Here are the latest titles chosen -
For discussion on:

April 3 The Thursday Murder Club Richard Osman

May 1 The Berry Pickers Amanda Peters

June 5 Demon Copperhead Barbara Kingsolver

No July meeting

August 7 Remarkably Bright Creatures Shelby Van Pelt

Sunday School

As we continue to reinforce the importance of prayer, a fun challenge has been put before the children. A special fidget toy will be given to each child when they can recite the Lord's prayer by memory. Since we have a wide range of ages the challenge is for all of them now, but only when they feel comfortable to recite the prayer they can ask to try to earn it.

Luke was our first that was able to successfully recite the Lord's Prayer so far.

We have continued to follow the life of Jesus this spring through his many parables and looking towards Easter and what that means for us today. We will take a closer look at the Last Supper and how that ties back to Exodus which we spent all fall learning about.

Upcoming dates:

4/13 - No Sunday School as there will be the Palm Sunday Breakfast sponsored by our youth families.

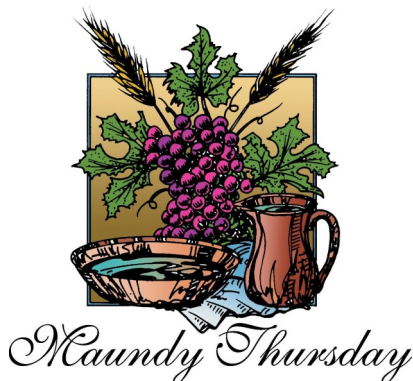
4/20 - No Sunday School on Easter, but stay after the service for our annual Easter egg hunt.

As always, if anyone is wanting to help out with Sunday School in any way please contact Amanda Christie.



XYZ's April Meeting

Our April meeting will be our annual Pot Luck on Maundy Thursday. The date is **April 17th** and Worship is at 10:30 am with our Potluck afterwards. Please bring your favorite dish to share. Community Connections will provide plates, napkins and silverware, coffee and lemonade. Bring your appetite and join us! Everyone is welcome and you don't have to be white or gray-haired to fit in!





Dear Karen,

This is a thank you note.

Even in these turbulent times - or perhaps particularly in these turbulent times - I am reminded of all there is for which to be grateful. I am especially grateful for how you have encouraged Lutheran Social Service (LSS) in its mission of service. In important ways, you help drive LSS forward in its journey. It is a journey in which we listen deeply to our neighbors' dreams for greater self-sufficiency and then unleash the care and expertise of the LSS Movement to achieve those dreams. Thank you!

The work in which we are engaged unites three amazing groups of people.

Minnesotans who want to change their own lives and live with greater independence.

Employees and volunteers who deliver high quality service with great love.

Congregations, individual donors, and funding partners who care deeply about their neighbor's well-being and are attracted to LSS' reputation for innovation and trustworthiness.

Today, we live and serve in a time of turmoil. It is also a time in which some governmental funding partners appear to waver in their willingness to engage as we provide individuals and families with the services they need to live with greater self-determination and resilience. The outcome of the polarization and vitriol we witness across our country is not yet clear— concerning, but not yet clear.

Conversely, the LSS mission does not waver. Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota expresses the love of Christ for all people through service that inspires hope, changes lives, and builds community. It is our bedrock. It is the strong foundation from which we build.

For example, since World War II, LSS has helped legal refugees - as vetted and defined by the U.S. State Department - find employment and safe housing. The call to welcome the stranger and the foreigner among us has deep biblical roots. While new arrivals are halted, LSS will continue to help legal refugee families acclimate and grow the contribution they wish to make to our community as new Americans.

Even before the stoppage of arrivals, Refugee Services represented only about 1% of the individuals and families LSS serves each year. Despite being a fraction of our services, we are proud to still be one of the larger providers of life-changing services to legal refugee families in our state.

Each day, Lutherans in Minnesota actively volunteer their time and resources in support of the over twenty-five services LSS provides.

Over time, Lutherans in Minnesota have created a number of long-standing organizational responses for individuals and families longing to live with the vibrancy and dignity God intends. Lutheran Social Service is one of those long-standing responses, now serving in every county of Minnesota and beyond.

