

## Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn

493 Forest Avenue at Pennsylvania  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137  
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West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod - ELCA

**MONTH OF JULY 2023**  
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Grace To You is the monthly newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn.

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### FROM THE PASTOR

In celebration of our country's independence, I'm going to take this opportunity to reflect a bit on the nature of the relationship between our church and our nation. It's often a topic that raises a lot of strong feelings—and it's one that is misrepresented in public discourse and media with rather bizarre, if not downright frightening, frequency.

Most people think our Constitution includes a clause that guarantees the "separation of Church and State." But that's not accurate. That phrase first appears in a letter that Thomas Jefferson wrote to a group of men affiliated with the Danbury Baptists Association of Connecticut in 1802. Jefferson wrote that religion is between each individual and God, and the government should hold no influence over a person's religious opinions. This is a reflection of the clause that *is* in the First Amendment: "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof....*"

So government can't show *preference* for one religion over another by any legal or economic precedent. That's why many municipalities no longer allow Nativity scenes in public space or Christian Christmas carols in schools. If they're going to avoid establishing a *Constitutionally forbidden* preference for a particular religion (Christianity), they would have to invest in equal displays and events for every other religion too. Neither practical nor fiscally feasible.

But even though the government can't establish or show preference for one particular religion, government *does* engage with religious institutions on a regular basis. It sets tax laws governing houses of worship (which must

apply equally to all religious institutions). It contracts with religious institutions (like Lutheran Services in America) for certain social services. And it receives input from its constituents who are part of religious institutions, although it may not show preference based on religion.

That's a really quick overview of the limits on government in relation to churches. But churches have limits, too. These limits were codified in 1954 when Congress passed legislation that defines a 501(c)(3) organization as one "*which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.*" Since churches are 501(c)(3) organizations, churches (and pastors) cannot support or oppose any political candidate for office, either through preaching or campaign events.

However, the ban by Congress is *only* on political campaign activity regarding a candidate; churches and other 501(c)(3) organizations *can* engage in a limited amount of lobbying (including ballot measures) and advocate for or against issues that are in the political arena. That means that churches can and do take stands on various political issues. And we lobby; for decades Lutheran Services in America has been regarded as a valuable resource on Capitol Hill for input on legislation impacting poverty, aging, people with disabilities, and many other issues.

The ELCA strongly upholds the Constitution of the United States. As members of the ELCA and citizens of the U.S., we uphold our patriotic duty by enthusiastically participating in our government as informed and concerned citizens, working for a world where God's justice is made manifest in our community life. And we give thanks, every day, that we have the freedom to do so.

# GRACE TO YOU

*Proclaim, Build, and Serve*



## SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sunday worship at Grace is at 10am followed by great refreshments and Christian fellowship at 11:00am.

## SHARING CIRCLE

The Sharing Circle on Racial Healing will be taking a break in July and August. We will resume bi-weekly meetings after Labor Day, starting on September 10.

## A REMINDER ABOUT PASTOR MELODY'S DAYS OFF

**Pastor Melody's days off are Friday and Saturday.** If you wish to reach out to her for a non-emergency communication, it is best to do so Monday through Thursday. In particular, text messages received on her days off are most likely to get lost in the string of other texts she receives. Email is the best way to be sure she will get your message at a time when she can respond. Of course, in case of a pastoral emergency (death or serious illness/injury) you may reach out to her via phone, text or email at any time.

## PEOPLE OF GRACE

Mark your calendars for a special People of Grace gathering at Joe & Donna Jacobo's beautiful patio, **Tuesday, July 18 from 5-8p.** Stop in at any time, please bring an appetizer and/or drink to share. If you are available to assist Donna & Joe with any setup needs or stay for clean up, volunteers are welcome. We look forward to enjoying the outdoors and fellowship together. 1N346 Prairie Avenue, Glen Ellyn. jl1jacobo@yahoo.com

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COORDINATOR POSITION

Grace is seeking someone to fill the position of Children's Ministry Coordinator—a somewhat pared down position previously held by Becky Ficarella. This position will focus on faith formation and events for our kids in Sunday School, and will involve working with teachers and parents, organizing curriculum and materials, working with VBS, and coordinating with the pastor on Confirmation ministry. The position will require roughly 10-12 hours per week on a flexible schedule. Grace can provide you with any supplies you may need. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Melody.

## FAITH TALK

Since we didn't meet in June, we're moving the conversation about how the ELCA came to its present position on LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the Church. It's been a longer journey than many folks realize, and there are some pretty surprising aspects to the process. Join us for an always-fascinating conversation and terrific fellowship! **Thursday, July 6 from 12:30-2:00 on the Lower Level.** As always, even with a serious topic there's still a lot of room for laughter! Please feel welcome, even if you've never attended before.

