



Grace Notes

SPRING 2025 EDITION



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Grace United Methodist Church | 300 E. Gartner Rd., Naperville, IL 60540 | 630-355-1748



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You're Invited to Holy Week & Easter at Grace

Palm/Passion Sunday - Sunday, April 13

Worship at 8:00AM* and 11:00AM*

**Please Note: Due to the Naperville Half Marathon, we will have two worship services on Palm Sunday.*

Holy Wednesday - Wednesday, April 16

Holy Week Experience at 5:00PM

Come join us for a journey through Holy Week. The children's music ministry will help to lead us on this experiential journey as we wave palms, wash hands, receive communion, and end at the foot of the draped cross. All ages are invited!

Maundy Thursday - Thursday, April 17

Worship at 7:00PM

Good Friday - Friday, April 18

Worship at 7:00PM

Easter Sunday - Sunday, April 20

7:30AM**

Worship in the Sanctuary with Brass and Grace Bell Ensemble.

9:30AM**

Worship in the Sanctuary with Brass, Chancel Choir and Grace Praise Team.

11:00AM**

Worship in the Sanctuary with Brass, Chancel Choir and Grace Praise Team

*** Please Note: These times differ from our regular Sunday worship schedule!*

*** The 9:30AM service will be live streamed on YouTube at youtube.com/@graceumcnaperville/streams.*

EASTER EGG HUNT



Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 19

1:00PM to 2:30PM

All 1-10 year olds are welcome!

A special visitor has promised to

stop by! Please register at

peopleofgrace.org/easteregg hunt.

Please check our website the day of the event in case of inclement

weather! Free will donations will be

accepted to benefit Youth Summer

Missions!

We Knocked Their Socks Off!

Generous members of Grace contributed more than 300 pairs of socks to RAO25's Soup & Sox on da Block event *plus* 100 more pairs of fun socks with dogs on them – dozens of breeds – that the Little Travelers store in Geneva donated, compliments of employee Betsy Koepnick.

Melvin Little and Patrick Daniels from RAO25 report that Soup & Sox was a hit in the North Lawndale community, the neighborhood they both grew up in. On March 8, they served soup, chicken, pizza, snacks, and beverages, and distributed hundreds of women's, men's, girls', and boys' socks.

Chicago Police staff attended the event, as well as staff from Project HOOD, Lawndale Christian Legal Center, Southwest Airlines, and State Rep. Lakeisha Collins' office. Chicago CARES served as a new partner for this event. A heartfelt thank you to all who participated!

P.S. The door swings both ways! Melvin was part of the teaching team leading children and families on Sunday Funday with Pastor Kim on March 16.



Grace UMC Annual Conference Participants Needed



Grace UMC has been allotted 8 delegate spots for the upcoming Northern Illinois Annual Conference (AC). This year's AC is especially significant as delegates will vote on whether to ratify key amendments to the United Methodist Constitution passed at the last General Conference.

These important changes include:

- A restructuring plan called **"regionalization"**
- Removing language from the Book of Discipline that restricted LGBTQ persons from leadership roles within the church
- Clarifying who is eligible to vote for clergy delegates

For these amendments to become official, each Annual Conference around the world must approve them – making this a truly historic time to be involved!

The Annual Conference will be held in **Schaumburg**, which means you can easily drive each day. Hotel rooms are also available for those who prefer to stay overnight. If we organize a team **before April 30**, we may be able to request funding from the Foundation to help cover costs. We hope you'll consider being part of this meaningful event. If you have any questions or want to learn more, please reach out to any of the pastors.

FMSC Feed the Need Mobile Pack

Over 100 friends and family of Grace UMC signed up to help FEED THE NEED at the Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack on the campus of Benedictine University on the weekend of March 8 and 9. Grace has expanded its support in recent years by becoming a \$5,000 Faith Partner of the Mobile Pack, purchasing the food that we pack. This year's FAITH PARTNERSHIP funds came from the October Harvest Home Collection (and subsequent anonymous matching donor) and the annual November Children's Music Ministry's Noisy Offering.

Each packing session concludes with a rundown of the group's accomplishments – the number of boxes packed, the number of meals packed, and the number everyone anxiously awaits, the number of children who will be fed for an entire year because of their 2-hour commitment to save the lives of the most vulnerable. The two sessions that Grace participated in will collectively feed 83 children for an entire year! The GRAND TOTAL for the weekend was 800,928 meals packed! (And, on Friday, Feed the Need, the local mobile pack, packed its 10 millionth meal! Grace has been a big part of that total, participating for over a decade!)

Thank you to all who donated and/or packed the meals. Thank you for turning hunger into HOPE, and being Love and Light for the world!



Becoming Beloved Community Recap

From Racial Justice Team

Many thanks to the people that were able to attend our Becoming Beloved Community sessions in March where we learned new information and new perspectives. Dr. Richard Guzman presented historical facts during the first session as a basis to further discussion in the next two sessions. We found this Netflix video to be very helpful in understanding some of our country's history that we were not familiar with, and, this published paper thoughtfully considers the advantages that exist in our society for some more than others.

The second two sessions were primarily listening based with stories told by the session leaders with roundtable sharing within our groups. We practiced peacemaking/talking circles which provide a way for people to understand different lived experiences through listening, which then enables working through differences in a safe and productive way. This structured process is used to bring people together to better understand one another, build and strengthen bonds, and solve community problems. These discussions were also a perfect opportunity to develop skills discussed in the David Brooks book, *How to Know a Person*, from the church book read earlier this year. With the current divisiveness in much of our society, this was a welcome respite to eagerly come together and practice listening to, discussing, and understanding varying perspectives.



