
August 2026 In Touch with Grace



Dear Family and Friends of Grace,
We are in a season of gratitude and new beginnings. August is a month that feels like standing in a doorway. The long, warm days of summer are still with us, yet hints of autumn begin to appear. Gardens are overflowing with vegetables, flowers are at their peak, and fields are preparing for harvest. It is a wonderful reminder that God is always at work, bringing growth from seeds planted long ago.

As we enjoy these beautiful days, it is also a good time to reflect on the many blessings God has given us. We often celebrate the "mountaintop moments" in life, but faith also grows through ordinary days—sharing a meal with friends, tending a garden, reading Scripture on a quiet morning, or offering a kind word to someone who needs encouragement. These simple acts become the harvest of God's love in our lives.

There's an old joke that gardeners understand better than anyone: "I planted a few seeds expecting a tiny garden. Instead, I grew enough zucchini to feed the neighborhood!" Sometimes life feels that way too. We make plans, but God has a way of providing something even more abundant than we imagined—and occasionally it comes in the form of extra zucchini!

Jesus often spoke about seeds, fields, and harvest because they remind us that God's kingdom grows patiently and faithfully. We may not always see the results of our prayers or our acts of kindness right away, but God continues to nurture them. Every visit to a neighbor, every prayer offered, every act of generosity plants

seeds of hope that can bear fruit for years to come.

As summer winds down, our congregation will begin preparing for the busy season ahead with fall ministries, education programs, and opportunities for fellowship and service. Whether you have been away traveling, enjoying family gatherings, or simply trying to stay cool while still soaking up the sunshine, we look forward to reconnecting with you. There is always a place for you here.

May this August be filled with moments of gratitude, laughter, and peace. May you find God's presence in blooming flowers, singing birds, gentle rains, and warm conversations with friends. And may we all remember the promise from Galatians 6:9 -

"Let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up."

God's blessings to you as we continue growing together in faith, hope, and love.

Pastor Karen



Announcements

- August 2 worship will include an Organ Sonata on Creation presented by our fabulous organist Kathleen and narrated by Jeff O. You won't want to miss it!
- August 9, 10 a.m. Outdoor worship with our Eastside Neighbors at Keller Park, Shelter #5 with a picnic to follow. Join us in a new location with our ESCo congregations.
- **Lutheran Night at the** Twins will take place on Tuesday, August 11! It is too late to purchase group tickets but you can still buy your own. Gustavus Adolphus will provide a bus to the game. Check with them to see if there is still room on the bus. Their bus will arrive in time for those who wish to sing the National Anthem with fellow Lutherans and see our new bishop throw out the first pitch.
- Minnesota State Fair parking will take place from August 27 through September 7. This year, the parking lot will be staffed by our Scout Troop. The parking lot will be open just for church members on Sunday mornings until 1 p.m.
- Our 'Trip to the Alps' has room for a few more. Visit Austria, Switzerland, and N. Italy with our friendly and fun group from September 21-October 2. Brochures are in the Good Shepherd Lounge. See Pastor Karen with questions
- **Save the Date—** On Sunday September 20th, Renee Storbakken's niece, Teri, will be with us to talk about her experience in Sierra Leone as part of Mercy Ships. She was also part of the school building renovation supported by Renee and SLCM. It should be a very interesting presentation!



"Church, church what do you see?
I see a baby monarch caterpillar looking at me!"

Our resident 'butterfly' lady, Amanda Christie, has been checking the milkweed around the church and found a Monarch caterpillar and some eggs on Sunday (7/19)! She's taken the caterpillar she named 'Grace' home to raise and then release back at church when it's ready to fly.

We'll keep you updated on her progress!!

Also, Amanda has 35 monarch and 10 swallowtail butterfly eggs at home. If you are interested in getting into helping the butterfly populations maybe she can get you started.

Food Shelf Sunday is August 2nd!

AUGUST MISSION OF THE MONTH

August's Mission of the Month at Grace is Feed My Starving Children. FMSC is a Christian non-profit organization that co-ordinates the packing and distribution of food to people in developing nations. Founded in 1987 it has been involved in more than 70 countries.