For their part, civic entities at virtually every level have learned that the Lutheran expression of service and support for those in need is an effective, efficient, proven, and trustworthy partner in transforming hope into reality. LSS does this with a deep sense of accountability, both to the person served and to the donor or funding partner.

An early foundational Lutheran witness to loving the neighbor occurred in 1865 when a Lutheran congregation welcomed Swedish orphaned children, offering safety, housing, and a community of support. That experience sparked new ventures of service throughout Minnesota. That faithful love of neighbor is alive and well today, in homes and congregations in every corner of the state.

Earlier, I framed some of this 'thank you note' in the context of challenges and unknowns in our current environment. I would be remiss to not provide an important, more powerful, positive context as well.

In the 160 years since its founding LSS has remained steadfast and vigilant, growing its services through two world wars, one great depression, thirty-four recessions, and more than twenty worldwide pandemics. We listen, we adapt, we lead, and we innovate new, more effective approaches to respond to the dreams of Minnesota families needing hope and action. LSS will navigate this time of challenge and opportunity as well.

As I frequently tell LSS teams of professionals and volunteers, LSS is strong and stable. We remain laser-focused on two things within our control: 1) delivering high-quality services that change lives, and 2) being trustworthy stewards of all that has been entrusted to us.

Thank you again for the important role you play in the work of LSS, and your commitment to loving one's neighbor.

Sincerely,

Patrick Thueson

President, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota and CEO, Children's Home Society

Community Connections - ongoing projects!!

Internal, Local and Global

If you would consider serving treats on a Sunday morning, we would appreciate your help. Please take a look at the sign-up schedule in the South Tower room and see if there is a date that works for you to help out! If you would be willing to bring treats but would prefer to not serve, please speak with Linda Sackreiter and we can arrange that as well.

Thanks for your help!!

2025 Collections

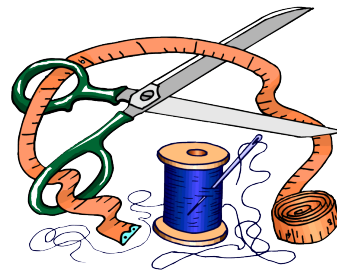
Quilts, baby care kits (Note: soap size accepted for baby care kits is 3.5 or 4 oz gentle soap; soap in each kit has to total 8 or 9 oz)

We delivered 30 Quilts and 9 baby kits to the LWR warehouse last year and have 26 new ones ready to go!

Other on-going collections at Grace - used eye glasses and cancelled stamps. Please find the small collection baskets on the library shelf. Also, Sandy Abernathy will take any American Flags that need to be disposed of properly. These can be left in the collection area in the library. (We are not currently saving soup can labels) Thank you for all donations!

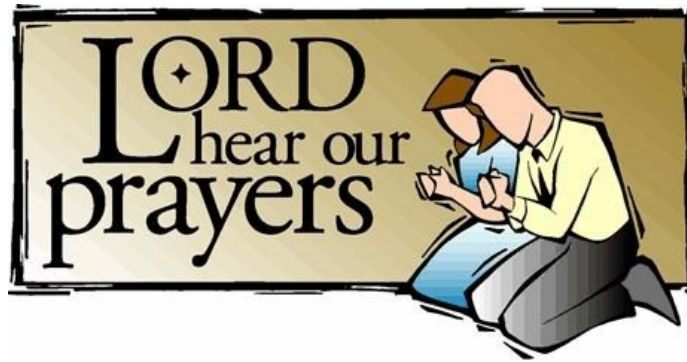


Quilt Days— We will be meeting again in April on the 2nd Saturday (12th) and the 4th Saturday (25th). All are welcome to join us. No skills necessary, we will teach. Most months we meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays in the Tower rooms. Come join us in this month for some good conversation and to put those hands to use for a wonderful cause. Lutheran World Relief distributes donated quilts all over the world including in the US.



Miles of Pennies The large collection jar in the library is always accepting donations toward giving to the LSS fund for helping homeless Youth in St. Paul. Our goal was \$250.00 for 2024 and we sent \$275 to LSS! Let's exceed that again in 2025! Thank you to everyone who participates in this important mission. Your generous donations of coins and paper money are appreciated.