You're Invited - Upcoming Concerts at Grace

Naperville Men's Glee Club Concert

Saturday, April 12 at 3:00PM

The "Men Sing! Choral Festival" invites men of all ages to experience a day of singing, learning, and community. Hosted by the Naperville Men's Glee Club and Music Director Dr. John P. Rakes, this free festival concludes with a public concert featuring participants and guest groups. Open to men of high school age and older, this inspiring event offers singing workshops led by experienced directors, opportunities to collaborate with fellow singers and guest choral groups, and preparation and performance of several pieces in a culminating concert. **The festival concludes with a concert open to the public at 3:00 PM** (doors open at 2:45 PM). Tickets may be purchased in advance online at napervillemensgleeclub.org/tickets, or at the door.



NaperVoice Spring Concert

Sunday, April 27 at 4:00PM

Singing More Superpowers: American Composers Explore Humanity's Highest Qualities

This new program is a sequel to our Spring 2023 Concert, *Singing Our Superpowers*. Themes including hope, courage, and love will be explored by contemporary American composers including Moses Hogan, Christopher Tin, Andrea Ramsey, Mac Huff, and Philip Spencer. The very significant and beautiful *Considering Matthew Shepard: A Choral Suite* by Craig Hella Johnson will be the featured work on this concert. Proceeds will benefit this concert's designated local service organization, 360 Youth Services, a Naperville nonprofit providing life-changing services to youth through substance use prevention education, counseling, and housing. Tickets may be purchased online at napervoice.org.

Welcome and Hospitality Ministry

A warm and welcoming hospitality ministry is essential for a church's growth and sense of community. It creates an environment where everyone feels valued and connected, helping newcomers feel truly at home and experience the love and compassion of our church family.

At **Grace**, we're excited to strengthen our sense of welcome and hospitality in several ways:

1. **New Guest Bags** for first-time visitors
2. A **New Welcome Stand** in the Sanctuary and the 9G Process
3. A **Strong Welcome/Hospitality Team** during Holy Week
4. **Staffing the Welcome Desk** on Sunday mornings
5. **Growing our Usher Team**
6. An **Intentional Greeting Team**
7. Special **"Getting to Know Grace" Opportunities**

Here's how you can help:

1) New Guest Bags - Fundraiser Opportunity

We're launching a fundraiser to cover the cost of our new guest bags! We're inviting Grace members to purchase a bag at a small markup to help offset the cost. This will be a freewill offering with a minimum of \$5 per bag. Bags will be available for purchase the beginning of April. Buy your reusable bag to help celebrate Earth Day!



2) New Welcome Stand in the Sanctuary

We've set up a new welcome stand in the Sanctuary where first-time guests can pick up their Welcome Bags. Our ushers will be trained to help distribute these bags, but we need everyone's help! If you see a new face, introduce yourself and help direct them to an usher or host to receive their bag. Your warm smile and friendly greeting can make all the difference!

3) Holy Week Serving Opportunities

Holy Week is one of the most important opportunities to make people feel welcome. We need volunteers for Ushers, Greeters, and the Welcome Desk on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Sign up at peopleofgrace.org/easterwelcome to serve and help make Holy Week extra special for our guests! Scroll down the needs list, look for Holy Week Opportunities, click the time you'd like to serve and sign up, put in your info, and submit. You will receive an email that has you verify your email. Thanks for serving.

4) Welcome Desk Volunteers

We're looking for two volunteers each Sunday to staff the Welcome Desk with warmth and enthusiasm. Volunteers will answer questions, help with event registration, and guide people to the right place. Sign up at peopleofgrace.org/hospitality to be part of this vital ministry.

5) Join the Usher Team

We need more ushers to help seat guests, assist with the communion line, and collect offerings. If you enjoy helping people feel comfortable and supported, this is a great way to serve! Sign up at peopleofgrace.org/hospitality to become an usher and one of the pastors will reach out to you.



6) Be a Greeter

A friendly greeting at the door sets the tone for someone's entire church experience. Our goal is to have greeters at each entrance for every service. If you can offer a smile and a handshake, you're perfect for this role! Sign up at peopleofgrace.org/hospitality to be a greeter and one of the pastors will reach out to you.

7) "Getting to Know Grace" Opportunities

We'll host three "Getting to Know Grace" sessions each year for those who want to learn more about our church. The first one is on Sunday, April 6 at 12:00PM. These gatherings will include a tour, an overview of our website and database, and guidance on how to engage in the life of the church. It's a great way to meet the pastors and staff while discovering how to Gather, Grow, and Go as a disciple of Christ. Visit peopleofgrace.org/gettingtoknowgrace to register.

Thank you for helping make Grace a place where everyone feels truly welcome!

Fun For All Ages!

Getting to Know Grace

Sunday, April 6 from 12:00PM to 1:30PM

Register at peopleofgrace.org/gettingtoknowgrace

The last few years have brought about a few changes at Grace. Change can be hard to negotiate, but thanks to our stellar office staff we have a good handle on the administration and systems that facilitate our ministry, and we couldn't be more grateful to Patti Cash, our Building Operations/Communications Director, Aaron Sax our Administrative Assistant and Building Host, and Kim Johnson, our Bookkeeper. With these highly qualified folks onboard, we, as pastors, have more time for you!