## LIFE PRO TIPS

"Life Pro Tips" is a common internet term for those little hacks that make life just a little simpler. Here are a few examples:

- Tired of buying resealable plastic bags that add to the problem of plastic waste and only last for one or two uses? If you buy cereal, crackers, or anything else that comes in those translucent, crinkly plastic bags, wash and save those instead. They are *awesome* for keeping produce fresh, great for storing baked goods or leftovers, can be used in the freezer, and hold for multiple washings. Close 'em up with a rubber band, twist tie, or bulldog clip.
- Try replacing your paper towels with reusable bamboo "paper" towels. These can be used just like paper towels, but can be washed and reused over and over. (Pastor Melody has some going on 4 years!)

To keep your produce fresh longer, put one of those clean, dry bamboo (or paper, if you're still using them) towels in the bag or container. It can help produce last almost twice as long!

## ZOOM WORSHIP

We will continue to offer a Zoom link for our Sunday worship service for those who are continuing to participate from home. If you need a bulletin, remember you can view (on another device) or download/print a bulletin from Grace's website. Just click on *Quick Link to Worship*.

**Zoom link:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89031586315>**

**Dial In: 1 312 626 6799**

**Meeting ID: 890 3158 6315**

### ARTS & APPS

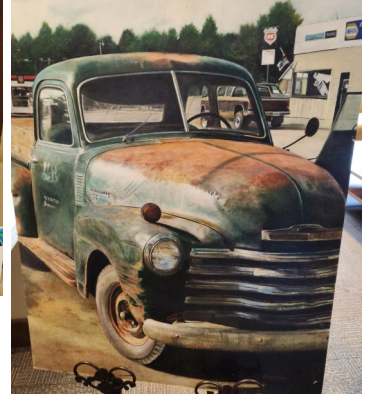
Thank you to all who shared their incredible creative works with us at the Arts & Apps event on June 4th. From sculptures, to paintings, drawings, computer graphics, and photography - what wonderful talents we have amongst our Grace members! Thank you to all who provided the delicious appetizers and sparkling drinks, which were enjoyed by all. Below is just a sampling of some of the amazing art.



Paul Rom



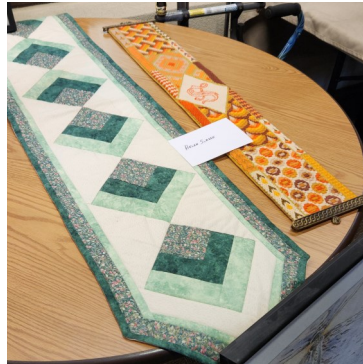
Heather Graf



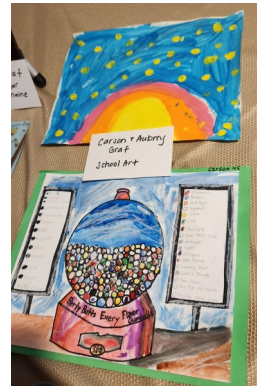
Tom Roete



Eva Holzapfel and her antique music boxes.



Helen Sladek



Carson & Aubrey Graf



Melody Eastman



Rose Fenske



Chuck Miller-Photography  
Jan Miller-Lace and Watercolor Giraffe



Kathy Maras



Emily Gregor



Ginny Stein



Rob Granner

## A NOTE FROM BRADFORD

Grace and peace be with you, my friends!

Firstly—a shoutout to all who helped to make Art and Apps one of the funnest and most interesting events I've ever experienced at Grace! I had no idea we had so many artists in our midst, and the food was \*\*\*chef's kiss!

On another note (aaaahhhh...just kidding)—I've recently learned of a woman named Conny Méndez. Her life (1898-1979) is fascinating. She was a Venezuelan composer, singer, writer, artist, actress, and metaphysicist. While she published over 40 songs, her writings as a Christian metaphysicist interest me the most.

One of her more famous pieces is called "The Little Blue Book." As the title suggests, it's a short read, and I can't recommend it highly enough. Originally published in Spanish, the book largely centers around faith.

I want us to try something. Below are some of the affirmations from "The Little Blue Book." Some of these may seem a bit "out there", but maybe try them out for a day. See how they feel.

"I am not afraid. I do not want to be afraid. God is love, and in all creation there is nothing to fear. I have faith. I want to feel faith."

"In every case of fear, I do not accept fear. God is Love. I am God's child. I am Love. I am made of and by Love."

