



Volume 77, Number 8



Grace
Lutheran Church

Lead Pastor

Shane Koepke

Associate Pastor

Henry Burt

Financial Director

Marsha Smith

Music Director & IT

Aaron Bartz

Office Manager

Deb Attig

Building Supervisor

Darin LaFrance

Engagement Director

Jenny Campos

Office Hours

9:00 am—2:00 pm

Monday—Thursday

507-373-6496

Worship Services

Sunday Morning

9:00 am

In-person & online

Sunday School

Sunday Morning

10:00 am

Sept. through May

www.gracealbertlea.org

www.facebook.com/GraceAlbertLea

GraceAlbertLea

John 6:43: *Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves."*

It's easy to grumble. The weather is too hot, too humid, too much snow, not enough snow. Rain would be nice. The rain can stop now. I have a theory that we grumble most about the weather because it's a universal experience. We all can't control it and so we all get to complain about it. Just as I was leaving a care center the other day on a VERY humid and hot July afternoon, two women were out there just happy as could be soaking up the sun and warmth. I, on the other hand, began sweating the moment the door opened. My shirt instantly damp and I was not happy, but then I looked up and saw these two women enjoying the heat. I asked them if they liked it, and they said "OH YES!!" And I said, good you can have the heat, and I'll take over in the fall and winter when I appreciate those cooler months. We all laughed and agreed we would take our turns appreciating the different seasons. No more grumbling, only appreciation in due season.

Jesus in the verse above tells the people to stop grumbling to themselves because there is nothing they can do when it comes to salvation. It's only through God the Father that people are brought to Jesus for salvation. Not grumbling about how others have it better. Not complaining about how unfair salvation sometimes looks, only the work of God can save us. But, rather than appreciate that, like the weather we grumble.

As we say goodbye to Pastor Henry this month, it might be easy to grumble. His time here was too short, and yet we cannot get in the way of God's calling. And while I am disappointed, no amount of grumbling is going to make anything change. We pray the best for him as a professor in Florida and we pray for Grace as we look to call another pastor to serve the congregation and community.

So let's listen to Jesus, let go of grumbling and pick up the appreciation of God's salvation.

Peace for the journey, Shane



Associate Pastor Henry

A Shore is a Shore is a Shore

As I stand here on the edge of Lake Chetek this morning in late July, a wooden cross adorning the center of the outdoor worship space, I have a plethora of emotions well up in me. It is three weeks before I leave Grace Lutheran Albert Lea for a new ministry field in Florida.

This next chapter of my life will be filled with lecturing and grading more so than sermonizing, worshiping, and--from the front of a fifteen passenger van somewhere in rural Wisconsin--listening to youth group members talk about the wonderfully complex time of their lives. In many ways, I am grieving this transition. Indeed, I have been nurtured in the faith and have grown in my pastoral leadership so much over these last seven months at Grace. The beauty and the warmth of this community comes down to the people. An A-list staff in Pastor Shane, Aaron, Darin, Marsha, Deb, and Jenny has made walking into the office a joy and a privilege day in and day out. Working alongside deeply committed youth leaders has allowed me to learn the intricacies of an emerging generation of leaders in the church at large. We have so much to learn from the youth inside our walls as well as in our community, nation, and world at large. There are few congregations that foster this curiosity and engagement of our youth as well as Grace does. It is in our quality, and not necessarily our quantity, that makes this ministry flourishing and sustainable for the long haul. And it all begins with the commitment of volunteers who give of themselves so lovingly and faithfully. I have been in awe of the selfless giving of this congregation, what with its many ministries, since the first week I began here.

I am leaving such a rich and vigorously disciplined community behind. So even as I grieve, I celebrate my time at Grace. Through teaching confirmation classes, holding monthly adult forums, and fellowshiping with young and old, you have given me the opportunity to craft my ministry for this next chapter of my life. I may soon be in a classroom teaching religion and philosophy classes to eighteen to twenty two year olds, or giving community lectures to the citizens of St. Augustine (many of who, let's just say, are not eighteen to twenty two years old), but that does not mean I won't see the faces of you all there. When familiarity and even self-doubt start to creep in, I can take heart in sticking to the fundamentals. These include curiosity, compassion, levity, and the priceless gift of simply being with people--to make them feel known, seen, and loved. You have allowed me to grow in these fundamentals during our short time together.