We are offering three "Getting to Know Grace" sessions each year for those who want to learn more about our church and how all of the pieces work together for us to gather in Christ, grow in love for God and neighbor and go to share that love in the world. These gatherings will include a tour of Grace Church, an overview of our ministries, a look at our website and database, guidance on how to engage in the life of the church, and a bit about our beliefs and theology. It's a great way to meet the pastors and staff while discovering how to Gather, Grow, and Go through Grace! Whether you are a guest seeking more information or a longtime member looking for a refresher, you are welcome to bring your questions and join us!

Our first meeting will be held on Sunday, April 6, at 12:00PM. The room will be announced as we determine the size needed. A light lunch will be provided. Please register at peopleofgrace.org/gettingtoknowgrace to let us know you're planning to attend!



DuPage River Sweep

Saturday, April 19 from 9:00AM to 12:00PM

Come help care for creation as Grace members participate in the annual "river sweep" of our DuPage River! This event is sponsored by the Conservation Foundation and will take place Saturday, April 19 from 9:00AM to 12:00PM. Please contact Jaci Green Tschirhart at green.tschirhart@gmail.com for additional information and to register.

Volunteer Appreciation

Sunday, April 27 between services



We are beyond excited to celebrate YOU, the incredible volunteers who make Grace UMC the vibrant, loving community it is! April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we want to take this opportunity to shout from the rooftops just how much we appreciate, value, and PRAISE GOD for you! The body of Christ is an amazing thing, and when we all come together—using our unique gifts, talents, time, and resources—we make a lasting impact for God's Kingdom! Through your servant hearts, we show God's great love to others, and that is something worth celebrating!

On Sunday, April 27, during the time between services, we're throwing a special celebration in your honor! Come by the Gathering Space to pick up a small token of our appreciation, and let us THANK YOU for all that you do. We have prayed for you, given thanks for you, and are so excited to recognize over 200 amazing people who serve with passion and dedication. YOU. ARE. AMAZING. YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE, and we want to show you just how much we love and appreciate you! We can't wait to celebrate with you on Appreciation Sunday—you won't want to miss it!

Holy Smokes

Register at peopleofgrace.org/holysmokes

Sunday, April 27 at 10:30AM to 12:30PM

Save the Date! Delicious bar-b-q returns to Grace on Sunday, April 27. Come enjoy a meal provided by 5Bs Catering. Two meat meals are \$16.00/each; Kids Hot Dog Meal is \$8.00. Orders may be placed online at peopleofgrace.org/holysmokes, by calling the church office or on Sundays between now through April 20. Questions may be directed to Gaye Lynn Loufek at gayelynn.loufek@peopleofgrace.org.



Touch-A-Truck

Saturday, May 3 at 9:00AM to 12:00PM

Register at peopleofgrace.org/trucks

All ages are invited to Touch-A-Truck on Saturday, May 3 at 9:00AM to 12:00PM! Explore many trucks of all kinds! The first hour will be quiet for those who love trucks, but not the noise. Please register your attendance for this FREE event for all ages open to the public! We host family friendly events throughout the year and would like to keep in touch with you. You are always welcome at Grace!

Touch A Truck is a great opportunity to welcome people of all ages to our property at Grace! VOLUNTEERS are NEEDED to help make this event a positive experience for all who attend. If you are available and would like to volunteer, please visit peopleofgrace.org/truckvolunteers and choose which time slot(s) work best for you.

Are you a Business owner or work for a company that has cool trucks, interesting construction or farm equipment?

We would like you to participate in Touch a Truck. This event attracts over 800 people with young children. There is no cost to you or the community members - just a fun three hours at 9:00AM to 12:00PM. Please contact Richard Newell if you can participate or have questions at richard.newell@peopleofgrace.org or call 630-947-9311.

Faith, Food, and Fun: May the 4th Be with You

Sunday, May 4 from 12:00PM to 1:30PM

Register at peopleofgrace.org/faithfoodfunmay4

Join us on Sunday, May 4 from 12:00PM to 1:30PM for an unforgettable Faith, Food, and Fun experience! Celebrate Star Wars Day with us in a galaxy far, far away. Come enjoy delicious Star Wars-themed treats like: Yoda Soda, Bantha Milk, and Thermal Detonators! But that's not all! We'll also have Star Wars activities for all ages, and Pastor Eric will guide us in an interactive faith lesson. Whether you're a Padawan or a Jedi Master, there's something for everyone! You won't want to miss this amazing afternoon. May the Force—and faith—be with you!



Faith, Food, and Fun: All Church Picnic

Sunday, July 6 from 11:30AM to 1:00PM

Register at peopleofgrace.org/faithfoodfunpicnic

You are invited to this all-church event. Join us for outdoor worship at 10:30AM followed by an ALL-CHURCH picnic! We will have some 4th of July themed intergenerational fun together. Be sure to wear your red, white, and blue. Don't forget your sunglasses, hat, and sunscreen. We will provide the meat with your registration fee. Then, just bring your favorite dish to share. A needs list with various categories will be sent at a later date. The cost is \$5 per person, \$20 max per household.

Vacation Bible Camp

July 14 to July 18 from 9:00AM to 11:30AM

Register at peopleofgrace.org/vbcroadtrip

Grace UMC's Vacation Bible Camp will be on **July 14 to July 18 at 9:00AM to 11:30AM!** This year's theme is **Road Trip - On the Go with God**. We're excited to welcome you and your friends and neighbors!

