

## Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn

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

MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2023  
1085423-09

*Grace To You* is the monthly newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church of Glen Ellyn.

Non-Profit Organization  
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Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
Permit #104



### FROM THE PASTOR

As we're getting closer and closer to my retirement, this is probably a good time to talk a bit about the expectations of pastors who are leaving congregations (whether for retirement or change of call). It's one of the hardest parts of these transitions for me, but there are boundaries set in place by the ELCA that pastors are expected to abide by, and I've come to understand that they are there for good reason.

Many of you are probably familiar with these boundaries, and some of you may not be. But a reminder and review is always a good idea.

In short, I am expected by my bishop to make a clean and healthy break from Grace—mainly so that your new pastor will have your full attention and engagement. I cannot come back and do pastoral services for you—whether at Grace or in a private setting. No weddings, funerals, baptisms, house blessings, counseling sessions, communion visits, etc. I know—it's hard for you to have to reach out to a pastor you don't know well for important life events. But the Church has learned (the hard way!) that dividing your loyalty between your former pastor and the new one you haven't made a connection with yet will end up creating problems for everyone.

What about social events? Well, painfully enough the boundary applies there too. Because the bottom line is that, as your pastor, I have had a profession responsibility for your well-being that isn't equally reciprocated.

It isn't *designed* to be equally reciprocated—any more than a relationship with a therapist would be. While we have shared a great deal of love and joy with one another over these last 8 years, our relationship isn't built merely on mutual friendship. Pastors are taught at the beginning of our training that, in spite of the deep level of intimate connection we feel with members of the church, this *is* a professional relationship—and the pastor is the one responsible for maintaining healthy boundaries in that professional relationship.

"Can I say hello if I see you at the grocery store??" Yes, of course! I'll always be happy to run into all of you who have been such a large part of my life these past years. The fact that I am unable to accept invitations from you to provide pastoral care doesn't mean that I don't want to ever see you again. But you know, I know, and the bishop knows that for you to build the best working relationship with your new pastor, I need to get out of the way.

It might sound cold-hearted but believe me, it's the opposite! It's *because* pastors often develop such a deep love for their congregations that the boundaries are so important. Without them, we would be tempted to "stay in touch" and end up sticking our fingers in where they don't belong. And that's a recipe for confusion, conflict, and heartbreak. It's *because* I have loved being your pastor *so much* that I want to do what's best for you going forward. I hope you will never, ever doubt that.

*Pastor Melody*

# GRACE TO YOU

*Proclaim, Build, and Serve*



## MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

The Monday evening Bible study group, starting on **Monday, September 11, 2023, at 7:00pm**, will study the minor prophets Amos and Hosea.

These minor prophets come from the period when there were two Hebrew kingdoms, Israel in the north which had a succession of dynasties, and Judah in the south which remained loyal to the House of David and contained the Jerusalem Temple. Our featured prophets preached the Word of God in the Northern Kingdom during its declining years. Israel was captured and destroyed by the Assyrians in 721 BCE.

Amos, although a citizen of Judah, was called by God to preach in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, likely during the decade 760 – 750 BCE. During this time, Israel enjoyed peace, and an elite enjoyed great prosperity. However, the society was unjust to the ordinary person. Amos preached against this social inequity. Needless to say, he became unpopular with the king and with the king's paid clergy in the substitute temples of the Northern Kingdom.

Hosea preached and wrote in Israel from around 750 BCE until the Assyrian capture in 721 BCE. He provided a sharp critique of the political, social and especially religious acts of the Northern Kingdom as related to an idyllic time in the past, using a lot of graphic imagery. He predicted the fall of the Kingdom and considered it to be God's judgment. Like Amos, he was unpopular.

We will use Kerygma Bible study materials. The writer of the Resource Book for Matthew is Dr. George W. Ramsey, Professor Emeritus of Bible Studies from Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC. The sessions include a video presentation by the author. Participation will be possible in person in the Education Office and via Zoom link.

The Monday night group has become cohesive over the years, sharing conversation as well as our Bible study. Still, there is always room for more, and we will make you feel welcome. Kindly contact Mark Hamilton or Vince Hardt if you have not participated before so that we may order course materials for you and add you to our Email list.

Mark Hamilton 630-841-2941 marham999@gmail.com  
Vince Hardt 630-415-4600 vvince2001@hotmail.com

## SUNDAY AND ZOOM WORSHIP

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

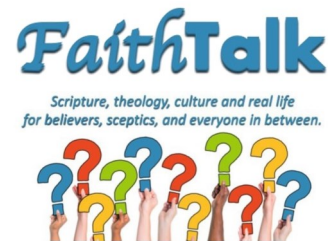
We also offer Zoom for our Sunday worship service for those who are continuing to participate from home. If you need a bulletin, remember you can view (on another device) or download/print a bulletin from Grace's website. Just click on *Quick Link to Worship*.

**Zoom link:**

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

**Dial In: 1 312 626 6799**

**Meeting ID: 890 3158 6315**



How is faith portrayed on television these days, and does it help or hurt the Church in today's culture? We'll take a look at some representations of religion, and some specific portrayals of Christianity in some of the newest series on various streaming services. It'll be a fascinating look at what "the world out there" (or at least in Hollywood) is thinking about us. And guess what? It's not all bad! Join us for a lively conversation on **Thursday, September 7 from 12:30-2:00**. Feel free to bring snacks if you like; we're a pretty comfortable bunch.