We lift our prayers to God in times of thanksgiving and times of need, in times of joy and times of sorrow. This month we especially pray for Pastor Paul Hesterberg, Stacy Bray, (Marlene Hockbein's niece), Judy Adam, Bev Henderson, Carol Anderson, Butch Nelson, April Premo (niece of Judy Nelson), the family and friends of Ron House, and all those we name in our hearts.

How to donate other than in the offering plate:

There is always snail mail. The office is open to receive the mail and our bookkeeper will count what comes in each week and deposit it in the bank. Our address: 1730 Old Hudson Road, St. Paul, 55106.

To donate electronically: You can schedule a transfer of funds with your own bank if they have bill pay available and it will come automatically on the date you choose. Otherwise, you can go to our website (www.gracelutheranstpaul.org) and click on the GIVE page.

This site is secure for financial transactions through Vanco which is the Simply Giving program. At the GIVE page you can go through the steps as directed and give whatever amount you wish to several different categories (general, other, etc.) This works best on the Firefox or Edge browsers. This does get to us electronically in a very timely manner. If you are comfortable using the QR, it will take you directly to the GIVE page on the website. **Please call the office if you have any questions.** Thank you.

Give QR



Financial Snapshot for GLC-2023

	<u>February Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual*</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund	\$ 12,977.64	\$ 42,472.47	\$41,368.34
Expenses	\$ 20,135.74	\$ 46,090.32	\$58,853.32
Deficit/Overage	- \$ 7,158.10	- \$3,617.85	-\$17,484.98



2 Wayne Erickson
 Joshua Trulen
 3 Larry Adam
 4 Johanna Oberlander
 6 Atarah Eve Lee
 7 Ron House
 Travis Long
 12 Bill Kinney
 15 Greg Mohwinkel
 17 Richard Gunderson
 Tootie Henningsen
 William Wood
 20 Kelley Reed
 22 Tony Childs
 23 Rich Raschke
 24 Karen Boehne-Warner
 25 Knute Nelson

26 Char House
 Gen Wrobel
 27 Amanda Christie
 Donna Walseth



Worship Leaders for April 2025 -

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>
6	Jeff Oberlander	Alexis Petersen	Bob Golder
13	Monique McClure-Hegge	Kaliska Reed	Keith Smeby
17 Maundy Thursday 6:30pm	Ps. Vincent Momoh	Tony Childs	
20	Peter Zitzewitz	Cami Alleman	Carolyn Hesterberg
27	Jan Steingas	Alexis Petersen	Linda Sackreiter

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ushers</u> (the families of the acolytes are also helping out)
6	Brian Petersen, Rachel Petersen, Molly Petersen
13	Jeff Oberlander, Ann Oberlander
17 Maundy Thursday 6:30	Brian Jackson, Patty Young
18 Good Friday 7 pm	Larry Atneosen & team
20 Easter	Brian Jackson, Patty Young, the Alleman Family
27	Brian Petersen, Rachel Petersen, Molly Petersen

<u>Date</u>	<u>Money Counters</u> - (we could use some additional volunteers on our counting teams)
6	Amanda Christie team
13	Monique McClure-Hegge team
20	Kate Pray team
27	Amanda Christie team

We could use some additional usher volunteers - Please contact Brian Jackson if you are interested in helping out. 612-323-5673

SAVE THE DATE - May 18th will be the day of our Rhubarb Festival this year!
We will be doing something different and the proceeds will go toward our AV upgrade that was completed during 2024. Get those rhubarb recipes out and get ready to bake for our bake sale and come and enjoy a delicious brunch offered by our own Worship Committee!! After worship on May 18th!!



Grace Lutheran Church
1730 Old Hudson Road
Saint Paul, MN 55106



Easter is April 20th!

Phone: 651-774-9617

FAX: 651-774-0006

www.gracelutheranstpaul.fyi

gracelutheranstpaul@gmail.com

Pastor:

Rev. Karen Williams

Custodial Staff:

Linda Denson

Office Staff:

Linda Sackreiter

Music Staff:

Kathleen Hollar—Organist

Jan Steingas—Triple G's

Sanctuary Choir

Connie Smeby—Joyous Juniors