Join us in a fun-filled adventure on the open road, taking all the kids (Travelers) on thrilling journeys to exciting destinations. Led by the Navigator and an adventurous pup Scout, kids will learn that God is always with them. Through engaging stories from the Navigators' Guide (the Bible), Travelers will delve into timeless tales of faith from the Old and New Testaments. Get ready for twists, turns, and excitement as they face new challenges and find strength in God's presence on this unforgettable trip! Register by June 1! Looking forward to a great VBC!



VBC Volunteers Needed!

Register at peopleofgrace.org/vbcvolunteers

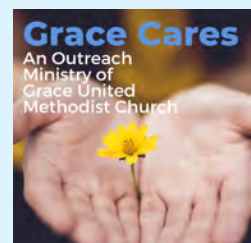
Registration for adult, teen, and apprentice Volunteers at Grace UMC's Vacation Bible Camp is now open! We're excited to welcome you, your friends, and your neighbors July 14 to July 18 at 9:00AM to 11:30AM to VBC! Be sure to share an invitation with children you know aged 3 years old and potty trained to 5th grade, as well as those who want to volunteer. As we expand our VBC this year, we are looking for adult (18+), teen (entering 9th -12th grade fall of 2025), and apprentices (entering 6th -8th grade fall of 2025) to serve as we welcome many children. We would love to have you join our team.

Growing in Faith Together: Road Trip On the Go with God

Sunday, July 20 from 9:15AM to 10:15AM

Register at peopleofgrace.org/gift

Parents, grandparents, and/or caregivers are invited to the children and youth Faith Formation hour to be with their children, grandchildren, and youth. Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) is a gift of time for the family unit to learn and practice how to grow in faith together through a hands-on, interactive, and fun way to incorporate faith-filled and positive conversations into your daily routines. Summer entails vacation and extra time together. How do you incorporate your faith with God on the Go? Come learn some fun ways through music, snack, games, craft, and learning resources.



Grace Cares Ministry

Is God calling you to serve? Do you have a heart for people who are hurting? Do you have a passion to help people heal through Christ? If this describes you, please pray about becoming involved in Grace Cares Ministry. We have many different types of volunteer roles available on our ministry team, including Stephen Minister, Prayer Team, leading a support group like GriefShare or DivorceCare. To learn more, contact Richard Newell at richard.newell@peopleofgrace.org or 630 947-9311.

Children Faith Formation

The faith of a child is so important. It includes learning at their own level, being mentored by those older than them, worshipping together in a community of believers, and serving. At Grace UMC, we strive on helping children Gather, Grow, and Go. Each Sunday morning from 9:15AM to 10:15AM children learn at their own level and surrounded by other children who are slightly older or younger than them will at Faith Formation Hour. We use Grow Curriculum where there are many hands on, interactive lessons with large group/small group environments and we intermix those Sundays with Sunday Fundays, Growing in Faith Together, and worshipping as a family unit.

Over the summer, we want to give families the opportunity to worship together. We will still have Sunday Fundays or Growing in Faith Together on the 3rd Sundays. In addition, we want to give children/youth of all ages the opportunity to participate at a greater level in worship. So, if your child/youth would like to usher, greet, read scripture, lead prayer, etc., please let us know and we want to help get them involved.

Here is the schedule for April to September:

April 6 – Worship as a Family

April 13 – Sunday Funday on Palm Sunday at 11:00AM – Start in worship to wave palms and then head down for Sunday Funday

April 20 – Happy Easter – Worship together as a Family at 7:30AM, 9:30AM, or 11:00AM

April 27 – Regular Faith Formation

May 4 – Regular Faith Formation at 9:15AM, then Faith, Food, and Fun 12:00PM to 1:30 PM

May 11 – Regular Faith Formation at 9:15AM, then Support Children's Musical at 10:30AM

May 18 – Sunday Funday & 5th Grade Move Up at 9:15AM

May 25, June 1, & June 8 – Regular Faith Formation at 9:15AM

June 15 – Sunday Funday at 9:15AM

June 22 & June 29 – Regular Faith Formation at 9:15AM

July 6 – Worship as a Family at Outdoor worship at 10:30AM and Faith, Food, and Fun afterwards for a Church Picnic

July 13 – Worship as a Family

July 20 – Growing in Faith Together at 9:15AM (Grandparents, Parents, Youth, Children)

July 27 – Worship as a Family

August 3 – Worship as a Family at Outdoor Worship at 9:15AM

August 10 – Worship as a Family

August 17 – Sunday Funday at 9:15AM and Backpack Blessings during worship

August 24 & August 31 – Worship as a Family

September 7 – Worship as a Family at Outdoor Worship at 9:15AM

September 14 – Family Orientation from 9:15AM to 10:15AM and Celebration Kick Off

September 21 – Sunday Funday at 9:15AM

5th Grade Move Up

Sunday, May 18 from 9:15AM to 10:15AM

This is a time that the 5th Graders will be moving up from Children's Ministry to Youth Ministry. This will occur during Sunday Funday. These students can then be participating in Youth Ministry events over the summer.

Sunday Fundays

Register at peopleofgrace.org/sundayfunday

9:15AM to 10:15AM in Fellowship Hall on the 3rd Sunday of the month

Vacation Bible Camp type themed days on the 3rd Sunday of the month (except November and February) including fun, games, snack, crafts, and lesson for children 3-years old and fully potty trained to 12th grade. (2-years olds welcome with adult.)