FSMC consistently received the highest awards for integrity and trustworthiness, earning a 4 star rating from Charity Navigation for 17 years. FSMC is 100% funded by donors - no government assistance is provided.

So far from January - April 2026 132.9 million meals were shipped by FMSC. These meals will feed 381,408 kids a daily meal for a year.

Please prayerfully consider making a contribution to this wonderful organization which reaches out to some of the most vulnerable of God's people with one of their basic needs - FOOD. With your help 2026 can be the year there was food. Please use your blue multi-purpose envelope, mark mission of the month and place in the offering or mail to the church office. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.



Many thanks for all the Sierra Leone Scholarship donations. Once again it was an overwhelming response. We will share totals soon!

Blood Drive Coming to Grace on Monday, August 31st, 1-6pm!

FYI—Power Reds give donors the chance to nearly double the amount of red blood cells compared to a regular donation. These cells are the most transfused component and critical for trauma patients, surgeries, organ transplants, and women with childbirth complications. Hospitals rely on them every day - and our drive can be the reason they have what they need.

Here's why Power Reds are a gamechanger:

- ***Twice the lifesaving power:** One appointment helps twice as many patients.
- ***Counts as 2 units toward our goal:** Just 10 Power Reds can add 20 to our total.
- ***Better experience for donors:** Smaller needle, fluids returned, & many donors feel more hydrated afterward.
- ***Less frequent appointments:** Can only donate up to three times per year.

Imagine what it would mean for our drive if a handful of donors switched to Power Reds - - how many more lives could be saved?!



American Red Cross

Music Notes -

There is a theory that creativity and insanity are steps away from each other. Even the British poet John Dryden in 1681 wrote "Great wits are sure to madness near allied, And thin partitions do their bounds divide". Several of the most well known composers suffered from what was called manic depression, now known as bipolar disorder. Statistically, one out of four people will suffer from deep depression at some time in their life. Sigmund Freud's theories took off around 1909, too late for the majority of those famous composers. Here are just a few composers who, even though suffering from mental illness, contributed great works of music.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) suffered from extreme bipolar episodes. He swung from intense writing sessions, composing 138 love songs in the first year of his marriage to Clara. A prime example of his bipolar creation is his 8 movement piano cycle revolving around the characters Florestan, a very fiery creation in contrast to Eusebius, a very calm one. His intense writing periods were followed by deep depression where he couldn't write even one note. He died in an insane asylum at the age of 46 after he tried to drown himself in the Rhine River.

Peter Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) possibly suffered from bipolar disorder. He was known to hold his head in fear that it would fall off. He was constantly afraid that someone would find out about his homosexuality; he tried marriage for one year which failed, followed by a period of intense depression and feeling of guilt. His mood swings were infamous.

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896) one of the greatest symphony composers, suffered from OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder). Most music manuscripts will have measure numbers at the beginning of each staff, along with possible rehearsal letters. Bruckner would instead number every measure in a score. There was even an instance when his sister was visiting him, innocently wearing a sequenced dress. Bruckner tried to count all the sequences on the dress.

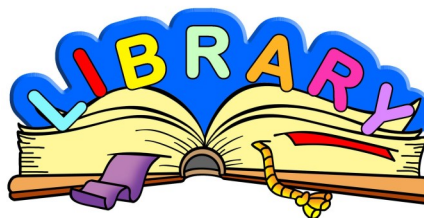
Edward Elgar (1857-1934) who created such masterpieces as the *4 Pomp and Circumstances* and the *Nimrod Variations*, had recurring thoughts of suicide. It has been said that his wife Alice, 10 years his elder, was more of a mother figure to him than a wife. She made sure that his life was in order. After her death, Elgar didn't write for 10 years.

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) who wrote many Finnish compositions including *Finlandia*, was an alcoholic. After a severe throat tumor operation, he was informed that he couldn't drink anymore. His response was, "How can I rid myself of these terrible shadows - or perhaps get them into some kind of new perspective?"

There are several other famous composers who quite possibly suffered from deep depression or another related mental illness, but there is no way of knowing for sure because of the lack of medical data. All we know is that even though these men endured times of great distress, they got through those excruciating times by escaping through their deep love of music. And because of their responses to those trials and tribulations, we now have some of the most phenomenal music ever written.