This warmth of familiarity is how I choose to start this new chapter of my life. Strangely enough, I find it here at the edge of Lake Chetek. The scenery is not all too unlike how I have woken up every morning these past seven months. There stands Fountain Lake behind the library. Rather than a cross, a huge water tower dominates the background. Soon, when my feet touch the shore of the Atlantic, rather than being hit with the vastness of the world beyond the water, I am certain to find homeliness in the fishermen and fisherwomen, the pontoons whizzing by, and if I am lucky, perhaps even a mermaid or two.

*You who have fished other waters;
You, the longing of souls that are yearning;
O loving Friend, you have come to call me.*

*Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes,
Kindly smiling, you've called out my name.
On the sand I've abandoned my small boat;
Now with you, I will seek other seas.*

~Pastor Henry



Gifts of Love

Altar Guild

In Memory Of:

Catherine Perschbacher given by Lester Perschbacher

Andy Munyer given by James & Judy Munyer

Lu Ryan given by Faith Ryan

BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAMS

In Memory Of:

Sharon Meyer given by Jerry Meyer

Mike Kleinschrodt given by Ross & Joyce Hansen

Gift Given By:

West Freeborn Lutheran Church, Kent Jaspersen, Albert Lea United Methodist Church, Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

Ball Scholarship

In Memory Of:

Bob Edwin given by Bob Ball & Laura McKibben

Baby Care Kits

Gift Given By:

Don & Melody Munden
Al & Pat Arends

Building Fund

Gift Given By:

Kent Jaspersen
David & Jeanne Lundak

Don Gross Scholarship

Gift Given By:

Kent Jaspersen

Food Shelf

Gift Given By:

Carroll & Mavis Hanson

LOVE

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl
Ed & Julie Groeneweg

Kitchen Remodeling Fund

In Memory of:

Carol Mae Olson given by Sharon & Wayne Jahnke

Martin Luther

Gift Given by:

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

Memorial

In Memory of:

Frieda Elliott given by Marlene Tasker

Prayer Garden

In Honor Of:

Lester Perschbacher given by Dexter & Janet Henschel

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl
Kent Jaspersen

Undesignated

Gift Given By:

Ed & Julie Groeneweg

PLEASE NOTE that any additional "Gifts of Love" recorded by the church office after July 20, 2025 will appear in the next issue. If you have given a gift and your name has not been recorded, please call 507-373-6496.



Church Council Minutes

July 8, 2025

Present at meeting: Pastor Shane, Pastor Henry, Doreen Pontow, Gerry Vogt, Robert Jacobson, Jerry Dahl, Markie Samp, Erica Samp, Dave Drommerhausen, Adele Rosnow

Opening Devotions: Doreen gave devotions on burdens and how we do not need to carry them alone. If we go to God he will carry our burdens so we can rest. God also gives us the Yoke of Law, which is us giving complete submission to God's Law and binding ourselves to Jesus and use Him as a source of strength and He will fill us with love.

Open Forum: None

Approval of Today's agenda

Motion made by: Jerry Dahl

Seconded by: Erica Samp

Approved

Review of Last Months Minutes

Motion made by: Gerry Vogt

Seconded by: Dave Drommerhausen

Approved

Financial Report: Given by Dave Dommerhausen, We had the third month in a row operation in the black. Approximately \$2000 to the good. Most areas are staying within budget and expenses have been reasonable or less than expected.

Old business: None

New/other business: Looking into bids for the kitchen, wanting to have them in by end of July so staff can work on how we will fund the project and form a committee to make decisions regarding upgrades and changes to the kitchen area.

Reports:

Lead Pastor's Report Pastor Shane: Looking into having an interim pastor for when Pastor Henry leaves until we can get the Call Committee back together. We will not have to start the process from scratch, we can re-submit what we have. Also will be working with the Personnel Committee on what we need going forward.

Associate Pastor's Report Pastor Henry:

Continuing to work on items for renovating the youth room. Planning on having an event to re-open the youth room Aug. 4th with pizza, popcorn and root beer floats for youth 6th-12th grade. Leaving for Luther Park Summer Camp with 14 youth July 20th, having several opportunities for the youth there, one night will be tent camping as well. Sunday July 27th the youth going on the trip will be participating in the Liturgy and other parts of the service. Organized and planned several things through the end of the year for the youth. Pastor Henry's last Sunday will be Aug 10th.

Committee Reports:

Building and grounds: Fire alarm inspection was done. Clunking noise from elevator was inspected and is not something that can be fixed and is not dangerous. Working on switching the phone in the elevator to the new style that the rest of the church is switching to.