- Sunday, April 13 from 11:00AM to 12:00PM* – We will start in the Sanctuary waving palms and then head downstairs to Fellowship Hall for Palm Sunday / Holy Week fun. *Please note the time change due to Naperville Half Marathon and our worship schedule change for Palm Sunday.
- May 18 from 9:15AM to 10:15AM – Lego Day
- June 15 from 9:15AM to 10:15AM – Summer Fun
- July 20 ***NOTE: This is a Growing in Faith Together Sunday instead – Parents/Grandparents invited
- August 17 from 9:15AM to 10:15AM – School Fun & Backpack Blessings



Kindertot

Register at peopleofgrace.org/kindertot

9:30AM to 10:30 AM in Room 122 on the 4th Monday of the month**

Grab your favorite adult(s) and come have some themed Bible fun! Each week will have a different theme that includes play, music, a story, a prayer, and building relationships with other Kindertots and their favorite adults. Friends and neighbors are invited and welcome to be part of the fun. It's a great time to hang out and get to know others in a play setting. Please

- April 28 from 9:30AM to 10:30AM – Spring into Fun
- May 19** from 9:30AM to 10:30AM (Not a 4th Monday due to Memorial Day) – Lego Day
- June 23 from 9:30AM to 10:30AM – Summer Fun
- July 28 from 9:30AM to 10:30AM – Construction Day
- August 25 from 9:30AM to 10:30AM



Grace Youth Ministry (G.Y.M.)

Faith Formation on Sunday Mornings

Grace Youth Ministry (G.Y.M.) is a place where non-religious and nominally religious pre-teens and teens can come to explore what it means to live a life as a follower of Jesus Christ and have the opportunity to choose to grow and live out their faith. Everyone belongs and is welcome **Sundays at 9:15AM to 10:15AM** for Junior High (6th-8th) & Senior High (9th-12th) in Room 234. *Please note: there is no class on 4/6/25 and 4/20/25 for Family Worship Days.*

G.Y.M. (Grace Youth Ministry) on Wednesday Evenings

A time for youth 6th-12th grades to explore what it means to be a follower of Christ on **Wednesday evenings in Room 234 at 6:00PM to 7:30PM**. Through study, mission opportunities, serving opportunities, and fellowship gatherings, youth are introduced to a deeper meaning of a Christ-centered life and how a life of faith brings the promise of hope, help, and unconditional love for a lifetime. Friends and neighbors are welcome at all G.Y.M. events!



Senior Celebration

Sunday, May 18 at 10:30AM

Calling ALL High School Graduating Seniors! Please join us for a special worship service honoring you and all your achievements on Sunday, May 18 at 10:30AM. Please wear your graduation gown (cap optional) and any special cords, medallions, etc. We will gather in Room 234 at 10:15AM. Please contact Gaye Lynn Loufek at gayelynn.loufek@peopleofgrace.org with questions.

Summer G.Y.M.

Summer Fun! Youth grades 6-12 (in fall 2025) are invited and encouraged to attend Summer G.Y.M. July 9, July 16, and July 23!

- **July 9** - Mini Golf
- **July 16** - Kickball
- **July 23** - Summer Surprise Games

Please RSVP at peopleofgrace.org/summergym

Summer Sunday School Schedule

Summer is such a great time for recharging as a family: having quality time together, having opportunity to see God in new and countless ways, and experiencing worship together. We have provided summer Sunday school dates here, giving families the opportunity to plan special ways to grow in faith together.

- **June 1** - ALL Youth are invited to help with the Suds on Sunday car wash during Sunday School
- **June 8** - Family Worship
- **June 15** - Sunday Funday—combined Sunday School with Children's Ministry
- **June 22** - Regular Sunday School
- **June 29** - Regular Sunday School
- **July 6** - Family Worship at Outdoor Worship
- **July 13** - VBC Kick-off—Family Worship
- **July 20** - Growing in Faith Together—Combined Sunday School with Children's Ministry
- **July 27** - Hope @ Home—No Sunday School
- **August 17** - Sunday Funday—Combined Sunday School with Children's Ministry
- **August 17** - Backpack Blessing



August Sundays - In an effort to give our leaders a chance to attend the worship of their choice, have some time to rest and recharge, and allow staff and lay leaders to plan for fall, we encourage your family to worship together in August and enjoy the last days of summer. Sunday School will resume on Sunday, September 8.



Suds on Sunday Car Wash

Sunday, June 1 during all worship services

Come to worship in a dirty vehicle, leave in a clean one--YOURS, of course! Youth Summer Missions will be holding our annual car wash during worship services on **Sunday, June 1 from 8:00AM to 12:00PM** in the lower lot. So, drive your dirty vehicle to worship, park it in the lower lot, and we'll send you home in one that is sparkling clean (outsides only). Free will donations accepted and will benefit youth summer mission trips: Side x Side and Hope @ Home. *** Please note: the lower lot will be closed for general parking that morning. Limited handicap accessible parking will be available.*

Youth Mission Trips

Side x Side Mission Trip

June 7 to June 14 to Birmingham, AL

Register at peopleofgrace.org/sidexside

God has called you to be his hands and feet in the city of Birmingham, AL and its surrounding area. You have answered the call and will travel to the city to “do the work God has prepared in advance for you to do.” Your work and the relationships you make will become part of your legacy. May God shine in and through you as you share your heart and your gifts with the people of Birmingham, AL. Thank you for saying “yes”! Questions? Please contact Gaye Lynn Loufek, Director of Youth Ministries and Missions, at gayelynn.loufek@peopleofgrace.org. [Click here to learn more and for a printable registration packet](#)



Hope @ Home

July 24 to July 27 in the local community

Register at peopleofgrace.org/hopeathome

God calls us to be the hands and feet of Jesus in many ways. On July 24 to July 27, we are called to serve in our own backyard. All who will be in 6th-8th grade in fall 2025 (and interested adults) are invited to attend a Hope @ Home informational meeting on **Sunday, May 18 at 6:30PM** in Room 234 at Grace. Attending the meeting does not obligate you to participate. Please contact Gaye Lynn at gayelynn.loufek@peopleofgrace.org with questions or [click here to learn more and for a printable registration packet](#).