Kathleen Hollar will again be walking on September 19th for the Walk to End Alzheimers. It takes place in downtown Minneapolis. Join her or contribute to the Alzheimers Association in her name through their website. She is walking to help friends and their families who are suffering from this devastating ailment. Perhaps you, too, have friends or family traveling that road. More info on the walk will be forthcoming. Thank you!

FROM THE LIBRARY:



BOOKS FOR SALE:

The “Books for Sale” basket has gotten a refresh!

Due to some recent donations of brand new or like new books, we have a great selection in our basket! Feel free to browse and if you find one you just need to have, all donations are welcome!

Grace Book Club -

For discussion on:

August 6th - Twice Mitch Albom

September 3rd - The Correspondent Virginia Evans

October 3rd - Theo of Golden Allen Levi



The Property Management Committee is looking for additional members. They meet once/month, typically on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, at 6 pm.

One immediate need with the onset of spring and summer is the watering & maintenance of the gardens on the property.

Our hope is to provide a safe, healthy, and pleasing place to worship for all so we are responsible for the upkeep of our building and grounds. In addition, tasks related to the maintenance/upkeep of our 60+ year old building.

Most importantly, our heartfelt thanks to those who have faithfully served on Grace's property committee over the years. The time has come for them to have a well-deserved leave. It is with that in mind that we pursue recruiting new help on the committee and are unable at this time to continue.

Please contact Jim Dike (651-529-0264) for more info. Thanks!

VBS Summer 2026 - There is Always S'more Room for Jesus.

Part two of our Virtual Bible School (VBS) continues with the last ingredients of our S'more treat.

Remember we started with the graham cracker representing God as our foundation and strength, then we have the chocolate that is Jesus, the sweetest gift and richness in our lives.

The third ingredient we need is the marshmallow filling. As you probably guessed, this represents the Holy Spirit. We are filled each day with the Holy Spirit guiding us, and it helps to hold our faith together. Without the Holy Spirit we would fall apart.

The final part of making a s'more is the fire, which represents refinement and transformation of our lives. God gives us challenges to help us grow and become the people we are meant to be. With the heat of the fire this treat becomes something new and comes together as one not three separate parts. Our Grace family comes together to form a community and all of our separate parts put together can make great things.

I hope you now look at a s'more a little differently, and see how God's love and creation is all around us, even in a simple campfire treat. God can do so much S'more.



Graham crackers = GOD



Chocolate = Jesus



Marshmallow = Holy Spirit





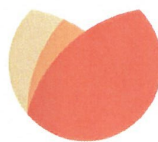
Merrick Community Services is doing a Back Pack Giveaway again this August! This event prepares hundreds of East Side Youth for a new school year. School is out but it will be back in session before we know it. The event this year will be held on Thursday, August 20th, 2026. Grace will be collecting to help them out.

If you would like to donate a backpack, they are focusing on High Schoolers this year. Also, there is a list of school items they are asking for below. Financial donations are also welcome as always. If you wish to contribute that way, please make checks to Grace and we will send a joint donation from the church.

MCS' primary service area has one of the highest rates of food insecurity among Minnesota counties. About 45% of households on the East Side are at or below 200% of the federal poverty line (about \$49K for a family of 3). **Your contributions will directly benefit students and their families.**

The Community Connections Committee will have a bin in the Good Shepherd Lounge for donations through the 16th of August. Here is the list of supplies they are most looking for:

- Scientific Calculators/Graphing Calculators
- USB Sticks (thumb drives)
- Mechanical Pencils
- College-lined Notebooks
- 3-ring binders
- Ball point pens
- Rulers/Protractors
- White out
- Planners



MERRICK
Community Services
Growing. Stronger. Together.

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!!

2026 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)

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. She will also take any plastic bags for a neighbor doing mats for the homeless in town. (We are not currently saving soup can labels) Thank you for all donations!