Music: None

Mission team: None

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Church Council Minutes

Education: None

Altar Guild: None

Youth: Youth are leaving for summer camp July 20th.

Positives from congregants: Food for Back Packs happening in Alden this year. Slides were well received for the online worship. Staff fun day at the Twins game was a success despite a 4 hour rain delay. Wednesday services are really neat and those attending are really enjoying it.

Negatives from congregants: None

Tasks for next council meeting: None

Prayer Intercessions: Members & friends for their health issues, Texas flooding and the lives lost and devastated there, Adele's cousin's wife on the loss of her son, Pastor Henry on his new journey, our community, and Markey for all the work she has been doing in her community/school.

Next meeting time and date: August 12, 2025, 6:30pm

Adjournment: 7:22 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Adele Rosnow

Grace Lutheran Church Council Secretary



Remember your
Coins for Sunday's
Noisy Offering!

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

We will be selling coffee
before our worship service on
Sunday, August 3, 2025.



Generosity at Grace

**June
2025**

Average
Attendance
in person was:
124 per worship

Giving
\$44,060.65

Expenses
-\$43,911.90

**Year to Date
Giving vs
Expenses:**
\$281,253.54
- \$279,216.27
\$2,037.27

Thanks for your attendance In Person or Live Streaming as we continue to be the church apart and together.

The Finance Ministry Team and Church Council appreciate your generous support. Your faithful Stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace Lutheran.



Grace Prays

Prayers of Healing

For **Lynn Vogt Rasmussen**, daughter of
Gerry & Jerry Vogt

For **Ellen Miller**, daughter of Pat & Al
Arends

For **Viola Matson**

Prayers for those Grieving

For the family & Friends of **Norma
Demmer**

For the family & Friends of **Terry
Schindler**, brother of Gary Schindler

For the family & Friends of **Mary Pirsig**

For the Nikki Schumaker on the passing
of her father

Prayers of Joy

For **Evelyn Lee**, daughter of Logan &
Maleah Schumaker and granddaughter
of Nikki Schumaker

GRACE PRAYS: We are honored to pray with
and for you—whether it's for healing, hope, joy, or
comfort. To keep our prayer list current, we ask
that names be shared with permission and
remain on the list for two weeks. You're welcome
to call and renew the request as needed.
Please contact the church office to add or
remove a name. Thank you!

August

(Remember to pray for our Grace family on these dates.)

1. Judy Menssen
2. Linda Crom, Andrea
3. Mark & Sharon Christian, Andy & McKinzey
4. Pam Wolters
5. Robert Gade, Hunter
6. Kittie Hanson, Andrew
7. Dale & Paula Buendorf, Henry & Mason
8. Dave Drommerhausen
9. Dorothy Field
10. Jerry & Tricia Dahl, Carter, Spencer,
& Emma
11. James & Treasa Love
12. Matthew & Kristin Larson, Brekyn, Adler,
& Ryley
13. Gary & Marlene Bergeson
14. Talora Grosland
15. Greg & Kris Hanson
16. Terry & Julie Stahl, Christopher & Tyler
17. Dale & Dorothy Baldwin
18. Paul & Denise Andersen
19. William & Rita Olson, Brian
20. Jay & Myrna Montag
21. Robert Toft
22. Scott & Jeannie Jackson, Jaslyn, Kylie,
& Mariah
23. Todd & Christma Lange, Henrik, Jens,
& Solveig
24. Rex & Lois Stotts
25. Eugene & Dianne Knudtson, Felicia, Chad,
& Ryan
26. Brad & Jody Kirchner, Kaedyn & Landon
27. Dennis & Helen Hamberg
28. Perry Loge
29. Larry Madson
30. Craig & Becky Loehr
31. Mark & Trudy Harig



Caring and Sharing

Chair-people needed

Peggy & David Anderson

Dawn & Melvin Gilbertson

Nancy & Mark Greiner

Sharon & Wayne Jahnke

Liz & Troy Johnson

Janelle & Shane Koepke

Elaine & Cecil Learn

Mardelle & Virgil Loge

Jeanne & David Lundak

Myrna & Jerald Montag

Stacy & Josh Pfennig

Jenny & Phil Scott

Cynthia & Mike Severson

Sally & David Skrlin

Virginia Sorenson

Carmen Steele

Andrea & Mark Stotts

Lois & Rex Stotts

Marlene Tasker

Sandra & Gary Thompson

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES for Adults at Grace

We invite you to join any of our regular Bible study groups at Grace Lutheran.