Support Hesed House

Grace Church has been supporting Hesed House since the early 1980s. Located south of downtown Aurora, it is the second largest homeless shelter in Illinois. We have been providing hot dinner, hot breakfast, and sack lunches on the second Tuesday/ Wednesday each month. We have also been donating urgent items, such as personal products, sheets, towels, etc. Hesed House opened an expanded facility in December. We are now regularly serving 240 guests. With this higher need for food, we want to increase this ministry's visibility and the opportunity for more of the Grace family to participate.

Here is how you can help:

- **Sign up** to contribute specific groceries on the second Tuesday of the month (April 8 for April) from a list and drop off at church. Find the list and sign-up at peopleofgrace.org/hesed.
- **Sign up** to help cook and/or serve on the second Tuesday of the month (April 8 for April) at Grace Church kitchen or at Hesed House. See the specific needs and sign-up at peopleofgrace.org/hesed.
- **Donate** to the Grace Church Hesed House fund which pays for the remaining grocery needs (groceries that are not donated) at peopleofgrace.org/give and selecting "Hesed House."
- **Donate** personal care items from Hesed House "current needs" list at hesedhouse.org.
- **Pray** for those who have no home and need our help.

Visit peopleofgrace.org/missions for additional information. If you have any questions, contact Larry Hartman at LEHartman@sbcglobal.net.

Spring Is In the Air!

Grace Gardners

What? Interested folks who tend a specific area or task, keeping the church grounds attractive. Major maintenance is done by contractors.

Who? Maybe YOU! We have planting beds waiting to be adopted!

Learn more:

Call Betty Long at 630-730-5180.



Join a Small Group!

We have several faith formation opportunities for adults on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. Take a one stop shop and sign up for all the faith formation groups by visiting peopleofgrace.org/adultgroups.

Sunday Morning Groups

Portico Connections

Join us Sunday mornings at 9:15AM in Room 231. This is a great group to join if you have children or youth at 9:15AM Faith Formation Hour or if you attend the 8:00AM or 10:30AM service, and want an hour of study and fellowship with a great group of people. We will begin a ten-week study of *Untangling Faith* by Amberly Neese on April 27. Please join us for this study of five essential daily practices to grow our faith. Everyone is welcome! Contact Stefanie Abderhalden at stefanie.abderhalden@gmail.com with any questions.

Forum Class

The Forum Class meets on Sunday mornings at 9:15AM in Room 232. This faithful and welcoming group enjoys a spirited study of the scriptures as well as presentations from guest speakers, often incorporating discussion and thought-provoking audio/visual material. We will conclude the study of the Apocrypha books on Sunday, May 4. We will begin the study of N. T. Wright's *Studies of the Gospels* on Sunday, May 11 and continue through September 7. (No Class Memorial Day and July 4th weekend.) Contact Sandy Bray at smbay730@gmail.com for more information.

Hearts on Fire

Hearts on Fire gathers Sunday mornings at 9:15AM in Room 250 with a welcoming atmosphere to share in fun but challenging and meaningful discussions around faith and discipleship. Everyone is welcome to join in the discussion! Contact Bob Pacanowski at BPacanowski@FranklinSports.com for more information.

Now through April 13 - *The Third Day-Living the Resurrection* by Tom Berlin

April 27 through May 18 - Remaining 5 sessions of *Parables-Putting Jesus's Stories in their Place* by Josh Scott

May 25 through June 29 - *Breaking the Code-Understanding the Book of Revelation* by Bruce Metzger

Questors

Questors welcomes all adults on Sunday mornings at 9:15AM in Room 254 to participate in presentations/discussions on a variety of topics: contemporary living issues, religious history, Biblical studies, etc. Class offers mission and fellowship opportunities. Contact Betty Long at b-long6120@sbcglobal.net or Joan Bratton at joan@bratton.com for more information.

Beginning May 4, join us for a 4-week series, "What does it mean to be a Christian in the modern world?" presented by Al Brunsting. Topics include: Reformation to Today, Causes of De-Churching?, Protestantism v. Modern Science, and Relevant Issues Now. Al Brunsting had a long career as a PhD in Physics. He is accomplished in optical systems, fiber optic telecommunication, and project management. In retirement, he co-authored and published three books with Dr. Tom McFaul, a philosopher, ethicist, futurist, and expert in world religions.

Weekday Groups

Temple Builders

Temple Builders meets on **Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 9:00AM** in the Activity Center for exercise and strength training.

Parenting with Grace Mom's Group

All moms are welcome on **Tuesdays at 7:00PM to 8:15PM** in Room 231. We are currently discussing the book, *Rooted in Wonder: Nurturing Your Family's Faith Through God's Creation*, by Eryn Lynam. As always, you're welcome to purchase the book for a more in-depth experience with the content, or simply attend and join in on a relaxed, fun, and informative discussion. If you have questions, please contact Stefanie Abderhalden at stefanieabderhalden@gmail.com or Melissa Pomeroy at melissa.dawn.pomeroy@gmail.com. Register at peopleofgrace.org/moms. All moms are welcome!