"I am intelligent with the intelligence of God, since I have been created from the very essence of the Creator. By intelligence, with intelligence, and from the intelligence of God."

"I do not accept this appearance (Shadow) of conflict. I am peace, harmony, and order. We are all One. Forgive them who know not what they do. I forgive all, and I forgive myself. Thank you God, that you have heard me, and always hear me."

My friends...do not forget who you are, and certainly don't forget who God is.

Both creation accounts in Genesis use the term "ruach" to describe God breathing into Adam the "Breath of Life."

"Ruach"...the same term understood as "Spirit" and "Wind."

God breathed God's Spirit into us, giving us Life.

The same breath that spoke "Let there be Light"...the breath that spoke the multiverse in all its forms into existence breathes in all of us (and all living things). One Breath, one Wind, one Spirit.

Therefore, be ye not ruled by fear. God knows no fear, because in God, there is no scarcity. There is only intentionally infinite abundance. More than enough, for every one, forever.

"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"  
Matthew 6:26

In God there is no danger, only peace and rest. There is no hate, only love, compassion, and understanding.

"Indeed the very hairs of your head are all numbered."  
Luke 12:7a

Someone would have to love someone else a whole lot in order to number the hairs of their head...

My friends, not only are you loved, but you ARE Love, thoughtfully and deliberately crafted in the Divine likeness/image of God...

...and there will only ever be one of you. Ever. So you matter.

Science now suggests that we are all expressions of the Universe, experiencing itself (Neil DeGrasse Tyson, Cosmos).

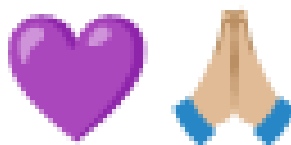
I'm not a scientist, but that sure sounds like science itself asserting the existence of intelligent design/a Creator/ God...

And in every prayer that you speak to God, say these words, without a shadow of doubt:

"Thank you God, for you have heard me."

Be well, be joyous, my friends. Remember to breathe, hydrate, and rest.

Peace be with you now and always!



Bradford

bradfordmthompson@gmail.com

**PADS—NOTE NEW JULY ONLY CHANGE!**

PADS will be on the **4th of July** this coming month. But let us first thank all the volunteers that were able to supply enough prepared food for 2000 individuals and families in need. It was a remarkable feat from our congregation and shows what people within Grace can accomplish. Thank you for helping members within our community.

**Because of the holiday, PADS has told us we can supply lunch instead of dinner so everyone can get to their evening festivities!** We're going to give them a "picnic" lunch suitable for the holiday. We're looking for grilled foods - Hot dogs, hamburgers, sausages, chicken breasts. We'll have warming trays - anyone have any? - to serve the food hot. We'll also ask for all the fixings - buns, lettuce, tomato, cheese, onions, chili, etc. We're also looking for summer salads (no mayo please) and desserts. Let's make this a great 4th for the guests.

**Since we'll be serving this as a buffet, we'll need lots of volunteers like we had when we served at the church. Please let us know if you can help on that afternoon as well. We'll serve at 1:00 so we'll need help with setup starting at 12:30.**

If cooking is not an option we can always use frozen dinners or shelf stable foods and fruits like oranges, apples and bananas. Dessert items are also welcome. Please remember that a third of our guests are children when making food selections.

Of course all food donations are appreciated. If anyone has contacts with restaurants or stores who would like to help, please let us know.

**We will need any cooked food dropped off at our house or in the upstairs gym kitchen at church. Or, you can deliver to the IHC (Interim Housing Center) - previously a Red Roof Inn - on the south side of Butterfield just west of Highland Ave between 12:30 pm and 1:00 pm - east side of the building Room 106.**

Thank you so much for your support and for helping members in our community!

Joe (630) 740-4527 and  
Donna Jacobo (630) 740-4542



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN**

West Conference - Metropolitan Chicago Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
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**Every Member: Minister & Missionary!**

Melody Eastman, Pastor  
Carole LoGalbo, M.S., LCPC Parish Counselor  
Barbara Sudds, Office Manager  
Bradford Thompson, Minister of Music

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30am - 3:00pm  
Tuesday and Thursday 1:00pm - 3:00pm



**ATTENDANCE**

DATE	IN-PERSON	ZOOM
5/7	44	7
5/14	59	7
5/21	74	10
5/28	39	8

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

Harold Andersen, Greg Barber, Kathy Nelson, Lenore Dean, Dorothy Tracy, Lori Garabrandt for healing and strength.

**Prayers for Comfort in Grief:**

Family of Verdelle "Freddie" Venturoni,  
Mother of Sandra Venturoni

**Prayers for our Homebound Member:**

Norma Petersen