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

10:00-11:00 am

This study for women offers fellowship and great discussion.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

7:30-8:30 am

Consider joining this group for an opportunity for good discussion and good fellowship.

Grace WELCA Women's Circles

Mary Circle (meets every 1st Monday/5:00 pm)

New members are always welcome! Call the church office, 373-6496, for more information.



We are grateful to everyone who was ready to help or provide food. Your willingness to serve is truly appreciated. There's still time to sign up as a co-chair for this month—your support makes a difference!

Pastoral Act for July

Funeral for Norma Demmer

Funeral for Mary Pirsig

PASTORAL CARE

To assist the pastors in providing pastoral care for those hospitalized or homebound, please notify the pastors of pending surgeries, overnight hospital stays, or individuals who would like a home visit.

Please call 507-373-6496

Luther Park Bible Camp in Chetek, WI



Salad Luncheon



Announcements

AUDIO/VISUAL BOOTH

We're looking for people (middle school through retirement) to help run the audio/visual booth during Sunday services!

No experience needed—we'll show you what to do!

Interested? Talk to Pastor Shane!



LOOKING AHEAD

at the important dates coming up

Confirmation parent & student meeting:
Wednesday, September 3rd

Rally Sunday: Sunday, September 7th

Confirmation classes (7th & 8th grade) begin:
Wednesday, September 10th

First day of Sunday School: Sunday, September 14th

Please watch the announcements for signup info!

6th-12th Graders

Youth Room Revival

Check out the newly updated space, reconnect with friends, and help us bring the room back to life!

MONDAY, AUGUST 4TH | 6-9 PM

RSVP BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 1ST



MOVIE



PIZZA



POPCORN



ROOTBEER FLOATS



With Gratitude and Blessings,

We share the news that Pastor Henry will be leaving Grace Lutheran as he follows God's call into a new chapter. Though our time together was short, we are deeply grateful for the care, leadership, and spirit he brought to our congregation.

Please join us in praying for Pastor Henry as he prepares for this next step!

To read his resignation letter go to :
<https://www.gracealbertlea.org/about>
and click on Associate Pastor

★ FLAMES & GAMES ★

for youth in grades 6th - 12th

It's time to light up the night!

★ Bonfire + 🌭 Hotdogs + 🎲 Games + 🍷 S'mores = YES.
Don't miss out. We'll save you a seat by the fire. ★

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD

GRACE LUTHERAN PRAYER GARDEN

6:30-7:30 PM



REGISTER NOW



August's Focus: Canned Meats

Enough Food For All (EFFA)

Donate canned meats (tuna, salmon, or chicken).

Let's fill the pallet again!

- We're also collecting school supplies through August for Albert Lea Area Schools.
- A list of needed items will be posted in the narthex and weekly announcements.



Thank you for continuing to care for our neighbors!

SAVE THE DATE

Freeborn - Mower

RELAY FOR LIFE®

August 8th, 2025

5:00 pm

FREEBORN COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS



See You There!



AUGUST 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Building and Office Closed	2 Building and Office Closed
3 8:30 am Fair-Trade Coffee 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship	4 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL 5:00 pm Mary Circle 6-9 pm Youth Room Revival (6th-12th grade)	5 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	6 9:00 am Quilting 6:30 pm Outdoor Worship	7 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL 2:00 pm Oak Park Communion	8 Building and Office Closed	9 Building and Office Closed
10 9:00 am Worship Pastor Henry's Last Day 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Adult Forum 	11 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL	12 10:00 am Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm Council Meeting	13 10:00 am Thorne Crest Communion 6:30 pm Outdoor Worship	14 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	15 Building and Office Closed	16 Building and Office Closed
17 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship	18 Newsletter Deadline 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL 	19 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	20 9:00 am Quilting 6:30 pm Outdoor Worship	21 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	22 Building and Office Closed	23 Building and Office Closed
24/31 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship	25 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL	26 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	27 6:30 pm Outdoor Worship	28 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 9:00 am Grace Notes 1:30 pm Mail Prep SAIL	29 Building and Office Closed	30 Building and Office Closed

Grace Lutheran Church
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Telephone: 507-373-6496
Email: office@gracealbertlea.org

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Summer Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship Service

Time: 9:00 am

Options: In person and online

Watch: Facebook (facebook.com/gracealbertlea)
YouTube (youtube.com/@gracealbertlea)



Sign up for updates from Grace Lutheran.
Receive announcements via text or email.
Scan QR code to sign up for FlockNotes!