## WORSHIP LEADERS

**We need people willing to serve as zoom tech, lector, cross-bearer, and communion assistant. We also need a minimum of two ushers for each week.** If you can be a lector/help with carrying the cross and/or assisting with communion, please contact Susan Jacobson or the church office. Mark Drager schedules the ushers. Mark Hamilton works with the zoom techs. Thank you!

## PEOPLE OF GRACE

**Tuesday, September 19 at 7pm**

A location has not yet been selected. Please RSVP to Jeff Nelson if you are planning to attend.  
jeff.nelson@vlses.com

## WHAT GRACE CAFÉ IS REALLY ABOUT

Our initial step into serving our neighbors with monthly luncheons is off to a great start, thanks to amazing food and a welcoming setting. While we have been starting off small, we're getting rave reviews, and reservation requests from people we haven't even advertised to—so the word is spreading!

It's been a blessing that so many (senior) members of Grace have offered to volunteer: "How can I help with this?" We're so grateful for all of that support! Often people want to know if they can cook something, or work on setup or cleanup—and sometimes folks seem a little disappointed if it seems like they're "not needed" for those tasks. So we want to be really clear that **we need everyone's help!** Because our luncheons are, first and foremost, a way we create and strengthen community. This is particularly important in a culture where the older you get, the more likely you are to experience isolation or occasional loneliness.

Do you want to help? The very best thing you can do is simply *show up!* Sit with someone you don't know yet and make a new friend. Make sure no one is sitting alone, or getting left out at a table that has a "friend group" engaging everyone but them. ***This is the ministry!*** Be part of creating a community where everyone is seen and welcomed. As we continue with this, we shouldn't need to schedule volunteers to make sure everyone has a name tag or knows where to go. We hope that anyone who shows up will ask, "Is there any way I can help today?" and just step up. We want every person who comes, whether a Grace member or someone new, to feel like they have something to contribute.

It's also important to remember that this is not just about helping people who have become incapacitated in some way. **We are focusing on prevention.** We want to provide resources to help seniors *stay* healthy, active and engaged. Community, laughter, friendships all support mental and emotional health and have a direct impact on physical health as well. The same goes for activities like cooking together or

*Next column*

creating music or making quilts. Exercising with friends multiplies the benefits of exercising on your own. And of course, breaking bread together has always been a core builder of community. The more opportunities we have for these things, the healthier and safer our entire community will be.

So for all of you seniors out there thinking, "I don't need this yet," remember that we are doing this to support you as you *continue* to thrive. And just like in worship, your presence here will help *other* people thrive. Even if "all" you do is have a conversation and share a smile with someone new, you will be sharing spiritual gift of hospitality—which is a holy calling of God's people. It matters more than you might realize; it's God's work through our hands and hearts. And that helps all of us thrive!

## GRACE CAFÉ

**Join us for our next *Grace Café* " gathering on Wednesday, September 20 at 11am.** Grace is sponsoring this exciting program for Grace seniors and neighboring community seniors!

**What** - Lunch (prepared by Bonnie Paganis and her friend Patty), conversation, and a fun activity

**When** - Every 3rd Wednesday of the month 11:00-1:30  
Sign-up is required— look for the sheet posted in the narthex or contact the church office.  
Suggested donation of \$3.00 per person.

*Community Outreach sponsored by  
Grace Lutheran Church with seniors in mind.*

***We had close to 25 in attendance at our High Tea Lunch Bunch in July and a great time was had by all.***

## LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE

The Sharing Circle on Racial Healing will meet on **Sunday, September 17.** We will meet in the Great Room upstairs after worship.

Last spring, we started reading *The Little Book of Racial Healing*, by Thomas Norma DeWilf and Jodie Geddes. We will pick up where we left off before the summer break - Chapter 5, Making Connections. All are welcome to join. Please reach out to Karin Slenczka at [slenczka.k@gmail.com](mailto:slenczka.k@gmail.com) with any questions.

**FUN TIMES HAD BY ALL AT JOE AND DONNA JACOBO'S FOR JULY'S PEOPLE OF GRACE**



**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Hello from the Finance Committee! Hope everybody is having a wonderful summer. We're at the midway point for 2023 (results through June) and it seems like a good time to share what we're seeing. Some highlights:

- Total income is about \$5,000 greater than this time last year and total expenses are about \$15,000 less than last year. Combing these together and we're about \$20,000 better than last year.
- We made another significant investment in paying down the mortgage using gifts designated for mortgage reduction. The mortgage balance is currently about \$620,000. (Not bad if you remember initial loans of \$2M!) Our ability to service this debt helps address operating expense, lowering monthly payments.
- We've also begun investing the cash we have in better interest-bearing CD's to take advantage of current economic conditions.

These are all good things. And while I would characterize this as a positive mid-year, keep in mind that we run a deficit throughout the year until December. That's currently the case (\$40,000 deficit at the moment). We have to continue to rely on the stewardship of our members to close that gap by the end of the year which I believe is achievable!

Next year will include a lot of change - interim pastors, call process, other ministry staffing decisions, loss of Food Pantry, potential new mission partners- all with financial implications. These changes are all navigable and offer opportunities along with the challenges. I'd like to thank the congregation for the ongoing stewardship as well as my fellow Finance Committee members for diligence as we work to support Grace's mission.

Andrew Swiston  
Finance Chair



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN**

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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
7/2	35	5
7/9	39	13
7/16	29	8
7/23	48	13
7/30	38	12

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

Greg Barber, Rich Davison, Kathy Nelson, Lori Garabrandt for healing and strength.

**Prayers for Comfort in Grief:**  
Family and friends of Grace member Norma Petersen.

**Prayers for our Homebound Member:**  
Dorothy Tracy