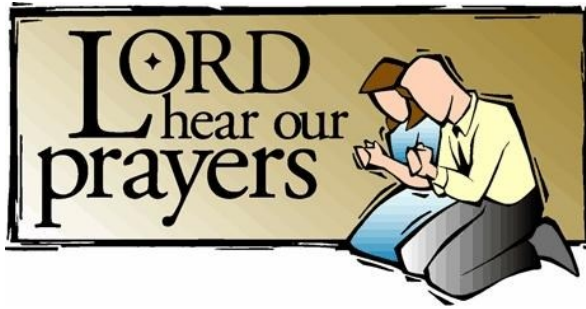
Quilt Days– The Quilters are again taking the summer off from meeting in favor of spending some time outside. We will begin meeting again on the 2nd Saturday in September. Please plan to join us in the So. Tower room on Sept. 12th to keep our hands busy for a good cause!

Lutheran World Relief distributes quilts & many kinds of kits throughout the world as well as in the U.S.



Miles of Coins 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 is \$250.00 for 2026. Thank you to everyone who participates in this important mission. Your generous donations of coins and paper money are appreciated. (Since pennies are no longer being made we've changed our fund name to 'coins' instead of 'pennies').





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 Norm & Shirley Walby, Cindy Wood, Randy Proulx, Josie Meyer, Phyllis Armstrong, Paul Hesterberg, Butch Nelson 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-2026

	<u>June Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund	\$ 29,431.93	\$ 205,056.31	\$156,975.00
Expenses	\$ 21,972.43	\$ 164,256.59	\$165,984.84
Deficit/Overage	\$ 7,459.50	\$ 40,797.72	-\$1,726.25



1 Gabriella Studiner

3 Jonathan Williams

5 Linda Denson

Cathy Geister

Evan Taylor

6 Jackson Geister

Gerry Lindquist

10 Raiha Storbakken

11 Jeff Gorton

Lynn Kolars

12 Adeline Oberlander

14 Avery Trulen

16 Randy Nikula

17 Bob Golder

24 Betty Castle

26 Valerie Hultgren

Amelia Kislinger

27 Pauline Kinnunen

Tayveanna Parsons

29 Sylvia Dyrhaug

Jennifer Voss



Worship Leaders for August 2026 -

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgist</u> or <u>Communion Asst.</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>
2	Jeff Oberlander -----	?	Jeff Oberlander
9	ESCo Picnic at Keller Park		
16	Kris Mohwinkel -----	?	Kris Mohwinkel
23	?	?	Peg Mathison
30	?	?	Sue Atneosen

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Greeters</u>
2	Nita Hanson & the Christie Family	?
9	ESCo Picnic at Keller Park	
16	?	?
23	Roger Mathison & Linda Sackreiter	?
30	?	?

<u>Date</u>	<u>Money Counters</u> - (we could use some additional volunteers on our counting teams)
2	Baumer-Mathison team
9	ESCo Worship -Linda will count on Monday
16	Lana Alleman team
23	Amanda Christie team
30	Baumer-Mathison team



Please see sign-up sheets for Sunday jobs in the Narthex, and the Sunday Fellowship sign-up in the S. Tower Rm.

Come Be a Part of the Worship Team!

Here are descriptions for each opportunity to join the Worship Team.

Greeters - all ages, arrive by 9:10, greet people at the lower level before the service

Ushers - all ages, arrive by 9:10, hand out bulletins, gather offering, help direct Communion, tidy Sanctuary after worship

Acolyte - all ages (with adult assistance if younger than 5th grade), arrive by 9:15, robe for festival services, light candles before the service, assist with communion during service, extinguish candles at end of service,

Lay Reader - all ages, arrive by 9:15, read the scripture lesson during worship

Liturgist - Confirmed members, arrive by 9:15, robe for most services, assist with leading the service, help serve Communion

Communion Assistant - Confirmed members, arrive by 9:20, robe for festival services, assist serving communion during service

Money Counter - Confirmed member, count offering money after the service

Chancel Care Assistant - all ages (with adult supervision if younger than 5th grade), after the service, assist in tidying up the altar area, putting away communion ware.

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



Sunday, August 9th at
Keller Park— 10:00 am
with Picnic to follow!

Phone: 651-774-9617

FAX: 651-774-0006

www.gracelutheranstpaul.org

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

Connie Smeby—Joyous Juniors