Reel People Movie Discussion Group

Reel People Movie Discussion Group meets on the **4th Thursday of the month at 1:00PM to 3:00PM** in Room 254. Everyone is welcome to join in the lively conversation!

Thursday Morning Bible Study

Come join us on **Thursday mornings at 9:00AM** in both Room 254 and on Zoom. Our Disciple Study is a welcoming, warm fellowship. The cost is \$20. We will continue meeting through Thursday, May 11 to discuss *The Prophets*. Register at peopleofgrace.org/adultgroups, or please contact either Sandy Bray at braysnap@aol.com or Pastor Doug Bowden at dbowden6@aol.com.

Racial Justice Group

Anyone interested in racial justice and eager to help Grace UMC and our community demonstrate how to truly love our neighbor despite race or ethnicity is welcome to join our group. This group strives to provide opportunities for creating community and relationships among people of all races and ethnicities. In addition, this group hopes to provide opportunities for learning how to help our community and our world stand up against racial injustice through various offerings of speakers, service projects, book studies, and events. Meetings are held on the **2nd Monday of the month at 7:00PM** in Room 254.

Fellowship and Support Groups

Grief Support Group

You are invited to a support group on **Thursdays, now through May 6 at 6:30PM** to help you move through the grief process. A GriefShare support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. You'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. Since the process of grief is not neat and orderly, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way. Visit peopleofgrace.org/loss to register and learn more. Please contact Richard Newell at richard.newell@peopleofgrace.org with questions.

Over 50 Fellowship Group

Thursday, May 1 from 12:00PM to 2:00PM - Dealing with Scams and Spams

Register at peopleofgrace.org/over50

Are you Over 50? You are invited to gather and meet some new friends or gather with some old friends. Enjoy a good meal, conversation, and a short program. Naperville Police Chief Arres will bring information about Senior Scam dangers along with current police procedures that ensure the safety of the community. The cost is \$15 per person. Register at peopleofgrace.org/over50 or in the Gathering Space at the counter. Everyone over 50 is invited!

Guys Gathering Together

Guys Gathering Together is a group for men who share common interests. Get out, eat, have fun, and have enjoyable conversations about various topics in a casual setting that impact each of us in today's world. Join us **Friday, May 23 at 6:00PM** for our next gathering. Stay tuned for details! Contact Bob at BPacanowski@FranklinSports.com with questions.

United Women in Faith

April General Meeting - Tuesday, April 1

9:15 AM Coffee and Tea in the Gathering Space

9:30AM Room 254 (Quester's Meeting Room)

Program: "Center Street Closet" given by Carol Craig, from Community United Methodist Church. Following the speaker, a Prayer and Self Denial service will be given by Ruth Wills. The Quilt Group and Prayer Shawl Groups will host a light luncheon in the Activity Center for a suggested \$3.00 donation following the meeting. *Please note the location change due to voting being held in Fellowship Hall.*



Center Street Closet is an organization that began in 2023 to help families by providing one place to select clothing and other essential items- at no cost. In addition to Center Street Closet providing support within our local church community, they reached out to local school districts and DCFS social workers to help reach additional families in need. In 2025, Community United Methodist Church of Naperville recognized the larger need in our community and opened Center Street Closet to anyone in need. Center Street Closet is located within Community UMC in downtown Naperville at the corner of Benton and Center Streets. The Closet is located in room 203 on the second floor of the building. We hope you will come to hear Carol Craig speak about how Center Street Closet began and how we can help support this wonderful local organization! All are welcome!

May General Meeting - Tuesday, May 6 in Fellowship Hall

9:15AM Coffee and Tea

9:30AM Program: "Food in Action Trip to Dominican Republic with Feed My Starving Children" given by Loraine Nemo from Feed My Starving Children Speaker's Bureau. Following the speaker, there will be a short business meeting. A light luncheon for a suggested \$3.00 donation will be hosted by the Book Discussion Group following the meeting.

As a Christian nonprofit organization, Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) believes hope starts with food. FMSC is dedicated to seeing every child whole in body and in spirit. Donations given by people help fund the meal ingredients. These meals are developed by food science and nutrition professional to supplement nutritional needs and reduce problems with malnutrition. Nutrition allows children to grow thrive and develop to their full potential. Volunteers hand-pack the meals. Meals are donated to FMSC food partners around the world, where kids are fed and lives are saved! FMSC works with food distribution partners that stay with communities for the long haul, empowering them to move from relief to development. We look forward to hearing from Loraine Nemo and her work and experiences with Feed My Starving Children. Come and join us and see how we can continue to support and feed children around the world. All are welcome to attend!

United Women in Faith will not meet during the summer months of June, July or August. We will resume on Tuesday, September 2 with our program: Tour of Conservation Foundation and MacDonald Farm in Naperville. More information to come later in the summer. Interested in learning more about United Women in Faith and our mission projects? Visit peopleofgrace.org/uwf on Grace's website or contact Jaci Tschirhart, United Women in Faith President at green.tschirhart@gmail.com.

If you would like to join Grace United Women in Faith, or a monthly Circle, contact Erin O'Brien at eobrien4344@sbcglobal.net.

APRIL				
4/6/2025	Sunday	Gettting to Know Grace	12:00PM	Activity Center
4/12/2025	Saturday	Naperville Men's Glee Club Concert	3:00PM	Sanctuary
4/13/2025	Sunday	Palm/Passion Sunday Worship (Marathon at 7AM)	8:00AM & 11:00AM	Sanctuary
4/13/2025	Sunday	Sunday Funday	11:00AM	Fellowship Hall
4/16/2025	Wednesday	Holy Week Experience	5:00PM	Sanctuary
4/17/2025	Thursday	Maundy Thursday Service	7:00PM	Sanctuary
4/18/2025	Friday	Good Friday Service	7:00PM	Sanctuary
4/19/2025	Saturday	River Sweep	9:00AM to 12:00PM	River
4/19/2025	Saturday	Easter Egg Hunt	1:00PM to 2:30PM	Lower lot and field
4/20/2025	Sunday	Easter Sunday Worship	7:30AM, 9:30AM, & 11:00AM	Sanctuary
4/27/2025	Sunday	Volunteer Recognition	Between services	Gathering Space
4/27/2025	Sunday	Holy Smokes	10:30AM to 12:30PM	Kitchen, FH, Lower Lot
4/27/2025	Sunday	NaperVoice Concert	4:00PM	Sanctuary
4/28/2025	Monday	KinderTot	9:30AM to 10:30AM	122 & 123
MAY				
5/1/2025	Thursday	Over 50: Dealing with Scams and Spams	12:00PM to 2:00PM	Fellowship Hall
5/3/2025	Saturday	Touch a Truck	9:00AM to 12:00PM	Lower Lot
5/9/2025	Friday	Children's Ministry Mother's Day Musical and Year End Celebration	6:00PM	Sanctuary and FH
5/11/2025	Sunday	Children's Ministry Mother's Day Musical	10:30AM	Sanctuary
5/18/2025	Sunday	Sunday Funday & 5th Grade Move Up	9:15AM to 10:15AM	Fellowship Hall
5/18/2025	Sunday	Senior Celebration	10:30AM	Sanctuary
5/19/2025	Monday	KinderTot	9:30AM to 10:30AM	122 & 123
5/20-5/22/25	Tu, Wed, Thu	PDO End of the Year Picnics	12:00PM to 1:00PM	Fellowship Hall
5/23/2025	Friday	Guys Gathering Together	6:00PM to 8:30PM	Activity Center
JUNE				
6/1/2025	Sunday	Choir Sunday-Message in Music	All worship services	Sanctuary
6/1/2025	Sunday	Suds on Sunday Youth Car Wash Fundraiser	8:00AM to 12:00PM	Lower Lot
6/7/2025	Saturday	Side x Side Mission Trip Leaves (thru June 14)		
6/15/2025	Sunday	Sunday Funday	9:15AM to 10:15AM	Fellowship Hall
6/23/2025	Monday	KinderTot	9:30AM to 10:30AM	122 & 123
6/29/2025	Sunday	Side x Side Slide Show	7:00PM	Fellowship Hall
JULY				
7/6/2025	Sunday	Outdoor Worship (and 8:00AM in the Sanctuary)	10:30AM	Lower Lot and Field
7/6/2025	Sunday	Faith, Food, and Fun: All Church Picnic	12:00PM to 1:30PM	Outside or Fellowship Hall
7/9/2025	Wednesday	Summer G.Y.M.	7:00PM to 8:00PM	
7/14-7/18/25	Mon - Fri	Vacation Bible Camp: On the Go With God	9:00AM to 11:30AM	Whole Church
7/20/2025	Sunday	Growing in Faith Together: On the Go With God	9:15AM to 10:15AM	Fellowship Hall
7/24-7/27/25	Thurs - Sun	Hope @ Home	varied times	Fellowship Hall/community
7/27/2025	Sunday	Piano Concert featuring Myroslav Mykhailenko	3:00PM	Sanctuary
7/28/2025	Monday	KinderTot	9:30AM to 10:30AM	122/123

Each month, please give generously to Grace's Love Loaf at the Welcome Desk or by donating via Push Pay at peopleofgrace.org/give and choosing the "Love Loaf" option. Below are the recipients of the collections for October, November, and December. Learn more at peopleofgrace.org/missions.



April 2025 Pantry Collection

This month's collection benefits the Marie Wilkinson Pantry. Founded in 1957, it was the pioneer food pantry in Aurora. After a recent renovation, they are again located at 834 N. Highland Ave. Many clients are children, seniors, low-income residents and people with disabilities. Many are employed but don't earn enough to make ends meet.



May 2025 Pantry Collection

This month's collection benefits the Common Pantry in Chicago. Operating since 1967, they are now located at 3908 N. Lincoln Ave. They provide a weekly hot lunch, a grocery shopping area, and social services to guests from the northern neighborhoods. Every \$1 provides 3 meals so please give generously.



June 2025 Pantry Collection

This month's collection benefits Loaves and Fishes. They offer their registered clients several shopping choices. They can visit a L&F Distribution site to shop for food in a grocery market setting or pick up pre-packed groceries on certain evenings/Saturday mornings or order groceries on-line and pick them up at certain sites. Deliveries are also made to homebound seniors at various low-income apartment locations. They appreciate our support so please give generously.

SAVE THE DATE! Outdoor Summer Worship

Sunday, July 6 at 10:30AM (8:00AM in the Sanctuary) - Followed by All Church Picnic at 12:00PM

Sunday, August 3 at 9:00AM (10:30AM in the Sanctuary)

Sunday, September 7 at 9:00AM (10:30AM in the Sanctuary)



Grace Notes Quarterly Newsletter

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We Gather | We Grow | We Go